

City of Bristol Tennessee

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, March 13, 2013

CONTACTS: Jack Spurgeon, Asst. Chief
Bristol Fire Department
Phone: 423-989-5701
E-Mail: jspurgeon@bristoltn.org

Stop a Portable Generator Fire Before It Starts

Cool weather and race fans set to move into Bristol

Spring is almost here, the weather is cool and race fans are coming to town. As usual, many race fans will be utilizing portable generators while staying at the campgrounds around Bristol Motor Speedway. "Generators are a great piece of equipment when used properly and when the right precautions are taken," stated Jack Spurgeon, Asst. Chief at the Bristol TN Fire Department. "One of the most overlooked problems is carbon monoxide poisoning that can occur when using a generator." The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reports that the amount of exhaust from one generator is equivalent to that of hundreds of idling cars.

Below are helpful safety tips offered by local fire officials:

- Always use generators outside and away from doors, windows and vents. NEVER use generators inside buildings, campers, or partially enclosed areas, even with ventilation.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for use.
- Keep the generator dry. Place the generator on a dry surface under an open, canopy-like structure.
- Dry your hands before touching the generator.
- Plug appliances directly into the generator or use a heavy-duty outdoor-rated extension cord. Make sure the entire extension cord is free of cuts or tears and the plug has all three prongs; especially a grounding pin.
- NEVER plug the generator into a wall outlet. This can cause utility workers and others using the same transformer to receive a shock resulting in severe injuries or death.
- Before refueling the generator, turn it off and let it cool. Fuel spilled on hot engine parts could burst into flames.
- Store fuel outside the living areas in clearly labeled, non-glass containers, away from fuel-burning appliances.
- Put battery-operated or plug-in (with battery backup) carbon monoxide alarms in your camper and follow the detector manufacturer's instructions. Test carbon monoxide detectors often.

Fire officials also suggest that everyone be familiar with and be able to recognize the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning. Symptoms may include headache, nausea and drowsiness. Extremely high levels of carbon monoxide poisoning can be fatal, causing death within minutes. Anyone who suspects they are suffering from carbon monoxide poisoning should immediately move to a fresh air location and call 9-1-1 from a safe location. For questions relating to carbon monoxide poisoning or for other safety related questions, please call Assistant Chief Jack Spurgeon at the Bristol TN Fire Department.

###