

Generator Safety and Use



Stay safe with generators

MainPower is committed to providing a safe and reliable electricity supply to all customers, however it is impossible to guarantee an uninterrupted supply of power. This fact sheet is designed to inform you about using generators safely in the event of a power outage.



Portable Generator

From time to time, your power supply may be interrupted. This can happen because of wind or snow storms, or due to planned maintenance on the network.

Portable generators (stand-alone type not requiring an electrician) can be useful to maintain critical 'plug-in' type appliances until power is restored.

Generators may be hazardous if used incorrectly. The following tips—and detailed understanding of your specific generator's instructions—can help avoid dangerous situations.

General Safety Tips

- Don't trust your senses to protect you from the carbon monoxide produced by running the generator. When buying a generator, it is recommended to also buy a battery-operated carbon monoxide alarm. This works like a smoke alarm and will sound an alert if carbon monoxide levels become dangerous.
- Think about your neighbours; a running generator can be loud so try to locate it where it will cause least disturbance.

Tips for Portable Generators

- Don't plug a generator directly into your home's wiring. Power from a generator connected to a home's wiring will 'back feed' into power lines, potentially causing a safety hazard for you, your family, neighbours, and MainPower staff, and causing possible damage to your generator when mains power is restored.

- Appliances can be plugged directly into the generator but always read the manufacturer's instructions carefully.
- Use a heavy-duty extension cord rated for outdoor use.
- Always follow the manufacturer's recommendations for earthing the generator (where specified).
- As petrol and diesel-powered generators produce deadly carbon monoxide fumes, always run portable generators outside the house—never inside or in a garage. Keep generators well away from open windows so deadly exhaust does not enter the home.

What will a small generator run?

- Each generator has a rated wattage which provides a limit on the appliances it will safely power.
- Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for proper use and capacity and don't try to connect lots of appliances at once.
- Rotate the use of larger items. This allows the use of a smaller generator which costs less to buy and is easier to move.
- Overloading the generator can result in damage to appliances it is powering.

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Stand-by Generators

Stand-by Generators

Stand-by generators are designed to provide large amounts of power and are typically used in a business or commercial operation. An electrician is required to connect a stand-by generator directly to the businesses electrical system.

Remember

- A licensed electrician must connect the generator and alter the wiring as necessary.
- Installations have either an automatic or manual changeover switch that disconnects the incoming mains and couples the generator to the installation wiring. This changeover must occur to stop electricity feeding back into MainPower lines and putting the lives of line workers at risk.
- Connected loads must not exceed the maximum rating of the generator. To limit the load to the maximum load rating of the generator, the installation wiring is split into essential and non-essential sections so that only the essential loads are supplied by the generator.
- To make sure that you are not billed for using the generator, the connection must be on the installation side of the energy meter. Generators designed to start automatically in the event of a power cut should be test-run on load at periodic intervals. The best way to ensure that a generator will start and changeover if the mains fails is to turn off the building main switch. Generators should be regularly serviced by a specialist company.

How MainPower can help

We can assist customers affected by an outage by:

- Estimating the required size of the generator
- Connecting the generator to the supply
- Disconnecting the generator from the supply

Contact details:

mainpower.co.nz
info@mainpower.co.nz
0800 30 90 80

Need a generator?

The following hire companies service North Canterbury.

Aggreko – Phone 03 344 1500.
39 Braeburn Drive, Hornby, Christchurch.

Amberley Hire & Landscape Supplies –
Phone 03 314 8665.
15 Markham Street, Amberley.

Hirepool – Phone 03 313 4518.
1 Ryans Place, Rangiora.

Kaikōura Hire Company – Phone 03 319 7183.
170 Beach Road, Kaikōura.

Rangiora Hire – Phone 03 313 7080.
19 Southbrook Road, Rangiora.

Smiths Hire – Phone 03 323 8029.
1190 Main North Road, Belfast, Christchurch.

Southbrook Hire – Phone 03 313 7336.
12 Newnham Street, Rangiora.