

CHOOSING A GENERATOR

PORTABLE VS. PERMANENT

Generators come in two forms: portable and permanent. The following chart will help you understand which type of generator is best designed and sized for your business to provide cost-effective benefits, while minimizing associated risks.

	PORTABLE	PERMANENT
Size	Relatively small (approximately 3 ft x 4 ft x 3 ft).	Fairy large depending on the model.
Approximate Cost (Purchase and Install)	\$	\$\$\$
Target Users	Small to mid-size businesses or those located in a remote location.	Larger businesses, business running sensitive equipment or numerous large appliances.
Running Time	8 hours or less; may need to refuel several times a day. Requires supervision during operation. See safety and maintenance for more information.	Long-lasting; good for prolonged outages. Minimal supervision is required. See safety and maintenance for more information.
Fuel Source	Gasoline; must be imported to the site. Some models will run on propane, or natural gas.	Natural gas, propane, or on a bi-fuel basis; generator should be compatible with the local fuels available in your area.
Wattage*	0–17,500 watts	7,000 watts and up
Number of Items It Can Simultaneously Power	Few, depending on the wattage output.	Can replace your typical power source running all aspects of your business, depending on the size installed.
Portability	Can be moved; it is not fixed to the ground.	Cannot be moved; it is fixed on property. Requires anchorage to a concrete slab.
Location	Must be run outside. Additional cabling (extension cords) needed from the generator to appliances.	Located outside of business on an isolated generator concrete slab. Hard wiring is installed.
Security Risk (Theft)	Since they are small, theft rates are higher. Can be latched down with a chain and lock.	Connections lock unit to slab. Theft not as likely.
Business Downtime After Power Outage	Depends on response and generator setup.	No downtime; typically wired directly into building's electrical system through a transfer switch.

*For small businesses, estimate the amount of wattage needed using the Department of Energy's "Estimating Appliance and Home Energy Use" tool at <https://energy.gov/energysaver/estimating-appliance-and-home-electronic-energy-use> For medium to larger size businesses, contact a licensed electrician for more information.