



## ***Connecticut Wing Safety Alert!***

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CPSC and FEMA Warn: When A Storm Knocks Out Power, Don't Risk Carbon Monoxide Poisoning by Using Gasoline-Powered Generators Indoors

WASHINGTON, D.C. - When disaster strikes and the power goes out, many Americans turn to their gas-powered generators for heat and electricity. But when they set up those generators inside, a second disaster may strike - carbon monoxide poisoning.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) have joined forces to warn residents not to use gasoline-powered generators or charcoal grills indoors or in attached garages because of the risk of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.

"If you want to use a gasoline-powered generator when the power goes out, set it up outside in a dry area, away from air intakes to the home," said CPSC Chairman Hal Stratton. "And never use a charcoal grill inside because you risk being poisoned by deadly carbon monoxide. Opening doors and windows or operating fans to ventilate is inadequate and unsafe. Even with a CO alarm, you should never use a gasoline-powered generator or a charcoal grill inside."

"People often turn to substitutes like gasoline-powered generators when storms, floods and other natural disasters interrupt power services," said FEMA Deputy Director Mike Brown. "In preparing for disasters, it is critical for people to identify and know the proper way to use generators."

CO is a colorless, odorless gas produced by burning fuel. The initial symptoms of CO poisoning are similar to the flu, and include dizziness, fatigue, headache, nausea and irregular breathing. Exposure to high levels of CO can cause death. CO poisoning from fuel-burning appliances kills more than 170 people each year. Others die from CO produced while burning charcoal inside a home, garage, vehicle or tent. Still more deaths happen when cars are left running in an attached garage.

"Every home should have a CO alarm that meets the most current safety standards," advised Chairman Stratton. Those standards are:

Underwriters Laboratories 2034 (second edition 1998); International Approval Services 6-96 (second edition 1998); or Canadian Standards Association 6.19-01 (2001).

FEMA and CPSC also warn about CO hazards when gas ranges are used to heat homes. In addition, to prevent fires, space heaters should not be used while you are sleeping and should be kept away from flammable materials and turned off when the consumer leaves the room. Bags of charcoal are labeled to warn about the hazard of burning charcoal indoors. The labels say: "Warning! Carbon Monoxide Hazard. Burning charcoal inside can kill you. It gives off carbon monoxide, which has no odor. NEVER burn charcoal inside homes, vehicles or tents."

Emergency management officials also suggest that other options to consider when power is interrupted from storms include checking into hotels or staying in designated shelters.

For more information on safe use of generators, read this CPSC publication:

<http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PUBS/portgend.html>

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