

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Hurricane Prep series: LDH encourages the public to take extra precautions when using generators to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning**

Deaths from carbon monoxide exposure often spike after hurricanes and storms

Baton Rouge, La. (July 28, 2022) — With hurricane season underway, the Louisiana Department of Health reminds the public about how to safely use a generator to avoid carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning in the event of a power outage.

During 2021, CO poisoning killed 81 Louisiana residents and sent hundreds more to the hospital. Six of these deaths occurred during Hurricane Ida. Deaths from carbon monoxide exposure often spike after hurricanes and storms due to improper use of portable generators.

Known as the silent killer, CO is an odorless, colorless and tasteless gas produced when fuel is burned that can easily build up to deadly levels. CO symptoms are often described as “flu-like” and can appear as headaches, nausea, dizziness, weakness, chest pain and confusion. Breathing in too much CO can make you pass out or kill you. People who are sleeping or drunk can die from CO poisoning before they have symptoms.

The Office of the State Fire Marshal recommends the following safety tips for portable generators:

- Place generators at least 20 feet away from your home.
- Look for any air entry points into the home near your unit and ensure that those are properly closed and sealed off, such as windows or doors, air intakes, nearby dryer vents or crawl spaces.
- Install CO alarm.
- Give generators breaks that allow for any concentrated exhaust to clear away from the area.
- Open your windows and doors during this break to air out any concentration that may have collected in your home.

In addition, here are some safety tips for standby generators:

- Check the manufacturing specs to verify the installation meets those specs.
- If there's a concern that the installation standards were not met, get an appropriate party, like the installer, out to inspect it.
- Ensure your generator is being appropriately maintained, including the oil change frequency requirements.

If you think you or someone else has been exposed to carbon monoxide, move the person into fresh air and call your doctor or healthcare provider. If someone has been electrocuted, call 911 for emergency care instructions.

For more information, click [here](#).

About the Louisiana Department of Health

The Louisiana Department of Health strives to protect and promote health statewide and to ensure access to medical, preventive and rehabilitative services for all state residents. The Louisiana Department of Health includes the Office of Public Health, Office of Aging & Adult Services, Office of Behavioral Health, Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, and Healthy Louisiana (Medicaid). To learn more, visit www.ldh.la.gov or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) or our [blog](#).

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