

GENERATOR

Buyer's Guide



Buying the right natural gas standby generator for your home

Purchasing a generator is an investment in your comfort and peace of mind. Here are answers to common questions to help you make the best generator choice for your power needs.

Why does the participating dealer need to come to my home?

A participating dealer must visually inspect your property to determine the best location to install your generator. Keep in mind:

- The closer the generator is to your gas and electric meters, the easier the installation and the lower the installation cost. But gas and electric meters are not always conveniently located next to each other.
- National electric and gas codes, city building codes and easements on your location may impact your decision.
- Homeowner Association requirements for property improvements, if applicable, must be taken into account.

What are your power priorities?

Now that you know where you want to locate the generator, you need to determine the size. Generators are rated in kilowatts (KW) — the higher the KW, the more powerful the generator. They can power your whole house, including the air conditioner or just a few dedicated circuits. The choice is yours, but it starts with a load analysis by a participating dealer. Before you meet with the dealer, ask yourself:

- How important is it to run the air conditioner during an outage, considering that heat and humidity can increase rapidly?
- What about food and medicines that require refrigeration, or power-assisted devices in the home?
- How long can you or your kids live without electronics or cell phones and other devices that need charging?
- Do you have a home office?
- Do you have a water well that runs on electricity?

You can use the table below to help ballpark the right size generator for your home or business. However, there's no substitute for a load analysis by a knowledgeable professional like a participating dealer to make sure you get the right-sized generator.

YOUR ELECTRICAL NEEDS	8-14 KW	15-25 KW	26-48 KW	49-150KW
Furnace Fan	X	X	X	For greater than 200-amp service in larger homes and small businesses
Refrigerator/Freezer	X	X	X	
Sump Pump	X	X	X	
Lighting	X	X	X	
Well Pump	X	X	X	
Television/Radio	X	X	X	
Computer	X	X	X	
Garage Door Opener	X	X	X	
Security System		X	X	
Central A/C System		X	X	
Water Heater		X	X	
Washing Machine		X	X	
Electric Range		X	X	
Clothes Dryer			X	
Dishwasher			X	
Microwave Oven			X	
Toaster Oven			X	
Extensive Power Requirements			X	

What is the Automatic Transfer Switch (ATS)?

A natural gas generator senses a power outage and restores power to your home within seconds. It's automatic — you don't lift a finger. Here's how it works:

- ATS detects an outage and disconnects your home from utility power.
- ATS starts the generator, which supplies clean power to the items you selected to power up, quickly and seamlessly.
- Once utility power is restored, the process is basically reversed, and your natural gas generator cools down and turns off.

Isn't a gasoline generator good enough?

Gasoline generators don't have the generating capacity of natural gas generators and can't power your whole house and the air conditioner.

Also, gasoline generators:

- Require constant refueling, which means carrying gasoline cans in the rain or dark and finding an open gas station during a major event.
- Don't start automatically and are noisy.

Cost considerations.

A typical 20KW generator installation can range from \$8,000 to \$12,000, but the installed costs are largely driven by the location and size of the generator.

- The more pipe or electric wiring needed to connect the generator to your home's gas meter and electric panel, the more it costs to install. Be sure to ask the dealer about upgrading your gas meter to ensure adequate pressure for all your natural gas appliances.
- The same is true of generating capacity — the more power you need, the more the generator can cost.

The site visit advantage: Balancing power and budgeting needs

- Talk to your dealer about whole-house generation and managed whole-house generation solutions.
- Managed whole-house allows for load shedding so that noncritical loads don't operate when critical higher-wattage loads like an air conditioner are starting up.
- In some cases, a managed whole-house solution could allow for the installation of a smaller KW generator.

What are the steps to install a generator?

- **Site visit:** Your participating dealer will contact you to perform a free site visit to determine the best location for the generator based on code requirements, costs, and your preferences.

- **Permits:** Generator installation cannot begin without obtaining the proper permits (electrical, plumbing, building, site survey and homeowner association (HOA) – if necessary). Your participating dealer will obtain all the necessary permits with your help prior to starting the installation of the generator.
- **Installation of the home generator and automatic transfer switch (ATS):** The installation team will place the generator onto the base so the plumber can connect the natural gas line and the electrician can complete the installation of the generator and ATS. Once the electric and natural gas lines are hooked up to the generator, it is ready for testing.
- **Final inspection:** If you live in a permitted area, your municipality will conduct a final site inspection. Once approved, the paperwork is sent to CenterPoint Energy for finalization.
- **Gas Meter upgrade:** The permits and inspection paperwork is sent to CenterPoint Energy by the participating dealer, notifying them that the permitting process was approved. CenterPoint Energy will provide you with your meter upgrade to complete the home generator installation. (There is a fee charged for the meter upgrade.)

What about service and maintenance?

The generator is powered by an engine not unlike your car, except that it burns natural gas instead of gasoline. Like your car, periodic maintenance is the key to keeping your generator in peak operating condition so it's there when you need it. Ask a participating dealer about maintenance and service plans.

Exclusive discounts for CenterPoint Energy customers

Our participating dealers offer discounts on the generator purchase based on the KW rating and other limited time offers available through the dealers or KOHLER®.

For more information, visit [CenterPointEnergy.com/Generator](https://www.CenterPointEnergy.com/Generator) or call **855-713-POWR** (7697).

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**Natural Gas
Generator Program**

