Everyday Safety

*Tailgate Talks*

**Portable Generator Safety**

*This Everyday Safety Tailgate Talk was originally published as part of the May 2018 training*

*series “The Safety Pins” by Phillip E. Spiezio, Washington County Safety Officer*

Portable generators can be a very useful piece of equipment during a power outage. Portable generators can also be very dangerous. If you plan on using a portable generator, it is essential that you take proper precautions for your safety and the safety of those working to restore the power.

Here are a few tips that will help you use a portable generator safely:

* Always read and follow the manufacturer’s operating instructions before running your generator.
* Generators emit carbon monoxide. Never use your generator inside your home, garage, or any other confined, enclosed area.
* Operate generators away from open windows, vents, or doors.
* Never operate a generator near combustible materials.
* Maintain your generator according to the manufacturer’s maintenance schedule.
* Gasoline vapors are extremely flammable. Allow the generator to cool at least a few minutes

before attempting to refuel.

* Never plug your generator directly into your home outlet. If you are connecting a generator to your home electrical system, be sure to install a power transfer switch.
* If you have to use extension cords, be sure that they are the grounded type and are rated for

the specific application.

* Coiled electrical cords can get extremely hot; always uncoil cords and lay them in flat open areas.
* Generators produce powerful voltage – Take precautions to protect your generator from exposure to rain and snow.
* Use caution - Be sure to not overload your generator.



*Everyday Safety Tailgate Talks are published by the Cornell Local Roads Program in cooperation with the National Local Technical Assistance Association and participating partner organizations.*

***Resources and References:***

OSHA Portable Generator Grounding Requirements

[*https://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data\_Hurricane\_Facts/grounding\_port\_generator*](http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_Hurricane_Facts/grounding_port_generator.html)*.html*

OSHA Portable Generator Fact Sheet URL

[*https://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data\_Hurricane\_Facts/portable\_generator\_safety*](http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_Hurricane_Facts/portable_generator_safety.pdf)*.pdf*

OSHA Portable Generator Safety Webpage

[*https://www.osha.gov/Publications/3277-10N-05-english-06-27-2007.html*](http://www.osha.gov/Publications/3277-10N-05-english-06-27-2007.html)

# Date: / /

**“Portable Generator Safety” Sign In Sheet:**

**Name: Signature:**