

# INCIDENT INVESTIGATION ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS

## Generator Fires

**DOCUMENT NUMBER:**

**DATE OF INCIDENT:**

**CATID: BUNN01 2020**

**FOLLOW-UP REQUESTED**

**HAZARD ANALYSIS**  **SECT 15**

**PRIMARY CONTACT: Rik Khanna, EXHR, 301-987-2508, [rkhanna@cpsc.gov](mailto:rkhanna@cpsc.gov)**

**BACK-UP CONTACT: Matthew Hnatov, EPHA, 301-504-7403, [mhnatov@cpsc.gov](mailto:mhnatov@cpsc.gov)**

### ASSIGNMENT MESSAGE:

Please investigate the attached incident involving a generator.

Please obtain age and description of product. Document all injuries and collect all official reports.

Be sure to obtain:

- Type of generator: portable, permanently installed (stationary, not portable) generator, or other (specify).
- Fuel type: gasoline, diesel, propane, natural gas, other (specify).
- Pre-incident, incident, and post-incident scenarios.
- Detailed timeline of sequence of events.
- Was the generator running when it caught on fire? If so, how long had the generator been running before it caught fire?
- Was the generator being refueled when it caught fire? If so, was the engine turned off when it was being refueled? If so, how long had the engine been off before it was refueled?
- If it had been recently turned off, how much earlier had it been turned off before being refueled?
- Was it still warm to the touch?
- Was it being refueled indoors? Where?
- Was gasoline spilled in the refueling? If so, how much? What part(s) of the generator was it spilled on?
- Was there anything plugged into the receptacles on the generator when it caught fire? If so, did the item plugged into the generator catch fire or did the generator itself catch fire?
- What was plugged into the generator? Was an appliance directly plugged into the generator receptacle or was it an extension cord?
- If an appliance was plugged directly into the generator, identify the appliance by product type, manufacturer, and model.
- If an extension cord was plugged into the generator, what was the other end of the extension cord plugged into: an appliance, a house receptacle, transfer switch, etc.?
- If the extension cord was plugged into an appliance, identify the appliance by product type, manufacturer, and model.
- If the extension cord was plugged into a house receptacle, did they use an extension cord that had two male ends?
- What type of extension cord and how long was it: one rated for outdoor, heavy duty use or one that is for indoor use?
- If the extension cord was plugged into a transfer switch, obtain identifying information about the transfer switch.
- Where was the generator when it caught fire? In the garage? In the house? etc.
- How close was it situated to anything, including walls, the gas can, and other items. Was anything placed on the generator? If so, what?

- If the generator was operated indoors, were there any doors or windows open in the space where it was located? Why did they choose to operate the generator in that space?
- If the generator was a permanently installed (stationary, not portable) generator, was the fire related to the generator battery (explosion, overheating, etc.)?
- If the generator was a permanently installed (stationary, not portable) generator, describe its location relative to the nearby structure(s) (including shortest distance between the generator and the nearest wall on the nearest structure and shortest distance between the generator and openings in that structure [window, door, vent, crawlspace, etc.]), direction of the exhaust relative to the wall and those openings, description of material the wall was made of (aluminum siding, vinyl siding, wood, brick, etc.), and if the wall caught fire or was damaged by the fire.
- How many people were in the direct vicinity of the generator fire?
- What was the weather like at the time they were operating the generator? Was it raining or look like it might rain imminently?
- Provide the generator's manufacturer, model number, power rating, and any other identifying information.
- How old was the generator and how frequently had it been used prior to the incident?
- How familiar was the person operating the generator with the generator?
- Were there any gas-fired appliances such as gas water heaters or gas clothes dryers near the generator?
- Were there any observations of fuel leaks from any of the fuel system components, e.g., carburetor, cracks/holes/split seams in the fuel tank, fuel hoses, fuel filter, vent grommets, etc.?
- Were there any plastic components on the generator that melted or caught fire?
- Is the generator a pull-cord-start type or electric-start type?
- What type of flooring was the generator placed on during the fire, e.g., concrete garage floor, asphalt, dirt floor, grassy field, laminate floor, etc.?
- If the generator has an hour meter to indicate the hours of use, what was the number of hours?
- Did the generator have the required mandatory label per 16 CFR 1407?
- Was the generator involved in a CPSC recall?
- Did the generator have any maintenance performed on it, such as an oil change?

**If applicable, please also complete the guideline for Smoke Alarms (Appendix # 128).**

**Please include all primary and all backup contacts in the distribution of the completed IDI.**

----- Area below will be completed in Data Systems -----

**Person(s) to Contact:**

**Guidelines:** Appendix 128 – Smoke Alarms

**Task Number:**

**Date:**

**Assigned to:**

**Processed by:** lew