

Don't Let Your Generator Generate Trouble

Having a generator on hand, whether portable or permanent, may sound like a great idea for times when the power goes out, but misusing one is dangerous. Although they can help light your home or cool your perishable food when the neighborhood is dark, if used incorrectly you could have a much bigger problem on your hands.

When using a portable version, there are two ways to connect it to a home. The first way is with a powered circuit panel that has a power transfer switch, which monitors incoming voltage from the utility line. The circuit panel and transfer switch should always be installed by a qualified electrician. The second option is to plug in a limited number of home appliances directly into a fuel-powered portable generator with heavy-duty extension cords.

Never try to power your home by plugging a generator into a wall outlet. This is known as back feeding, and it could electrocute a neighbor or an electric lineman working to restore power. A permanent generator must also have a transfer switch installed by a qualified electrician to avoid back feeding. Because of the harm an incorrectly powered generator can cause, the transfer switch is required by the National Electrical Code.

The primary hazards of using a portable generator are not pretty. They include carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning from the toxic engine exhaust, electric shock or electrocution, and fire, according to the Federal Emergency Management

Agency (FEMA). According to the agency, most of the deaths and injuries associated with portable generators are from CO poisoning when generators are used indoors or in partially enclosed spaces. A permanent or standby generator also has significant risks if not installed by a qualified electrician. Installing one is extremely dangerous and definitely not a DIY project.

Portable versions are less expensive than permanent or standby models and power only select appliances. The most expensive permanent generators—standby versions that are permanently installed and power most of the appliances in your home—are convenient but pricey. The average permanent system costs around \$10,000.

Safe Electricity points to other important safeguards to take when using a generator:

- Operate a portable generator in well ventilated locations outdoors away from all doors, windows and vent openings to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. The instructions that come with it are not meant for the recycle bin. Read and follow them; they are important.
- Turn the generator on before using it. Once it's running, turn your appliances and lights on one at a time to avoid overloading the unit. Generators are for temporary use and limited load; prioritize your needs.

GENERATOR Safety

Avoid hurting yourself and others – including linemen working to restore power. Understand how to use your generator safely!

Learn about preventing “backfeed” and more at:

 Safe Electricity.org



- Never use a generator in a puddle or standing water and never touch with wet hands.
- To protect a portable generator from moisture, operate it on a dry surface under an open, canopy-like structure.
- Never use or install a generator in an attached garage, even with the door open.
- Turn off portable generators and let them cool down before refueling. Never refuel a generator while it is running.
- Store fuel for your portable generator in a container that is intended for the purpose and is correctly labeled as such. Store the containers outside of living areas.
- Keep children and pets away from all generators, especially portable ones. Many generator components are hot enough to burn you during operation.

Using a generator is serious business and shouldn't be done in haste. Learn more about using electricity safely and efficiently at [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.SafeElectricity.org).



SCEA WATER HEATER PROGRAM

SCEA's peak shave water heater program provides members with a Marathon water heater at a discounted price for participating in the load management program.

The cost for water heaters is \$750. This is a great value for members. SCEA pays the cost of the electrician to wire the water heater and radio control. The member would pay any costs incurred by a plumber.



2023 REBATE PROGRAMS

Recipient must be a South Central Electric member. Any checks or credits will be made in the name or account of the member. The program will end when funds are exhausted; additional rebates may be added at a later date. The completed applications will be processed on a first come first served basis as they are received in our office. Rebate applications can be requested by calling the St. James office or available on line at www.southcentralelectric.com.

APPLIANCE REBATES:

Please see rebate applications for details.

Dehumidifier \$20

Credit applied to the energy bill

Air Source Heat Pumps \$350-\$600

Ductless Heat Pump \$350-\$600

Ground Source Heat Pump \$350/ton

Air Conditioner Tune Up \$30

Managed Electric Heat \$20/kW

Radio controlled, qualifies for discount of \$.031/kWh on system usage. Stored or dual fuel heat. Heat pumps are not eligible for this program.

LED Yard Light..... \$25.00/ea limit 3



Must be an Energy Star® appliance to qualify.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL REBATES:

Rebates are available on a custom basis. Rebates will be based on kW reduction on retrofit projects. To be eligible for a rebate the project must have a minimum savings of 1kW. We do not have rebate programs for new construction. Call SCEA for information on these rebates.



Protect your home and family with a Briggs & Stratton home standby generator

You can be confident that South Central Electric works hard every day to keep your lights on. For those times when mother nature strikes, we still have you covered with our generator program. You can purchase a whole home Briggs & Stratton Power Protect generator from South Central Electric. If you lose power, the generator automatically takes over. When power is restored, it automatically shuts down. Power when you need it without the hassles of portable or PTO generators.

Estimated Cost of \$8,000 to \$11,500 includes the following:

- Briggs & Stratton® Power Protect DX with industry leading 10-year warranty.
- Minnesota winter ready with battery warmer, oil heater & battery charger.
- Automatic transfer switch.
- **Electrician installation.**

Generators run on LP or Natural Gas. Estimate does not include costs of gas installation from your gas provider.


Call our office to learn more at **(507) 375-3164**

Attention Students and Parents!

Sophomores and Juniors Win a FREE Trip to Washington D.C.

Area sophomores and juniors have an opportunity to win an all-expenses paid trip to Washington D.C. Students will travel with others from around Minnesota and the country as they visit the sites in and around our nation's capital. Over 1,500 delegates from electric cooperatives around the country visited Washington D.C. in 2022. The students visited with their congressional representatives, toured famous museums and made memories and friends that will last a lifetime.

Don't miss this opportunity to make lifetime memories.

1. To enter the contest the student must live within the South Central Electric service area or attend one of the following schools: Butterfield/Odin, Comfrey, Madelia, Martin County West, Mt. Lake, Red Rock Central, St. James, Truman, Windom Area, or Westbrook.
2. Each contestant must submit a contest application form and an essay on the following topic: **"How do you and your family benefit from electricity?"** 
3. Applications are due at our St. James office by March 17, 2023 and the applicant must complete a personal interview on March 22, 2023. Interview times are between 4pm and 6pm.

Prizes

1st All-expense paid trip to Washington D.C. June 13-18, 2023.

(No substitute prize if unable to make the trip.)

2nd \$150 cash award and will serve as first alternate.

3rd \$100 cash award and will serve as second alternate. 

How to Apply

Contest rules and application forms for the Washington D.C. trip are available at our St. James office, on our website www.southcentralelectric.com, or by calling 507-375-3164.



Learn more at the national Youth Tour website: youthtour.coop, or check out the Minnesota Youth Tour Facebook page *Minnesota Rural Electric Association Washington D.C. Youth Tour*.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Seniors and College Students
\$1,000 Scholarship Available
to SCEA Member Dependents

SCHOLARSHIP
APPLICATION
DEADLINE IS
FEBRUARY 24,
2023

South Central Electric is honored to partner with Basin Electric to award a \$1,000 scholarship to a dependent of a South Central Electric member. The scholarship is available to high school seniors and college students enrolled full-time in an accredited two or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school working on an undergraduate or master's degree.

These applicants are also eligible for scholarships through South Central Electric's Operation Round Up® program.

The scholarship deadline is February 24, 2023. Applications can be obtained at our St. James office, on our web site www.southcentralelectric.com or by calling 507-375-3164.



Official monthly newsletter

South Central Electric

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The Board meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at South Central Electric's building at 71176 Tiell Dr., St. James, MN.

Please see our website for a summary of the board meetings.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

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