

## Use Portable Generators Carefully

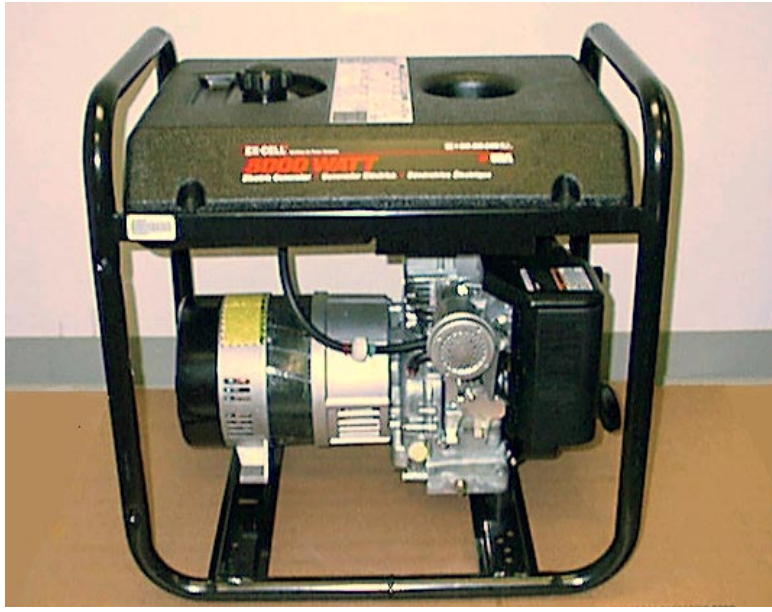
The Midwest winter storm season can mean power outages for businesses and homes.

Following some simple guidelines can protect buildings and people when it becomes necessary to use a generator to keep the home and business running.

Start by buying a generator that is listed with Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) or Factory Mutual (FM) testing organizations.

Look at the labels on lighting, appliances and equipment that will be connected to the generator to determine the amount of power that will be needed to operate the equipment. Choose a generator that produces more power than will be used by the combination of sources drawing on it, including the initial surge when it is turned on. Ask an electrician if unsure of energy needs.

Follow the directions supplied with the generator. Under no circumstances should portable generators be used indoors, including inside a



If you use a generator, take precautions to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, gasoline ignition, and electrocution.

garage. Many home fires and deaths from carbon monoxide poisoning occur from using a generator improperly.

Be sure to let a generator cool down before refueling. Store fuel for the generator in an approved safety can in a location

outside the home.

Do not hook up a generator directly to a home's wiring. Home-use generators do not supply enough amperage to supply sufficient power for today's homes. Therefore, power put into a home via a

generator could "backfeed" into the main line and cause problems for the electrical utility company, neighbors or the home owner.

There are a number of products available that will provide either an automatic or manual transfer between two power sources in a manner prescribed by the National Electrical Code. When selecting a product for this function, it should be one that has been evaluated for safe performance by a nationally recognized testing organization, such as Underwriters Laboratories. The project must be installed according to the NEC, all applicable state and local codes and the manufacturer's instructions. Homeowners should only attempt to install such products if they have thorough knowledge of safe electrical installation practices for this type of equipment. Otherwise, a qualified electrician should be contacted. (DJ)

SOURCE: Shirley Niemeyer, Ph.D., housing and environmental specialist, NU/LANR

## WATERWHEEL

### Unused and Abandoned Wells



Note: This is part of a series of articles related to rural water issues.

Many properties have wells that are no longer used. Sites with older homes often have an abandoned shallow well that was installed when the house was first built. If not properly filled and sealed, these wells can provide a direct channel for waterborne pollutant to reach groundwater.



An abandoned well is closed off.

A licensed, registered well driller or pump installer should be hired to close these wells. Effective well plugging calls for experience with well construction materials and methods, as well as knowledge of the geology of the site. The cost to close a well will vary with well depth, well diameter and soil/rock type. The money spent sealing a well will be a bargain compared to the potential costs of cleanup or the loss of property value if contamination occurs.

While illegal water wells in Nebraska have not been accurately counted, they are known to exist in every county, on farmsteads and in communities. Illegal water wells can contaminate groundwater, including drinking water supplies. In addition, they present a safety hazard to humans and animals.

