



# Hints For Homeowners

## Stay Powered Up All Winter Long

(NAPSA)—The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) predicts that it will be a wetter-than-average winter across most of the northern United States, extending from the northern Rockies to the eastern Great Lakes and the Ohio Valley. This could mean hazardous weather in some regions, including ice storms and windstorms that could knock out power. Now is the time to prepare the home in case of power outages.

A recent storm in the New England area brought down tree limbs and whole trees onto power lines, leaving more than a million people in the dark, with some of those power outages affecting homeowners for several days. Having emergency backup power is one way that homeowners can be prepared for whatever winter has in store, as well as any future storms.

### Portable vs. home standby power

Two basic options exist for homeowners: portable generators and home standby generator systems. Both solutions can keep the house lights on, appliances working, and in the event of a weather-related power outage or other emergency, will keep the home the safest place to ride out the storm.

Portable gasoline generators work well as a quick solution to roll out during an outage. Generally, a portable unit is low maintenance, but Generac Power Systems reminds users that they should check and run their generator and even refresh the tank of gasoline to be ready for the season. Additionally, Generac advises on portable generator safety: these units need to be taken outside and kept far away from an opening to the home to keep carbon monoxide fumes outside.

A more complete option is a permanently installed home standby generator. A Generac home standby



### For safety's sake, prepare now for rough weather to come.

unit is connected to a home's existing natural gas or propane line, turning on automatically when utility power fails. Unlike portable generators, home standby generators must be professionally installed and sized to fit the home, so homeowners should allow time for an installation process.

### Prepare your winter preparedness kit

In addition to having emergency backup power, homeowners should also have a winter emergency kit ready to go in case of a storm. Here's a list of some items to be sure to include:

- A working carbon monoxide detector
- Gas to run generator
- Extension cord
- Water—one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food—at least a three-day supply of nonperishable food
- Can opener
- Flashlight
- First aid kit
- Extra batteries
- Prescription medication
- Shovel—to create a safe space for the generator outdoors.
- Rubbing alcohol—for use as a deicer
- Fire extinguisher
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children.