

how to:



Power Uncertainty

INSTALLING A BACK-UP GENERATOR

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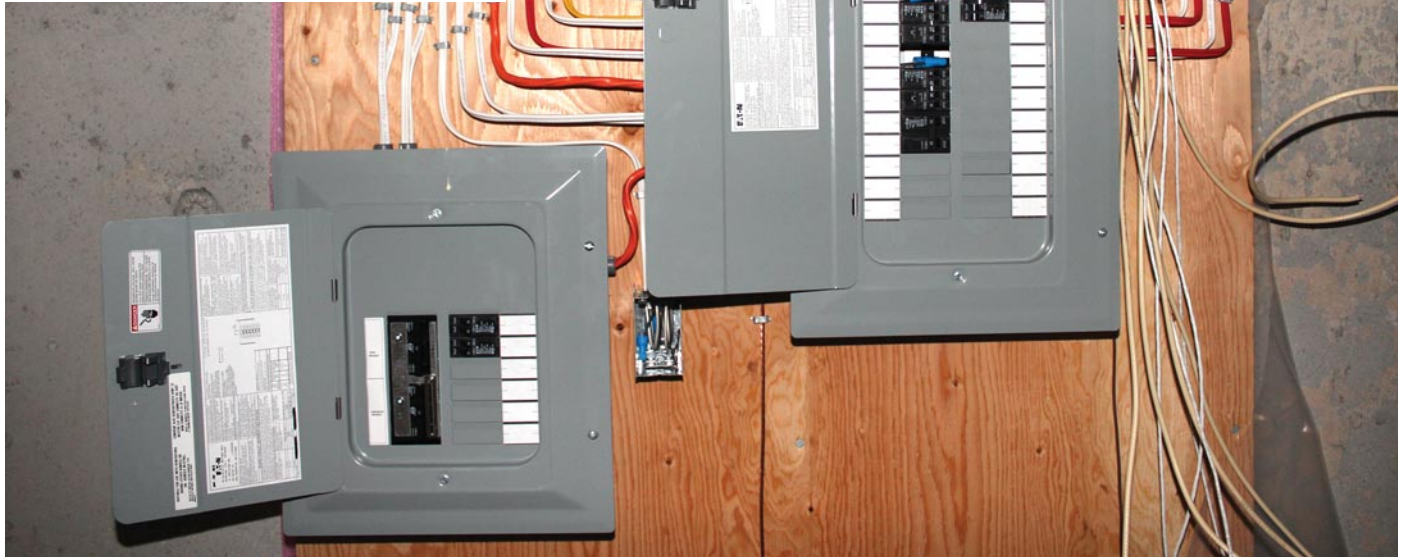


We've all been privy in recent years to severe weather systems that seem to be packing a bigger punch.

Power outages are a little more frequent and tend to be lasting longer. We hear news reports of utility companies caught off guard or struggling to keep antiquated equipment at generating facilities up and running. These are some of the reasons being cited by homeowners in deciding to integrate a back-up power system to their home.

The reality is that in this day and age, we are more reliant on electricity than ever before with state-of-the-art appliances and an insatiable desire for technology. Loss of power for more than a couple of hours seems to be a huge inconvenience, as well as a huge safety concern for our senior citizens. I've gone without power, and I'm sure I'm not alone here. Oddly enough, I found this to be fun at one point. "Don't worry I got this!" I say to my wife as I head off to the garage where all the man tools are kept. "It'll be like camping!" Gas up the generator and before you know it there's a spider web of extension cords running in through the window to power up whatever you can. What a mess, and it's happening way too often to be fun anymore! So

A electrical sub-panel would allow easy switchover between your generator and the city power supply.



what can we as homeowners do to prepare for future power outages?

Mervin House, a Code 1 Certified Journeyman Electrician, and owner/operator of D&S Electrical in Paradise, explains a couple of available options and how they work. In an effort to get back-up power running quickly with little set up and no extension cords, Mervin suggests installing a manual transfer switch along with a separate 30-40 AMP breaker panel that is integrated with the main panel. During a power outage this sub-panel effectively isolates circuits and allows pre-selected circuits in the home separate from the main panel to be operational by use of an external 5,000 - 6,000watt/240 volt generator. This type of set-up would allow you to turn on selected lights, power your refrigerator or microwave oven, as well as access a few plugs for operation of essential appliances such as a sump-pump, TV, cable, and Internet use. We should note here that this set-up will not allow electrical heat to be operational. Provisions for

heat, such as a wood or gas-fueled fireplace, would be an excellent complement to preparedness through a prolonged outage.

GenerLink offers a relatively low cost device that attaches directly to the meter base outside your home and is approved for use by Newfoundland Power. This device automatically disconnects your house from the local electrical grid when connected to a generator, preventing the possibility of electrical feedback that can damage costly equipment and be harmful to utility personnel once power is restored. This system gives the homeowner the ability to manually switch up the combination of circuitry in demand as required.

Both are excellent options, but please keep safety in mind first! These are not DIY projects. Both options here require installation by a certified electrician, permits have to be pulled, and it is essential that you fully understand how your back-up system works – both its capabilities and limitations. Also, never use a generator inside your home. 🏠

