

# Your Safety Matters

Safe, affordable, reliable power is important to you, and Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative is committed to meeting your needs.

Even so, ice, snow, thunderstorms and other unexpected issues can cause power outages.

Generators are helpful with supplying electricity to your appliances if an emergency exists. However, if used or installed improperly, they can cause serious injury and even death.

Information within this brochure could save a life.

## Questions?

*If you have questions about any Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative program, contact your local office:*

**Hickman County**  
931-729-3558

**Lewis County**  
931-796-3116

**Perry County**  
931-589-2151

**Humphreys County**  
931-296-2581

**Houston County**  
931-289-3311

*or email us at  
[power@mlec.com](mailto:power@mlec.com)*

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# GENERATOR BASICS

## Installation & Safety Tips



 **Meriwether  
Lewis**

# Generators: Potential Hazards & Preventative Measures

## ➤ What are the dangers?

### Electrocution can occur.

If an electric generator is connected to your home's wiring, the energy it generates can flow back into MLEC's power lines and cause serious injury or death to line workers or others who come in contact with the lines. Even a line that has been knocked down and is verified by MLEC as "de-energized" could re-energize without warning.

### Carbon monoxide can kill.

Never use a portable generator indoors - even with ventilation. This includes your home, basement, garage, crawl space and other enclosed or partially enclosed spaces. Opening doors and windows, or using fans, will not prevent carbon monoxide build-up in the home.

### Fires can ignite.

Never store generator fuel in the home. Gasoline and other flammable liquids should be stored outside of living areas in properly labeled, non-glass safety containers.

Before fueling the generator, turn it off and let it cool down. Gasoline spilled on hot engine parts could ignite.

### Electrical hazards are possible.

Follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe operation and maintenance. Keep the generator dry and do not use in rain or wet conditions. Make sure your hands are dry before touching the generator.

The safest route is to plug appliances directly into the generator, and make sure it is properly grounded.

## ➤➤ How can I make it safer?

### Know the dangers of a portable generator.

Never power the house wiring by plugging the generator into a wall outlet or wiring it into your breaker panel. This is an extremely dangerous practice that presents an electrocution risk to utility workers and neighbors. It also bypasses some of the built-in household circuit protection devices. Do not overload the generator. A generator should only be used when necessary and only to power essential equipment or appliances.

### Take the right steps.

If the plan is installing a generator to your house's wiring, it must be installed with a transfer switch (see illustration) or an interlocking breaker system by a licensed electrician. Remember, Tennessee law requires a state wiring inspector approve any additions or changes to the wiring in your home. Installing a generator falls into that category. You can contact the local state wiring inspector for additional details.

