Portable Generator Safety

Portable generators help make our lives a little more tolerable during periods of extended power outages, especially during hurricane season. However, those benefits don't come without risk.

Portable generators create Carbon Monoxide (CO) as a product of combustion. CO is a colorless and odorless gas that can quickly cause negative health effects, including death.

A few key safety rules to follow when using a portable generator include:

1. Always follow the manufacturer's recommendations to safely operate the generator.
2. Install at least one carbon monoxide alarm in the residence to alert you if fumes are building up.
3. Monitor wind direction. Even with sufficient separation, wind can push CO into a house, especially if doors or windows are open due to a power outage.
4. Never operate a portable generator inside any building, under an overhang, or on a roof of a structure.
5. Refuel the generator AFTER it has cooled down and AWAY from all ignition sources
6. Store flammable liquids/gasoline (maximum 10 gallons) only in approved and tightly capped containers.
7. Use remaining fuel in your car after the power is restored to limit the risk of fire or explosion in your home.
8. Never back feed the portable generator into the Clothes Dryer outlet. Use a licensed electrical contractor to install proper hook-up devices.
9. In accordance to the Palm Beach County Fire Code, "**Portable combustion engines shall not be located within 20 feet of a building or rooftop**" and the exhaust should always be directed away from the building structure.