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Use Caution With Portable Generators

Many Southwest Florida residents use portable electric generators to power their homes during electrical outages. While generators are a convenience, they can be dangerous if used improperly.

The safest way to operate a generator is to plug appliances directly into the generator. However, customers who are utilizing a back-up generator to provide electricity to their entire home must use a double throw switch to disconnect their electric service equipment from LCEC's system. This is necessary to prevent a dangerous back feed of energy into LCEC lines and equipment, which creates a hazard to residents, electrical equipment and unsuspecting line crews working in the area. If an automatic transfer system is proposed for this transfer function, the specific system must be approved by LCEC before it may be used.

Before you buy and install a generator, here are a few tips to keep in mind.

- Determine how much electricity you need for your home. You want to be sure to buy the right size generator.
- As a safety precaution, consult with an electrician before you hook up your generator.
- Be sure when you start your generator, that you place it outside where the fumes can escape without harming anyone.