

# News Release

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**Woodruff Electric  
Cooperative Corporation**

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## **Woodruff Electric Encourages Generator Safety**

A generator can be a valuable piece of equipment to keep appliances working during a power outage. However, before you buy or operate one, you need to be aware of the safety concerns surrounding generators.

“Generators are responsible for tragic carbon monoxide and electrical accidents every year,” says Tommy Talley, Safety and Loss Control Manager at Woodruff Electric. “Those who plan to use generators need to understand the risks involved with them and how to properly use them before even purchasing one.”

Generators can be either temporary or permanently installed. A permanent generator is wired into a house by a qualified electrician using a transfer switch. A transfer switch prevents a generator from feeding electricity back into overhead lines, which can be deadly for linemen.

A temporary generator is powered by gasoline and should not be attached to a circuit breaker, fuse, or outlet. Before ever purchasing a generator you need to know the wattage required to run the appliances you will attach to the generator. You also need to know the surge power, which is the power it takes to turn an appliance on.

Once you have purchased the proper generator, follow these tips to properly operate your generator:

- Read and follow all manufacturer operating instructions to properly ground the generator. Be sure you understand them before hooking up the generator.
- Never operate a generator in a confined area, such as a garage. Generators can produce numerous gases, including toxic and deadly carbon monoxide. They require proper ventilation.
- Generators pose electrical risks especially when operated in wet conditions. Use a generator only when necessary when the weather creates wet or moist conditions. Protect the generator by operating it under an open, canopy-like structure on a dry surface where water cannot form puddles or drain under it. Always ensure that your hands are dry before touching the generator.
- When you refuel the generator, make sure the engine is cool to prevent a fire, should the tank overflow.
- There should be nothing plugged into the generator when you turn it on. This prevents a surge from damaging your generator and appliances.

- Be sure to keep children and pets away from the generator, which could burn them.
- Shut down the generator properly. Before shutting down a generator, turn off and unplug all appliances and equipment being powered by the generator.
- Remember maintenance between uses. It is also a good idea to inspect the fuel and oil filters, spark plug, oil level and fuel quality and to start the generator on a regular basis before an emergency situation occurs.

Talley stated, "A properly used generator provides the convenience of running important appliances in a prolonged power outage without creating safety risks."

Woodruff Electric Cooperative, headquartered in Forrest City, is a member-owned electric utility. Woodruff Electric serves electric power to more than 19,000 homes, farms, and businesses in parts of Woodruff, Prairie, Monroe, Cross, St. Francis, Lee, and Phillips counties in eastern Arkansas. The District offices are located in Augusta, Moro and Barton.

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