

# PROTECTING YOUR HOME

## When Thunderstorms Cause Utility Outages

(NAPSA)—Now that thunderstorm season is upon us it is important to know what to do if a storm causes a power outage. The lightning, hail, flooding and high winds that thunderstorms can bring may lead to power blackouts and other service disturbances that can last from a few hours to several weeks.

These tips may help you deal with the unexpected effects of a bad storm:

**If You Have No Water**—Call the public works office or town hall to report the issue. Keep bottled water for an emergency. Count on about a gallon of water per person per day, and extra if you have pets. Fill the tub and spare containers with water for sanitation uses. A pail of water poured into the bowl can flush a toilet.

**If You Smell Gas**—Leave your house immediately and dial 911 from a cell phone or neighbor's house. Also, do not operate electrical appliances or switches and don't light a match or smoke.

**If You Lose Power**—Keep the refrigerator door closed to help keep cold air trapped inside. Food can stay cold in a refrigerator for up to 24 hours and in a freezer for up to 48 hours.

- Keep a flashlight in each room of your house along with spare batteries. A battery-powered radio can also prove useful in providing updated weather conditions and emergency information.

- Protect against voltage surges when the power is restored by unplugging sensitive electronic equipment, or better yet guard



**A permanently installed automatic standby generator can help guard against power outages caused by thunderstorms.**

against power outages and surges altogether with a permanently installed, automatic standby power generator.

These generators will automatically come on when the power goes out and shut off when the power comes back on. Plus, the American Red Cross says permanently installed stationary generators are better suited for providing backup power to a home than portables.

You can find permanently installed generators such as the Generac Guardian series that offer the highest output of any generator of their kind starting under \$2,000. They run on natural gas or liquid propane vapor and have no extension cords to plug in, gas tanks to fill or switches to flip.

Considering that power outages can cause food to spoil, security systems to shut down and sump pumps to fail, the right generator could be a wise investment.

For more information, visit [www.generac.com](http://www.generac.com).