

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Security During Power Outages

(NAPSA)—Electricity is never appreciated as much as when it is gone. Whatever the cause—increased demand on power utility supplies, winter ice and snow storms or other disasters—power outages are becoming more frequent, disrupting daily home and business activities.

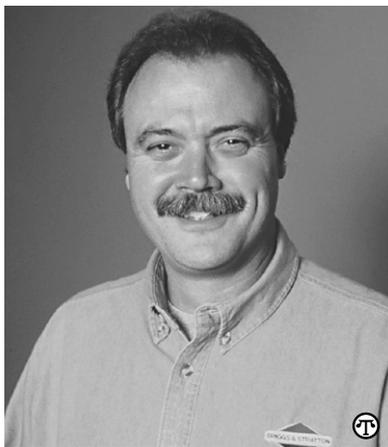
“That’s a major reason sales of standby power generators have increased,” says Pat Simpson, host of the popular HGTV cable television series *Before and After* and *Fix-It-Up*. “With a standby generator in place, homeowners can feel secure that daily life will go on no matter what happens to the power supply.”

Homeowners’ increased concern about security is reflected in a *Time/CNN* poll published in October 2001 that reported the number of those interested in buying a generator for security reasons climbed to 18 percent. This concern translates into a purchasing trend—since September 11, 2001, retail sales have spiked by up to 25 percent compared with previous years’ sales, according to Briggs & Stratton, small engine manufacturer.

“Homeowners like to be in control,” says Simpson. “A standby generator is really a tangible form of insurance.”

Today, the right generator can keep the lights and heat on, the food cold and the home business running. Even security systems and sump pumps will remain active through any power-related emergency.

Simpson says, however, that consumers need to be informed about the decision to purchase and operate a standby generator. “There are two types of standby



HGTV host Pat Simpson says that standby power generator sales have doubled in the last five years, largely because of increasing power outages.

generators: portable and permanently installed.”

Portable generators are smaller, gasoline-fueled, manually started models that can power necessary household items. The wattage range of these units runs from 4,000 to 10,000 watts. An important accessory for portable units is a Manual Power Transfer System, which eliminates the need for extension cords and makes transferring standby power to a home fast, safe and easy.

Permanently installed automatic-start generators are the most technologically advanced generators. Permanent standby units can sense a power disruption and automatically start even if no one is home, then shut off automatically when the line power is restored. These units connect directly to the home’s natural gas supply or a propane fuel supply and range from 5,000 to 20,000 watts.

Here are three tips Simpson gives for selecting the right standby generator to meet your needs:

1. Determine the type of generator: The first thing to consider is budget. A portable generator will cost \$500 to \$1,000. Permanent standby systems will run \$5,000 to \$10,000 installed, but provide a level of performance and convenience that is critical for some owners.

2. Determine wattage requirements: Size your unit for the items you’ll need during an outage: air-conditioner, refrigerator, freezer, lights, TV, computer, well and sump pumps, and others. “Approximately 5,000 to 7,500 watts is enough to power the average home,” says Simpson. Wattage ratings for appliances are listed on the nameplates.

3. Choose your features: Some generator manufacturers include features such as larger fuel tanks for longer run-time and automatic voltage regulation to protect sensitive electronic equipment. Options to look for include overhead valve (OHV) technology, electronic ignition for easy starts, low oil shutdown and a low-tone muffler for quiet operation.

“Don’t wait for the next power emergency,” says Simpson. “Take back control of your power supply with a standby generator.”

For free information about selecting and operating a standby generator, call 1-866-GEN-SETS or visit www.briggsandstratton.com/generators. An online “Ask the Expert” questionnaire will walk you through the process of selecting a generator and choosing features and accessories.