

Safety Around The Home

Outdoor Power Equipment Helps Weather A Storm or Power Outage

(NAPS)—Storms are growing more powerful and frequent, so having the right outdoor power equipment on hand can help you weather it better, says the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI). Home and business owners should think ahead before foul weather or a power outage occurs.

“Any season can be storm season now,” says Kris Kiser, President & CEO of OPEI, an international trade association representing manufacturers and suppliers of outdoor power equipment, small engines, battery power systems, portable generators, utility and personal transport vehicles, and golf cars. “It’s smart to invest in portable and whole-house generators and to have other outdoor power equipment on hand, such as water pumps and chainsaws to handle water damage or flooding and damage from fallen trees.”

He notes that outdoor power equipment is evolving all the time. “Today’s outdoor power equipment is more powerful and has more options than ever before. It’s important that you know how to safely operate your equipment. And, remember, always follow manufacturer’s directions and never disable safety features.”

To get ready for inclement weather, homeowners should follow these tips.

1. Before a storm, identify which equipment could be needed. Chainsaws or pole saws can trim and clear limbs and shrubs that may break off or get damaged by high winds.

String trimmers, pruners and chainsaws can remove other material from around your home that may make it vulnerable to wildfires.

A portable generator powers key appliances and charges cell phones when utilities go down. A whole-house generator can keep the lights and appliances on and running.

Before an outage, plan where the generator will be set up (never in a home or garage, and always away from any air intake like windows) and determine how to secure it if needed. Use outdoor-rated extension cords for portable generators.

Water pumps can get water and muck out of basements and homes. Be sure you know how to operate the pump. Never pump substances that your equipment is not designed to cope

**Weather It Better:
Prepare Ahead for Storms**



STORM PREPARATION

- ✓ Know your work area
- ✓ Clear your yard of debris
- ✓ Get out equipment needed
- ✓ Remove dead/dying tree limbs
- ✓ Keep kids/pets away from equipment



Staying safe at home is easier when you're properly equipped and prepared.

with. Pay attention to avoid overheating and follow all safety precautions.

A utility type vehicle can transport people and supplies quickly in an emergency. Keep the vehicle stable and drive slowly. Do not turn mid-slope or while on a hill. Consider taking a UTV safety course.

2. Always read and follow the safety and usage recommendations provided by the manufacturer. Never disable safety features. Practice how to operate equipment before you need it.

3. Have the right fuel on hand and charge batteries ahead of bad weather. Fuel that is more than 30 days old may phase separate and cause running problems, so it's important to purchase fuel just ahead of a storm. Store fuel safely and only use an approved fuel container. Only use manufacturer-recommended batteries.

4. Pay attention to your energy level and health. Preparation for bad weather, a power outage and storm cleanup can be taxing. Do not operate power equipment when fatigued. Always use safety gear such as chaps, gloves, eye protection and hearing protection when operating equipment.

5. Always keep children and pets away from operating outdoor power equipment.

For more tips, go to WeatherItBetter.com.