

## Answers to questions sent to us

This week I am going to answer one of the questions that has been forwarded to me since I have been writing these articles. I can't answer them all this week, however, I will try and to answer all of them over a period of time. If you don't see your question answered in the next few weeks, please forward them to me again.

**I bought a five year maintenance contract two years ago when I bought my generator, it cost me \$995.00 extra. This year when it wouldn't start, I called my installer to come over and get it running. He charged me for a new battery and a service call. He said it wasn't covered under warranty, nor was it covered under the maintenance contract. He said the maintenance contract just covered tune ups and oil changes, and the battery doesn't fall under the generator warranty. Is this true?**

**Also, I asked him to refund my maintenance contract since it is not what I thought it was, and he said he couldn't do that.**

I don't know the brand of your generator; as a result I can only answer in general terms.

1. Most factory generator warranties do not cover batteries, in fact, I don't believe any do. Most batteries come with their own 1 year warranty, some with 2 year. Beware of the installer that says the battery warranty is good for three to five years, because these are usually car batteries that are not rated for generators, and may not be covered.
2. When you buy a maintenance contract on an appliance, this usually means the repair or replacement on that appliance for a period of time. If you pay an extra amount at the time of purchase, the appliance is covered for an 'x' amount of time for repair and/or replacement. Not necessarily true on standby generators.

When you purchase a maintenance contract on a generator, it typically means that you are prepaying for the annual maintenance for that specific amount of time. This annual maintenance will cover service from an oil and oil filter change, and up to spark plugs and air filters if needed.

The intent of these type of maintenance contracts is to lock you in with the installer for the annual maintenance for the next five years. At the same time, you feel 'stuck' with them for all your repairs as well.

In summary, I would say you are not covered under the manufacturer's warranty, nor would this be covered under the maintenance contract. The installer would not be willing to give up this five year commitment, as he has you locked in for the five years.

In defense of these installers, most, if not all manufactures recommend these contracts at the time of sale as a means to retain customers over a period of time.

We do not believe in this type of maintenance contracts. Having a customer pay us five years in advance to do an oil change is not something we would be comfortable with. We would rather be paid when the maintenance is completed, then if we do a good job, we can earn the work for the next year.

**Since we have had many questions concerning maintenance contracts, we will write an article next week on different types of maintenance contracts, the pros and cons of each.**

If you have any questions, please forward them to [dirtygenerators@yahoo.com](mailto:dirtygenerators@yahoo.com), and we will try and answer them. We will also answer some of the questions in future articles. Is there a specific topic you would like us to cover? E-mail us and we will try and cover it