



Generator Exhaust Fumes

SP Energy Networks use portable generators during faults to maintain customers supply whilst repairs are being completed.

Any combustion appliance including portable generators that burn fossil fuels can emit carbon monoxide gas.

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colourless, odourless, tasteless, poisonous gas that can cause death or serious harm.

Recent incidents have highlighted generators being positioned close to air brick/vents, windows and windows with open 'trickle vents'. The hazards associated with the use of a portable generator specifically the potential for emitting carbon monoxide had not been identified on the START risk assessment. It is essential the location of the generator is assessed to ensure it does not introduce a hazard.

A warning label (see Fig.2) should be affixed to portable generators to remind users of the hazards from the exhaust.



Fig.1 Portable Generator



Fig.2 Exhaust Warning Label

Recommendations and action points

- The safety of the customer and other members of the public shall be considered before installation of a generator. A site specific risk assessment shall be carried out and recorded using the START.
- Generators must be positioned to keep exhaust fumes away from any possible entry point to buildings such as windows (open or closed), doors, air vents, flues etc.
- Consider public access (slips, trips and falls) with respect to temporary cables.
- Ensure generators are positioned away from open water courses and drains where practicable.
- Only use generators that have been inspected and maintained