

## Power Outages

Power outages are often unexpected. Depending on the type of work environment and the size, proper protocol for power outages will vary—the loss of power in a large commercial building will have a far different effect on employees compared to those in a small one-story establishment. However, an outage can still induce panic and wreak havoc on an operation without a contingency plan in place.

No matter where you work, following are tips for preparing your business for an electrical outage:

- Determine which supplies and equipment will be affected by an outage. Do certain computers or servers that contain critical information require backup? Does your operation need essential equipment to keep running during an outage? If so, make sure backup systems are installed.
- Flashlights or other illuminating devices should also be easily accessible. Enough batteries should also be safely stowed away.
- Have a battery powered radio handy to ensure you can hear the latest emergency news or information.
- Ensure staff knows how to manually open any electronic doors.
- Make sure you have a first aid kit that is fully stocked and also easily accessible during an outage.
- When an outage does occur, turn off any other non-essential electrical equipment: copiers, fax machines, coffee makers, printers, etc. When the power is restored, it will lessen the load of the electrical system.
- Communicate and practice emergency plans.

## Safely Operating Generators

During an outage, many businesses utilize generators to maintain a constant supply of power. Before using your generator, make sure it's properly sized and installed. If a generator is improperly installed, it can send an electrical back feed into the power lines, creating a hazardous situation.

When using a backup generator, make sure you...

- Have a trained and qualified electrician install it
- Ensure that the main circuit breaker is OFF and locked out prior to starting the generator. This will help protect utility workers from possible electrocution.



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