

“When the Lights Go Out...”



Almost everyone living in the Northeast was affected by “Superstorm Sandy” in one way or another. Extended periods of time without power, downed trees, heavy rains and flooding caused many potential fire hazards. Being prepared to protect your family from the threat of fire or burns during or after winter storms now becomes priority as we enter the winter season. You can reduce your chances of becoming a victim of fire by following the safety tips included in this issue of “Safety Lines”!

Alternative Heating

Finding a way to stay warm when the power goes out can be challenging...and dangerous!! Following some simple steps can keep your family warm AND safe!!

- **NEVER** use your kitchen oven/range to heat your home. In addition to being a fire hazard, it can be a source of toxic fumes.
- If you are using an alternative heater, be sure that it has a “**tip switch**”. These are designed to automatically shut off in the event the heater is tipped over.
- Alternative heaters **need their space**. Keep anything that can catch fire, as well as children and pets, **at least** three feet away.
- Only use the type of fuel recommended by the manufacturer and follow suggested guidelines.
- Never fill a space heater while it is operating or still hot. Refuel heaters **only outdoors**.
- Make sure wood stoves are properly installed. Make sure they have proper floor support and adequate ventilation.
- Use a glass or metal screen in front of your fireplace to prevent sparks from igniting nearby flammable materials. Use a **gate or fireplace screen** to keep small children and pets from touching the glass or metal.



Alternative Lighting

When the power goes out, so do the lights!! Finding our way around in the dark can be a real hazard if done unsafely ...Follow these tips to make sure you light your home safely!

- Always use flashlight, LED lanterns, etc. For emergency lighting in your home - **not candles!** Using candles during a power outage can be a fire hazard, and extremely dangerous.
- LED headlamps and lanterns (such as those you might use for camping) can be very useful to light your home during a power outage.
 - Make sure you have plenty of **batteries** for the various types of lighting you will need while the power is out.



Gas Safety

In the event that your home is damaged by wind, rain, or snow:

- Smell and listen for leaky gas connections. If you believe there is a leak, **leave immediately** and leave the doors open.
- Never strike a match - it can cause an explosion.
- Before turning the gas back on, have the system checked by a professional.

Electrical Safety

- If your home has sustained damage from flooding, water, etc., and you can safely get to the breaker or fuse box, turn off the power.
- Stay away from **damaged or downed power or utility lines** - they present a fire and life safety hazard!
- In the event of a storm, assume that all wires on the ground are electrically charged, and stay away from them. This includes cable TV feeds.
- Look for and replace frayed or cracked extension and appliance cords, loose prongs and plugs.
- Have a **licensed electrician** check your home for damage.



Winter Storm Survival Kit

Assembling a "Winter Storm Survival Kit" can be made into a fun scavenger hunt for you and your older child. Search the home for the following items, and keep them together in a place that will be easily accessible in the event of a power outage:

- ◆ Flashlights/battery-operated lanterns and extra batteries; A battery-powered radio (to receive emergency updates); extra food and bottled water; (food not requiring refrigeration or cooking is best); extra medicine; extra baby supplies; extra pet supplies; a first aid kit; blankets; manual can opener; board games, craft projects & other entertainment items
- ◆ Also make sure you have: plenty of heating fuel or alternative heat source; cash (in the event of a wide-spread power outage, ATMs will not be available.); a full tank of fuel in your car; and fully charge your cell phone, portable DVD players, laptops, etc.



Generator Safety

Portable generators can be a life-saver when temporary power is needed...however, they can also be extremely dangerous if not used properly. They can cause carbon monoxide poisoning, electric shock/electrocution, or fire. Follow these simple steps to keep you and your family safe while using a portable generator:

To avoid **carbon monoxide poisoning**:

- Always use generators **OUT-DOORS**, away from doors, windows and vents.
- **NEVER** use generators in homes, garages, basements, or other enclosed or partially enclosed areas, even with ventilation.
- Install carbon monoxide alarms in your home and test them regularly.



To avoid **electrical hazards**:

- Keep the generator **dry**. Operate on a dry surface under an open, canopy-like structure.
- Dry your hands before touching the generator.
- Plug appliances directly into generator or use heavy-duty outdoor-rated extension cord.
- **NEVER** plug generator into a wall outlet.

To avoid **fire hazards**:

- Before refueling the generator, **turn it off** and let it cool. Fuel spilled on a hot engine could ignite.
- Always store fuel outside of the living area in properly labeled, non-glass containers.
- Store fuel away from any fuel-burning appliance.
- Always follow all of the manufacturers instructions.

Generator Recall!

Were you one of thousands who bought a generator during Superstorm Sandy? Honda has recalled gasoline-powered portable generators with model number EU2000i and serial numbers EAAJ-2260273 through EAAJ-2485025. The generator's fuel hose can leak, posing fire and burn hazards. For more information on this, and other recent recalls, please visit

www.cpsc.gov.