Manager's Comments

GENERATOR SAFETY

It's the dog days of summer and hot temperatures and severe weather are common in our area. With the hurricanes that have hit south Alabama over the past few years, more and more households now have portable generators.

Although generators are beneficial when power lines are down, they can prove fatal to workers and consumers when used improperly.

At Clarke-Washington EMC, we hold our member's safety and the safety of our employees as a top priority, especially in dangerous times. When storms hit our area, we rush to your aid as soon as weather conditions permit linemen to travel and safely make repairs.

> "At Clarke-Washington EMC, we hold our member's safety and the safety of our employees as a top priority."

Clarke-Washington EMC is proud of our outstanding safety record, but sometimes, no matter the precautions we take to keep our members and workers safe, the very people we are there to help unknowingly put our lives – and their own – in danger.

Nevertheless, a generator connected to a home's wiring or plugged into a regular household outlet can cause backfeeding along powerlines and electrocute anyone who comes in contact with them — even if the line seems dead.

Generator owners are at risk of electrocution, fire injury, property damage or carbon monoxide poisoning if they do not follow the necessary safety rules.

Portable generators can be very helpful to consumers during outages, but we urge our members to follow these safety guidelines below when using them.

- Never connect a generator directly to your home's wiring. This can cause backfeeding along power lines and electrocute anyone coming in contact with them, including line workers making repairs.
- Never plug a generator into a regular household outlet. This can also cause backfeeding and pose an electrocution risk to utility workers and others served by the same utility transformer.
- Always plug appliances directly into generators. Connecting the generator to your home's circuits

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To report a power outage, call 1-800-323-9081.

Cooperatives
democracy in action

Local Page Editor,
Anna Wright

or wiring must be done by a qualified, licensed electrician who will install a transfer switch to prevent backfeeding.

- Use heavy-duty, outdoor-rated extension cords. Make sure extension cords are free of cuts or tears and the plug has all three prongs. Overloaded cords can cause fires or equipment damage.
- Make sure your generator is properly grounded.
- Never overload a generator. A portable generator should be used only when necessary and only to power essential equipment or appliances.
- Turn off all equipment powered by the generator before shutting down the generator.
- Keep the generator dry. Operate it on a dry surface under an open structure.
- Always have a fully charged fire extinguisher nearby.
- Never fuel a generator while it is operating.

Read and adhere to the manufacturer's instructions for safe operation. Never cut corners when it comes to safety.

You can help your loved ones, your neighbors and our linemen stay safe during times of severe weather and power outages.

We encourage you to protect the well-being and safety of your family during outages and at all times. We also urge you to protect our linemen who come to your aid during these emergency situations.

Linemen practice safety first

Art Dees of CWEMC Franklin office unhooks the "injured" dummy after safely removing him from the bucket of a line truck. Each year CWEMC lineman must be able to complete this exercise, among many others, to maintain their safety accreditation.

Clarke-Washington EMC linemen crew recently participated in a bucket rescue safety exercise at the Jackson and Chatom offices.

Linemen were timed on their ability to remove an "injured" dummy from the bucket of a truck.

Each lineman had to complete the exercise and have their time recorded. In a real-life situation, a person who has contacted a live electric line must be removed from the bucket of a truck, laid on the ground and have CPR administered to them within four minutes to save their life.

Every month our linemen receive safety training from Alabama Rural Electric Association. The men must complete this exercise, among many other safety exercises each year. They are always being informed on ways to keep them safe while being efficient in maintaining and restoring power lines.

Safety is crucial to the success of our cooperative. This is just one way Clarke-Washington EMC is maintaining its safety accreditation and professionalism. Safety exercises help us reach 200,000 completed safety hours. Successes like this are due to the training conducted here at our office and the priority of importance placed on safety training for employees of CWEMC

David Bryant runs to the "injured" dummy he has placed on the ground to begin administering CPR.

Generator Safety

You can use a portable generator to supply electricity to your appliances if an emergency exists during a power outage. But if used improperly they can kill you and the people who are restoring power to your building. They also can damage the appliances you connect.

Generator sizes vary. Common units can be from 8 to 14 horsepower and capable of handling from 4,000 to 8,400 watts (including starting surge requirements). Prices may range from $800 to $3,000.

