

Portable generators need maintenance

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As Tropical Depression 18W sideswipes Guam with possible 55 mph winds tomorrow, island residents may have to pull out the portable generators that have been collecting dust since the last super-typhoon hit in 2002.

Even if this tropical storm misses Guam, the first thing Guam residents should do is test their generators monthly, according to Jeff Paeste, operations manager at JMI Edison. He said people often forget about generators until there's a power outage, but generators, like cars, require consistent maintenance.

"Check the fuel levels just as much as you would your car," Paeste said.

If it's been sitting, crank it and run it for 10 to 15 minutes, he said.

To store the generator, Tanks-A-Lot owner Wally Tranowski said residents should drain all gas out of the carburetor, change the oil, wrap it up in a tarp and store it in a dry place.

And don't cut corners if you're purchasing your first portable generator. Paeste said generators bought for a cheaper price online may not meet Environmental Protection Agency standards, and if EPA finds out, the resident cannot use the generator at all.

"Buy it from a local distributor so if anything happens, you have a finger to point," Paeste said. "Do your homework."

Assess your family's power needs. To run a basic washing machine, refrigerator and a few lights, a 10-kilowatt is enough, he said. But

BE STORM READY

Basic Disaster Supplies Water

▲ You should have at least a three-day supply of water and you should store at least one gallon of water per person per day. A normally active person needs at least one-half gallon of water daily just for drinking.

▲ To keep water safe, keep bottled water in its original container and do not open it until you need to use it.

Food

Store at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food. Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking and little or no water. Avoid foods that will make you thirsty. Choose salt-free crackers, whole grain cereals and canned foods with high liquid content. Be sure to include a manual can opener.

BEFORE A STORM

Securing your home

▲ **Seepage:** Cover beds and other items with plastic to protect from water seeping in around windows and doors.

▲ **Surge:** Use surge protectors on major appliances and phone lines to avoid power spikes.

▲ **Kit:** Stock up on supplies such as candles, batteries, fuel for stoves and lanterns, toiletries and disposable plates and flatware.

▲ **Organize:** Arrange flashlights, lanterns, candles and lighters in places where adults can easily find them.

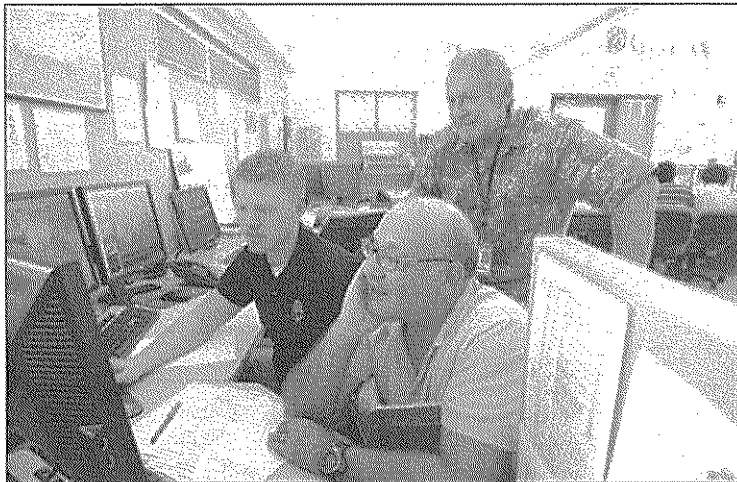
▲ **Water:** Have several gallons of purified water on hand.

▲ **Debris:** Secure all loose items such as garbage can lids, potted plants, gardening tools and other materials that could become airborne during high winds.

▲ **Tin:** Tie down tin-covered roof extensions with cables.

if your family requires an air conditioning to be on most of the time for the entire house, Tranowski suggested a 25-kilowatt generator.

"Some people make a mistake of



Masako Watanabe/Pacific Daily News/mwatanabe@guampdn.com

Keeping watch: National Weather Service Warning Coordination Meteorologist Charles "Chip" Guard, top; science and operations officer Roger Edson, front right, and intern Derek Williams work on an advisory at the Weather Forecast Office in Tiyan yesterday.



▲ **Flood:** Do not put valuable items and appliances on ground level to protect them from any flooding.

▲ **Power:** Have the main breaker or fuse box and the utility meters raised above the flood level for your area. This way, if your home floods, water will not damage your utilities.

▲ **Buy typhoon insurance:** If you have one, make sure it is current.

Securing your car

▲ **Fuel:** Fill your vehicles' tanks with gas. During Super-typhoon Pongsona in

December 2002, a fuel tank farm caught fire and burned for days, resulting in a shortage of gasoline.

10- or 15-kilowatts to run an AC, but it's a gas guzzler," Tranowski said.

Also, make sure spare parts are available on island, Tranowski said

December 2002, a fuel tank farm caught fire and burned for days, resulting in a shortage of gasoline.

▲ **Cover:** If you do not have a covered garage, move your vehicle away from trees or structures that may topple or collapse.

▲ **Insurance:** Check with your insurance provider if typhoon damage is covered. If you paid for a premium that covers only liability, it is likely you do not have typhoon insurance coverage.

Securing your business

▲ **Contact:** Keep emergency phone numbers on-hand. Business owners should designate a contact person who will communicate with other employees, customers and suppliers.

▲ **Windows:** Install storm shutters

over all exposed windows and other glass surfaces in the home or business. Plywood shutters — 1/2-inch marine plywood — can also offer protection from flying debris.

▲ **Records:** Keep financial records and other documents in a fire- and weather-proof location. If they're in a computer, make sure you have backup files.

▲ **Inventory:** Move your business inventory and equipment to a place that will keep it safe from rain and flooding.

▲ **Online resource:** More disaster-readiness tips are available on the U.S. Small Business Administration Web site: www.sba.gov/disaster.

HANDLING GENERATORS SAFELY

▲ Service and check regularly in advance.

▲ Do not run it inside the house or near a door. Fumes can cause carbon monoxide poisoning.

▲ Keep a fire extinguisher handy.

▲ Install it facing away from windows where neighbors may get the fumes.

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ON THE NET

▲ For more storm readiness information, go to www.GuamPDN.com.

STAY INFORMED

Get weather updates by logging on to:

▲ **Pacific Daily News:** www.GuamPDN.com

▲ **National Weather Service Forecast Office, Guam:** www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

▲ **Guam Homeland Security/Office of Civil Defense:** www.guamhs.org/main

from getting stolen.

"First and foremost, find a place where no one can find it," Paeste said. "Lock it up."

the Honda or Briggs & Stratton parts are more readily available than the Makita make that is found on base.

Above all, secure your portable generator with a chain to keep it