

# AFTER THE STORM



The Minnesota Department of Public Safety State Fire Marshal Division and Office of Pipeline Safety, along with your local fire department, encourages you to use the following safety tips to prevent fires during or after a tornado or damaging storm.

## Fire Related Hazards Present During and After a Tornado



- Leaking gas lines, damaged propane containers and leaking vehicle gas tanks may explode or ignite.
- Debris can easily ignite, especially if electrical wires are severed.
- Appliances and pools of water can be electrically charged.
- Generators that are not properly used and maintained can be very hazardous.
- Alternative heating devices used incorrectly create fire hazards.
- Appliances that emit smoke or sparks should be repaired or replaced.

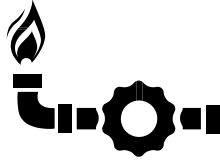
## Generator Safety

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions when using generators.
- Use the appropriate size and type of power cord to carry the electric load. Overloaded cords can overheat and cause fires.
- Shut off generators when refueling.
- Never run cords under rugs or carpets where heat might build up or damage to a cord may go unnoticed.



- Use generators or other fuel-powered machines outside the home only. CO fumes are odorless and can quickly overwhelm you indoors.
- Never connect a generator to another power source such as a power line. The reverse flow of electricity or 'backfeed' can electrocute an unsuspecting utility worker.

## Utility Safety



- Be careful when removing debris to keep from exposing electrical wires or gas pipes.
- Contact the utility company to disconnect the electrical or gas supply before making repairs involving those services.
- **CALL BEFORE YOU DIG!** Make sure underground gas lines have been located and marked before you start digging.
- Smell and listen for leaky gas connections. If you believe there is a gas leak, immediately leave the house and leave the door(s) open.
- Never strike a match. Any size flame can spark an explosion.
- Before turning the gas back on, have the gas system checked by a professional.

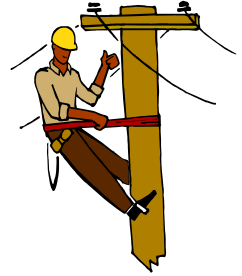
## Chemical Safety



- Look for combustible liquids like gasoline, lighter fluid, and paint thinner that may have spilled. Thoroughly clean the spill and place containers in a well-ventilated area.
- Keep combustible liquids away from heat sources.
- Pesticides, insecticides, and other chemicals are often stored in garages; watch for dangerous chemicals and handle them safely when cleaning up garages and storage sheds.

## Electrical Safety

- Assume all wires on the ground are electrically charged. This includes cable TV feeds.
- Look for and replace frayed or cracked extension and appliance cords, loose prongs, and plugs.
- Exposed outlets and wiring could present a fire or electrocution hazard.
- Appliances that emit smoke or sparks should be repaired or replaced.
- Have a licensed electrician check your home for damage.



## and Remember...

- Dress appropriately; storms can leave dangerous pieces of glass, nails, construction debris, and sharp objects that can cause injuries. Wear proper footwear, eye protection, and gloves.
- Be careful when using candles. Keep them away from combustible objects and out of the reach of children.
- Use flashlights instead of candles.
- Some smoke alarms are tied into your home's electrical service and don't work during a power outage. Check to see if your smoke alarm uses a back-up battery and install a new battery at least once a year.
- If there is a fire hydrant near your home, keep it clear of debris for easy access by the fire department.

