

Permanent Home Generator Requirements

Due to recent storms that caused lengthy power outages many residents are contracting to have permanent stand-by electrical generators installed. These permanent generators are typically connected to a natural gas supply line.

The following information is intended to assist the homeowner in having a permanent generator installed in a safe and ordinance compliant manner.

- **A permit is required.**
 - It must be obtained prior to the installation.
 - The permit may be obtained by either the property owner or the contractor for the property owner.
 - The Electrician must be licensed by the Town of Amherst.
 - The contractor must have proof of valid NYS Worker's Compensation & NYS Disability on file with the Town of Amherst.
 - Additional requirements may apply if the residence is subject to deed restrictions, subdivision constraints or is part of a condominium or other property association.
- **Proposed location on the lot must be provided.**
 - A copy of the survey of the property is needed so that it can be determined that the proposed location complies with:
 - The Town of Amherst Zoning Ordinance
 - The NYS Building & Fire Codes
 - National Fire Protection Association Standard NFPA 37
 - The manufacturers installation instructions.
- **The generator location is very important to minimize fire and exhaust gas hazards.**
 - The generator must have at least 5ft. clearance to combustible materials on all sides, including overhead. (As noted below there are some exceptions to this requirement.)
 - The generator must be at least 3 ft from property lines and cannot be located in a required front yard.
 - The generator must be located so that exhaust gases will not collect adjacent to, enter into or be drawn into an occupied building.
 - Attention to wind and air currents at the location, and distances to windows or other building openings must be considered.
 - The unit must be installed level and not where water may accumulate.
 - If the location is in a regulated flood hazard area the unit must be located above the base flood elevation.
 - The unit must not be located where water could flood or spray the unit. Sump pump discharge area, downspout discharge or similar issues must be considered.
 - The unit must not be located over buried utility services.
 - The unit must not block access to other utility equipment such as Electric Service, telephone equipment, Gas Meters, etc.
 - The unit must be placed so that there are no obstructions such as grass or landscaping.
- **Inspection Required**
 - Once the unit is installed, the installation must be inspected by the Town of Amherst Building Department to determine compliance with all applicable requirements.

Excerpt NFPA 37

3-1.4 Engines Located Outdoors.

3-1.4.1 Engines, and their weatherproof housings if provided, that are installed outdoors shall be located at least 5ft from openings in walls and at least 5ft. from structures having combustible walls.

Exception No. 1: Where the adjacent wall of the structure has a fire resistance rating of at least 1 hour.

Exception No. 2: Where the weatherproof enclosure is constructed of noncombustible materials, and it has been demonstrated that a fire within the enclosure will not ignite combustible materials outside the enclosure.