



COMMUNITY INFORMATION SHEET

## Backup generators & air quality

*Standby generators, their emissions, and how they are managed*

### What's the concern?

Data centres keep standby generators — usually diesel — to carry the load if the grid fails. People ask about exhaust emissions and noise when they run, and about the bulk fuel stored on site. While generators normally run only for brief testing or rare outages, the cumulative effect should still be managed.

### The facts

Generator exhaust contains nitrogen oxides and fine particles, so emissions and where the exhaust disperses matter, especially near homes. Bulk diesel is a contamination and fire risk, managed with bunding (spill containment) and dangerous-goods rules. Lower-emission options are increasingly available — renewable diesel (HVO), gas, or battery and hydrogen-ready systems.

### What good practice looks like

- Generators meeting recognised emission standards, with exhaust dispersion assessed at the nearest homes.
- Non-emergency testing restricted to daytime hours.
- Bulk fuel stored in bunded, spill-contained facilities meeting dangerous-goods requirements.
- Consideration of lower-emission alternatives (renewable diesel, gas, battery or hydrogen-ready).

### Questions you can ask

- How many generators, what fuel, and how often are they tested?
- How are exhaust emissions and noise managed near homes?
- How is the bulk fuel stored and contained?

**Want to know more?** Your local council, the EPA Tasmania and ARPANSA publish further information. This sheet is general information, not medical, legal or planning advice; figures are indicative and a specific proposal is confirmed by qualified assessment.