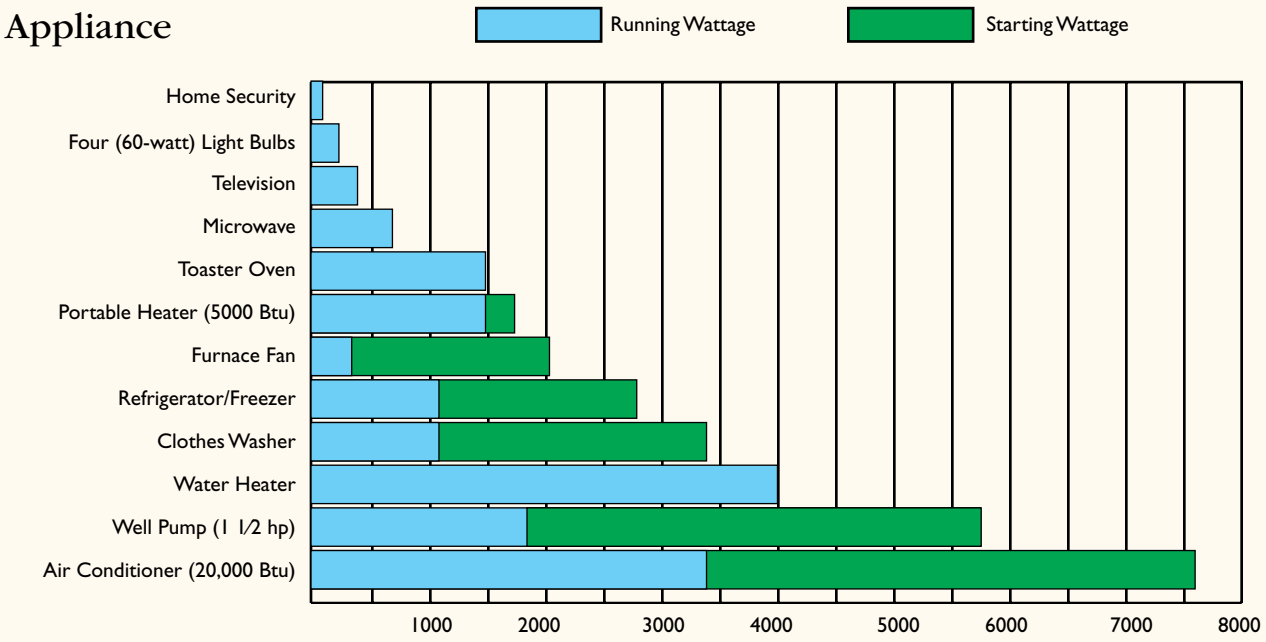
Connecting a generator to the main electrical supply for your house requires the services of a qualified, licensed electrician. Installing the connection and switch can cost $600 to $1,000.

Before connecting the generator to your household circuit, notify your electric cooperative.

Determining Wattage Requirements

Never exceed the rated capacity of your generator. Overloading can cause serious damage to the generator or appliances. Before operating a generator, list all of the appliances that are going to operate at the same time. Then determine the starting wattage requirements and the running wattage requirements. The starting load lasts only for a few seconds, but is very important when figuring your total wattage to be used. Your generator must be rated to handle the total wattage.

Ratings shown here are samples. Wattage requirements vary with different brands of appliances. Be sure to check the name plate on the appliances you plan to use. Always start your largest electric motor first, then plug in other items one at a time.



WARNING:

If you connect a portable electric generator to the main electrical supply coming into the house, the electrical generator could feed back into your electric cooperative's system and electrocute workers who are repairing the electrical lines.

To avoid backfeeding of electricity into utility systems, you must have a qualified, licensed electrician install a double-pole, double-throw transfer switch between the generator and utility power in compliance with all state and local electrical codes. (A minimum of 10-gauge wiring must be used.)

Your generator might not be large enough to handle the load of all the lights, appliances, TV, etc., at one time. To prevent dangerous overloading, calculate wattage requirements correctly.

