



UNITED STATES  
**CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION**  
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**COMMISSIONER MARY T. BOYLE**

**Commissioner Mary T. Boyle Statement on Approval of the Portable  
Generator SNPR**

**April 5, 2023**

With today's unanimous vote, the Commission steps up to the plate on a long overdue measure to protect unsuspecting consumers from carbon monoxide poisoning associated with portable generators. This is a well-documented hazard, responsible for more than 1,300 deaths and 17,000 injuries over the past 18 years. These numbers are not abstractions but represent real people -- who turned to generators for help when they were in crisis. And the latest information we have suggests that this disheartening pattern of death and injury continues unabated. We owe it to the public to seize this opportunity to reverse this trend.

The good news is that we can make a difference. By advancing this rulemaking process, we are taking action aimed squarely at preventing harm and saving lives. The proposed rule before us sets clear, science-based expectations for manufacturers. It requires them to build safer generators with lower emissions and automatic shut-off mechanisms. The specifics in the rule match up with standards developed by industry-led organizations.

The importance of safety for portable generators will only grow as demand for them grows in the face of extreme weather events -- like those we have seen even just over the past week. Bringing this to life, the briefing package offers a compelling example from the aftermath of one such natural disaster. (Staff Briefing Package Tab D.) After Hurricane Ida caused widespread power outages in Louisiana in 2021, staff conducted an investigation in collaboration with the State Fire Marshall and local fire departments. Among the findings: at least 66 homes had documented incidents of CO exposure associated with portable generators; tellingly, in at least three homes, the fire department reported that CO exposure was linked to a neighbor's generator; and tragically, a family of three died of CO poisoning linked to a newly purchased portable generator located outside their house.

Today's Commission action has put us on a trajectory toward the goal of eliminating this hazard. We can do this. Not only can we do this, but we must do this -- to save lives. I welcome comments on the proposed rule that aim to further this goal, and I expect the industry to embrace this chance to partner with us in protecting consumers.

We would not be here without CPSC's dedicated staff, especially Janet Buyer, Barbara Little, and the many others who have done the rigorous technical analysis, carefully reviewed the data, and navigated the ins and outs of the rulemaking process, not to mention those who worked on research, reports and education campaigns to raise public awareness of life-threatening hazards related to portable generators and CO poisoning. This work makes a difference. I am more optimistic than ever about the prospects for progress, and I look forward to a swift advancement to the final rule stage.