

Electrical generators can save lives by maintaining heat, light, refrigeration, and medical equipment during a power outage. They are essential tools on our construction projects, however these devices can be hazardous if not utilized properly. The following information outlines the specific hazards of carbon monoxide poisoning inherent with the use of generators.

### Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

- Portable generators emit carbon monoxide gas. It is colorless and odorless gas. The US Consumer Products Safety Commission is requiring manufacturers of portable generators to warn consumers of carbon monoxide hazards through a label that reads, “Using a generator indoors CAN KILL YOU IN MINUTES.”
- Never use a generator indoors or in enclosed spaces such as garages, crawl spaces, and basements
- Make sure a generator has 3 to 4 feet of clear space on all sides and above it to ensure adequate ventilation
- Do not use a generator outdoors if its placement near doors, windows, and vents could allow carbon monoxide to enter and build up in occupied spaces

### Symptoms of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

- Dizziness
- Headaches
- Nausea
- Tiredness
- Breathlessness
- Collapse
- Loss of Consciousness

If you experience any of these symptoms while working with a portable generator, **GET TO FRESH AIR IMMEDIATELY AND SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION**

### Questions for Discussion

- Name at least four symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning?
- Why is carbon monoxide gas difficult to identify when using a portable generator?