If You Do This	This Could Happen	Unless You Prevent It
1. Attempt to connect generator directly to the electrical system of any building.	1. You can kill or injure a person repairing service lines. The electricity you generate will backfeed through the building's electrical system to the outside utility feed lines. Attempting to connect to the incoming utility service could result in electrocution. If your electric cooperative's line crew is restoring electrical service while your generator is connected to the incoming utility service, you could start a fire or seriously damage your building.	1. A qualified, licensed electrician must install a double-pole, double-throw transfer switch to connect the generator to a building's electrical system. This is required by the National Electrical Code. Connection must meet local ordinances. A minimum of 10-gauge wiring must be used.
2. Fail to ground the generator's electrical system adequately.	2. Entire generator could become electrically charged and cause electrocution.	2. Make sure that the unit is connected to an appropriate electrical ground, in accordance with the National Electric Code. Follow instructions supplied with the generator.
3. Operate generator in rain, wet, icy or flooded conditions.	3. Water conducts electricity. If water comes in contact with electricity to the generator's frame and other surfaces, it will cause an electrical shock to anyone touching them.	3. Operate generator in a clean, dry, well-ventilated area. Make sure your hands are dry.
4. Use worn damaged, undersized or ungrounded extension cords.	4. Contact with worn or damaged extension cords could cause electrocution. Undersize extension cords could overheat wires or attached items, resulting in fire. Use of ungrounded cordsets could prevent operation of circuit breakers and result in electrical shock.	4. Inspect extension cords before use and replace with new if required. Use proper size (wire gauge) cordset for application. Follow instructions supplied with your unit. Always use electrically grounded cordsets.
5. Attempt to fill the fuel tank while the engine is running.	5. Gasoline and gasoline vapors can become ignited by coming in contact with hot components such as the muffler, engine exhaust gases or from an electrical spark.	5. Turn engine off and allow it to cool before adding fuel. Make sure there's a fire extinguisher in the immediate area certified to handle gasoline or fuel fires.
6. Fail to ventilate generator by operating in an enclosed area.	6. Obstructing ventilation causes overheating and possible ignition of the materials. You will produce toxic carbon monoxide exhaust fumes from the engine. Breathing exhaust fumes will cause serious injury or death.	6. Operate generator in a clean, dry, well-ventilated area. Keep objects away from unit during operation. Do not operate unit in a confined area, such as garages, basements, storage sheds, etc., which lack a steady exchange of air. Never operate unit in a location occupied by humans or animals. Keep children, pets and others away from where it's operating.
7. Tamper with factory set engine speed settings.	7. Tampering with the engine speed adjustment could result in overheating of attachments and could cause a fire.	7. Never attempt to "speed-up" the engine to obtain more performance. Both the output voltage and frequency will be thrown out of standard by this practice, endangering you and the attachments.

Youth Tour

Local youth see the past, prepare for the future at Electric Cooperative Youth Tour

Alabama's electric cooperative youth pose for a group picture in front of the U.S. Capitol.

More than 40 high school students from Alabama's rural electric cooperatives represented our state at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's annual Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., Saturday, June 9 through Thursday, June 14.

Representing Clarke-Washington EMC was Katie Simon of Thomasville High School and Tyler Chastain of Leroy High School. They were chosen to participate in this trip by winning the Clarke-Washington EMC Youth Tour contest, held in the spring.

Their week long trip to D.C. included visits to the Iwo Jima Memorial; the WWII, Vietnam and Korean War Memorials; and the Lincoln, Jefferson and FDR Memorials all on the first day. They also toured Mount Vernon, Washington National Cathedral, the Smithsonian Institute, the U.S. Capitol, Union Station, the Pentagon and the Holocaust Museum and they watched the Changing of the Guards at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.

"Youth Tour was an awesome experience for me," Katie said. "It was inspiring to see all the historical monuments and learn more about the electric cooperative way of life. I made so many new friends and great memories. I had the time of my life."

On their visit to the Capitol Alabama U.S. Sen. Jo Bonner took time out of their busy day to meet with the group of students from Alabama. He, along with other Alabama U.S. senators and representatives talked to the students about the importance of being involved with their government on all levels.

"I was excited about the trip to D.C. before we left home, but I was blown away by how awesome and even educational this trip was," Tyler said. "Youth Tour has been an unbelievable experience. It was inspiring to see all the sites and I have made many life-long friends on this trip."

Katie Simon is the daughter of Mark and Marsha Simon of Thomasville and Tyler Chastain is the son of Greg and Becky Chastain of Leroy.

Tyler Chatain of Leroy High School and Katie Simon of Thomasville High School pose on the steps of the U.S. Capitol during their visit to Washington D.C.