

ESFI Urges Consumers To Generate Safety During Outages

(NAPS)—As consumer reliance on electricity has increased, tolerance for power outages has declined. To combat the havoc wreaked by ice storms, thunderstorms, high winds and hurricanes, many homeowners turn to portable electric generators.

“Portable electric generators are a good source of power during electrical outages. However, generators that are improperly installed or operated can become deadly,” noted Michael G. Clendenin, executive director of the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI). “People die needlessly every year in accidents that involve portable electric generators. Safety awareness can prevent those deaths.”

ESFI recommends following these portable electric generator safety precautions to avoid dangerous situations.

- NEVER operate the generator in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces, including homes, garages and basements. Generators very quickly produce high levels of carbon monoxide, a colorless, odorless, deadly gas.

- Keep the generator dry. To protect it from moisture, operate on a dry surface under an open canopy-like structure.

- Plug appliances directly into the generator. Or, use a heavy-duty outdoor-rated extension cord that is rated in watts or amps at least equal to the sum of the connected appliance loads.

- Do not connect your generator directly to your household wiring, as this can backfeed along the power lines and electrocute anyone coming in contact with



them, including lineworkers making repairs.

- Make sure the generator is properly grounded.

- Do not overload the generator. A portable generator should be used only when necessary and only to power essential equipment or appliances.

- Make sure fuel for the generator is stored safely, away from living areas, in properly labeled containers and away from fuel-burning appliances. Before refueling, always turn the generator off and let it cool down.

- Turn off all appliances powered by the generator before shutting down the generator.

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe operation and maintenance.

- Keep children away from portable generators at all times.

For these and other electrical safety tips, visit the ESFI Web site at www.electrical-safety.org or call 703-841-3229.