



Out Doesn't Mean Safe: Beware of Generator Backfeed

When responding to storm damage and power outages, always assume electrical lines are energized—even when *utility power is down*. Homes and businesses may be using portable or standby generators that can create dangerous backfeed into the system.

Backfeed occurs when electricity flows in the reverse direction from a generator into utility lines. This can energize lines you expect to be de-energized, posing a serious risk of shock or electrocution.

Key Safety Practices:

- Treat all lines as **live (hot)** until they are properly tested and grounded.
- Never rely solely on outage status—**verify absence of voltage** using approved testing equipment.
- Ensure proper **lockout/tagout procedures** are followed.
- Be aware that improperly connected generators (e.g., without transfer switches) are a common source of backfeed.
- Maintain clear communication with crews and supervisors regarding line status.

Your safety depends on vigilance. When in doubt, **assume it's energized and act accordingly**.

Discuss near-misses and more safety topics during this month's Safety Call, **7:15 a.m. on Tuesday, May 5**. To join the call, go to www.meuw.org/monthlysafetycall or click this [link](#).