All illegal water wells must be decommissioned following requirements found in Title 178, Chapter 12, Regulations Governing Water Well Construction, Pump Installation and Water Well Abandonment Standards. Water well decommissioning must be carried out or supervised by an individual holding a valid Nebraska Water Well Standards and Contractors' license. (DJ)



Clinics are \$10 per person advanced registration and \$15 per person at the door. Preregistration is required three working days before each program. If a minimum number of pre-registrants are not received, clinics will be cancelled and preregistered people will be notified and given a full refund.

The programs will be offered at the following locations:

- Omaha — Douglas/Sarpy County Extension Office, 8015 W. Center Road
- Columbus — Platte County Courthouse - Extension Office Conference Room, 2610 14th Street (participants must use the east basement door to enter.)
- Grand Island — Hall County Extension Office - Main Extension Meeting Room, 3180 W. Highway 34 (located in College Park)
- Lincoln — Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road

2004 PROGRAMS	DATE/TIME/LOCATION		
January <b>GRASSES &amp; WILDFLOWERS</b>	12, 7-9 pm Omaha	15, 7-9 pm Columbus	17, 9-11 am Lincoln
February <b>ACREAGE WEED CONTROL</b>	9, 7-9 pm Omaha	12, 7-9 pm Grand Island	14, 9-11 am Lincoln
March <b>PASTURE MANAGEMENT</b>	15, 7-9 pm Omaha	18, 7-9 pm Columbus	20, 9-11 am Lincoln
April <b>SEPTIC SYSTEMS &amp; WASTE WATER TREATMENT</b>	19, 7-9 pm Omaha	22, 7-9 pm Grand Island	24, 9-11 am Lincoln
May <b>VERTEBRATE PESTS</b>	17, 7-9 pm Omaha	20, 7-9 pm Columbus	22, 9-11 am Lincoln
June <b>SMALL SCALE MEAT ANIMAL PRODUCTION</b>	21, 7-9 pm Omaha	24, 7-9 pm Grand Island	26, 9-11 am Lincoln
July <b>PRIVATE DRINKING WATER SYSTEMS</b>	19, 7-9 pm Omaha	22, 7-9 pm Columbus	24, 9-11 am Lincoln
August <b>PONDS</b>	16, 7-9 pm Omaha	19, 7-9 pm Grand Island	21, 9-11 am Lincoln
September <b>WINDBREAK DESIGN &amp; MAINTENANCE</b>	20, 7-9 pm Omaha	23, 7-9 pm Columbus	25, 9-11 am Lincoln
October <b>GRAPES</b>	18, 7-9 pm Omaha	21, 7-9 pm Grand Island	23, 9-11 am Lincoln

### TOPICS

continued from page 1

plantings of trees and shrubs designed to enhance crop production, protect people and livestock, and benefit soil and water conservation. Learn which trees to plant, proper spacing for maximum growth, where to locate the windbreak, and how to manage it for a long and effective life.

### Grapes (October)

The selection of grape varieties, equipment needed, wildlife control, fencing, and the marketing of grapes will be the primary focus of this program. Participants will gain a greater understanding of the grape enterprise and wine industry by attending this session.

### REGISTRATION FORM

**PLEASE INDICATE WHICH CLINIC(S) AND LOCATION(S) YOU ARE REGISTERING FOR:**

- Grasses & Wildflowers
  - Omaha  Columbus  Lincoln
- Acreage Weed Control
  - Omaha  Grand Island  Lincoln
- Pasture Management
  - Omaha  Columbus  Lincoln
- Septic Systems for Wastewater Treatment
  - Omaha  Grand Island  Lincoln
- Vertebrate Pests
  - Omaha  Columbus  Lincoln
- Small Scale Meat Animal Production
  - Omaha  Grand Island  Lincoln
- Private Drinking Water Systems
  - Omaha  Columbus  Lincoln
- Ponds
  - Omaha  Grand Island  Lincoln
- Windbreak Design & Maintenance
  - Omaha  Columbus  Lincoln
- Grapes
  - Omaha  Grand Island  Lincoln

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**\$10/person advanced registration, \$15/person at the door**

Preregistration deadline:

Three working days before clinic.

Number attending \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail completed registration form and check (payable to UNL Cooperative Extension) to:**

UNL Cooperative Extension in Dodge County  
Acreage Insights  
1206 W. 23rd St.  
Fremont, NE 68025