

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

How To Protect Your Home From Power Outages

(NAPSA)—Every year, millions of homes lose power for hours—or even days—at a time. Being prepared is the best defense for such energy emergencies—and for many homeowners, that means investing in a standby generator.

While virtually all homeowners can benefit from having a standby generator, it is especially important in homes with elderly residents or young children, for home businesses, and for travelers who are not home to deal with the often damaging consequences of a power outage.

Adding a home generator can be easy. A standby generator is installed outside the home, much like an air conditioner. It runs on propane or natural gas and hooks up to existing gas lines.

“Generators can be retrofitted into existing homes and new home construction can be prewired,” said Ed Del Grande, a three-time master pipefitter, plumber and contractor and a home improvement expert on HGTVPro.com and the DIY Network.

Standby generators, such as those from Kohler, turn on automatically when the power goes off. A transfer switch automatically monitors utility power and transfers the electrical load to the generator if power is lost (usually within 10 seconds).

The generator can power critical appliances and systems in your home, including lights, furnaces, air conditioners, refrigerators, sump pumps, home security systems and office equipment.

Permanent standby generators are different from portable generators, which are designed for worksites. There’s no need to fill them up with gasoline every few hours or change the oil and they have no exposed engine parts. Permanent standby generators are also better suited to delicate electronics such as computers or TVs.

Since they range from 8 to 125 kilowatts, it’s important to choose a standby generator that meets



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your lifestyle and needs. If you simply want to power a few key appliances/loads, an 8- to 20-kilowatt generator may serve you well. If you want to keep your whole house powered up, a larger generator is required.

To determine what size you need, contact a local generator dealer or licensed electrical contractor familiar with standby generators. A professional can help you determine the right size for your needs. He or she will also help with the following:

- Pulling appropriate permits
- Adhering to local ordinances
- Assessing your flood risks
- Compliance with noise and electrical codes
- Professional installation and service.

When shopping for a standby generator, Del Grande encourages people to consider the following qualities:

- Look for a standby generator that comes with a commercial-grade engine providing clean, consistent power and one that can handle heavy loads.

- Make sure you purchase a generator that comes with a minimum five-year warranty.

- Don’t forget about appearance. A generator sits outside your home, so look for a unit with a bold, clean look that’s corrosion-resistant.

For more information about residential standby power, visit www.KohlerSmartPower.com.