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## Press Release

### **Safeguard Your Home against Power Outages Generators Provide Safety and Comfort in Emergencies**

Albany, NY – August 20, 2008 – The 2008 hurricane season is proving to be a memorable one, as thunderstorms producing damaging winds and large hail continue to slam parts of New York. In June, a line of storms that cascaded through northern New York downed trees and power lines, causing massive power outages, hurling the region into a state of emergency. According to the New York State Department of Public Service, from 2002 through 2006 there were over 77,000 power interruptions each year throughout the state, affecting more than 6.5 million customers.

Power outages are fairly common and are on the rise, in part due to an ever-increasing commercial demand for power and limited resources to meet that growing demand. And it may get worse. Some scientists warn that global warming could increase the frequency and intensity of these storms.

"Whether it lasts for several hours or several days, a power outage can damage home appliances, cause food spoilage and even put a family's safety at risk," said Barbara Roach, executive director of the New York Propane Gas Association (NYPGA).

But the concerns don't stop there. Roach added, "Outages can keep sump pumps from working, damage electric wells and water purifiers—and compromise medical equipment." With more of the workforce working at home offices, extended power loss can have a devastating impact on small businesses.

A survey conducted by the Propane Education and Research Council (PERC) reported that most households expected to lose electricity for 24 hours or more during the storm season—yet only 20 percent of the residents owned a generator (66 percent portable, 25 percent standby). One in three customers surveyed nationally say an extended loss of power would result in some financial loss. A major concern, especially among older residents, was the loss of contact and communication via television, computer, and phone service.

When the power goes out, take precautions to ensure your safety and comfort. *(See sidebar, Be Prepared for the Worst.)*

#### **A FOOLPROOF SOLUTION**

So how can New York State residents better prepare for a major power outage? More consumers are turning to standby generators when electricity fails. By 2010 the market for standby generators is projected to grow 75 percent, driven largely by weather-related power outages.

"Given the increasing frequency of power outages, homeowners should be thinking about both their immediate needs as well as solutions that can keep their families, homes, and possessions safe for the long-term," said Robert Warner, president of NYPGA. "A propane-powered standby generator provides a continuous source of electricity when the power grid fails."

#### **NYPGA – Standby Generators**

PO Box 760, Clifton Park, NY 12065 ♦ [www.nypropane.com](http://www.nypropane.com)

"The devices are wired directly into a home's circuit breaker box and turn on automatically whenever there's an outage," said Warner. "Unlike a portable generator, you don't have to worry about hooking it into your home's electrical system during an emergency."

A propane generator provides power to all pre-designated equipment. Forty-five gallons of propane will keep an eight-kilowatt generator running at full load for up to 24 hours—enough electricity to run a gas furnace, fan, space heater, sump pump, water heater, microwave oven, and TV.

### **STANDBY VERSUS PORTABLE GENERATORS**

Propane standby generators connect directly to existing gas lines. Homeowners have a worry-free backup power source which, unlike diesel fuel and gasoline, is environmentally safe to store.

Propane generators run longer than those powered by other types of fuel. And, homeowners can store the propane in underground tanks that protect the fuel from the elements, making it readily available. A generator can pay for itself in the event of a single power loss.

While portable generators supply electricity to selected appliances through extension cords, standby generators are permanently installed and are designed to automatically turn on in the case of a power outage ensuring that the impact of any power loss is minimized.

For more information, visit [www.nypropane.com](http://www.nypropane.com)

### **About the New York Propane Gas Association (NYPGA)**

NYPGA is a member-focused trade organization providing services that communicate, educate, and promote the propane industry in New York. The association was formed in 1948, to offer opportunities to learn through training and networking with peers, and to aid with legislative issues that contribute to operating a safe and successful industry.

### **SIDEBAR: Be Prepared for the Worst**

#### **Before a power outage**

- Register life-sustaining medical equipment with your utility company.
- Make sure you have light sticks, flashlights, battery-powered radio with extra batteries and a wind-up clock.
- Have a corded telephone available —cordless phones will not work.
- Know how to disengage your automatic garage door opener so you can enter/exit.

#### **During a power outage**

- Turn off lights and electrical appliances except for refrigerator and freezer. Leave one lamp on so you will know when power is restored.
- Unplug computers and other sensitive equipment to protect them from possible surges.
- Conserve water, especially if you use well water.
- Never use gas ovens, gas ranges, lanterns, barbecues, or construction heaters for indoor heating.
- If you're using a kerosene heater, maintain proper ventilation at all times to avoid a build-up of carbon monoxide.
- Avoid candles, if possible. It's better to use battery-operated flashlights or glow sticks for lighting.

- Stay away from downed power lines and sagging trees with broken limbs.
- Use and store food carefully to prevent food borne illness when refrigeration is not available.
- Throw out meat, seafood, dairy products and cooked food that do not feel cold.

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