

Domestic portable generators



How to avoid the dangers when using domestic portable generators

Connect the generator correctly

If a generator is connected incorrectly electricity can 'back-feed' along the powerlines supplying your premises. This has the potential to fatally injure people in neighbouring homes or staff working to restore your normal electricity supply. It can also severely damage your generator.

- > Thoroughly read and understand the manufacturer's instructions before use
- > Don't connect generators directly to your home's wiring system, unless a licensed electrical contractor has installed special facilities, including a "changeover" switch
- > Unless changeover switch facilities are available appliances should be plugged directly to the generator via a heavy duty extension cord
- > Use a generator that complies with Australian Standard AS 2790. You can identify a complying generator via the Standards Australia "Standards Mark" on the packaging



Example of a portable generator



Australian Standard

Standards Mark

- > Petrol or diesel powered generators produce toxic fumes so must only be operated in a well ventilated outdoor area away from open windows.

How to safely operate a generator

- > Turn off the generator when re-fuelling or when there are no operating appliances connected
- > To prevent the generator from overloading it is important to consider the generator's rating (wattage). The total rating of appliances operated at the same time must be less than the rating of the generator.

The table below shows the typical rating of some common household appliances. The actual rating of appliances may vary depending on model type. The use of portable generators should be limited to work of short duration or one-off applications. Try to limit usage to essential appliances such as fridges/freezers, lights and pressure pumps for water wherever possible. Remember to take into account that appliances with motors will use three to four times the running rating during the start-up process.

Appliance	Rating (watts)
Fridge	240
Freezer	240
Computer monitor	100
Pressure pump	1000
Heater	2400
Kettle	2400
Lights (compact fluorescent)	15
Lights (incandescent)	75
Microwave oven	1000
Radio	70
Toaster	1000
Television (standard)	70

SAFETY FIRST

- > Do not connect a generator directly to your home's wiring system. An incorrectly connected generator has the potential to cause serious injury
- > Read the manufacturer's instructions before use
- > Operate the generator outdoors away from windows
- > Do not overload the generator
- > Switch the generator off when refuelling or not in use.