

# Ameren issues power outage and generator safety tips before possible winter storm

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**GODFREY - Ameren Illinois** has issued several safety tips for possible power outages, which may be caused by a predicted ice storm Friday, including tips for generator users.

In a release from Ameren Illinois, the company advises people to remember the following in a power outage:

- Turn off lights and unplug appliances to prevent damage and overloading circuits once the power is restored.
- Keep faucets on at a drip to prevent pipes from freezing
- Dress warm and in layers
- Close doors to unused rooms in the house
- Be cautious when using alternative heat sources and keep rooms properly ventilated.
- Block cold air from coming in by stuffing towels underneath doors.
- Ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) for electrical outlets can help prevent injuries and electrocutions when installed in areas that may be affected by melting snow or ice
- If using a generator, be sure to keep the unit outside the home.

If such a portable generator is put into use, Ameren Illinois has issued a list of safety tips for their proper use as well. Those include the following:

- Carefully read and follow the instructions for proper connection and use of a permanent or portable standby generator. You are required by law to ensure that no electricity from your standby power generator backfeeds into Ameren's power lines during an outage.
- Proper installation of a generator is critical. Improper use cannot only damage your equipment or electrical system, but also potentially result in injury or death to those who use them and to utility workers.
- Do not directly connect a portable generator with your electrical system. A direct connection could result in voltage on utility lines and presents a significant safety concern for utility workers and generator owners. Contact a qualified professional for connections of this type.
- Ensure that the total electric load on your generator will not exceed the manufacturer's rating.
- Never use a portable generator indoors. Place a portable generator outdoors in a dry area far away from doors, windows and vents.
- Exercise extreme caution when handling fuel for portable generators. Do not attempt to refuel your generator while it is running. Let the generator cool down before adding fuel.