

WHY A 10KW GENERATOR IS NOT A TRUE WHOLE HOUSE GENERATOR PART 1

I would like to start off by saying that I am glad we are done talking about warranties, and probably you are too. It has taken almost four months of articles just to cover the exclusions of one manufacturer's five year bumper to bumper warranty. Remember, I only talked about one, but most of the manufacturer's warranties are similar.

On April 26th I was at our home show in Gray, and I had many visitors who brought in their service contracts and warranties to me so we could review them. They were able to determine exactly what they were getting by reading the articles. Even though I am not writing about them at this time, feel free to contact us and we will try to meet and discuss your particular service contract or warranty.

I am finding that the most common size standby generator purchased is a 10KW whole house generator. The customer many times interprets, and rightfully so, that this will take care of the entire house because it is called a whole house generator.

Let's first decide what whole house really means.

There are instances where a 10KW may run the entire house. If your entire house is run on gas, such as your stove and dryer, if your hot water is not electric, if you don't have any portable electric heat, if you don't have a hot tub, if you don't have central air, if you don't have multiple window air conditioners, if you are not using multiple electric blankets, if you don't have a large lighting usage such as lighting in an indoor arena or barn, if you don't have a sauna, if, if, and many more if's. Yes, it is then possible to run your whole house on a 10KW.

Or, if what you consider your whole house is just lighting, and not using your larger appliances or multiple items at the same time, a 10KW will work, but then you aren't really energizing your whole house. You only have a generator that will give the option to run some or most items individually, but not all the same time.

There are ways to run your house on a smaller generator than your entire house load thru managed loads. These systems will protect you from overloading your generator; however, a 10KW will not even run some of the basic necessities.

Remember, KW means a 1000, so a 10KW is 10,000 watts. To determine the amperage output, divide the wattage by 240 volts (your generator output in volts), and that will give you the amperage that your generator will put out, so 10,000 divided by 240 equals 41.67 Amps. This is running full load. Generators should be sized at 80% of continuous load, which means a 10KW generator should not have a continuous load of more than 33.3 amps.

We will address this in more detail next week, but, in the meantime, don't be fooled by those that say a 10KW will run your entire house, if you do, there is a good chance you will burn out your generator prematurely.

In the mean time, take a look around your house and determine what you will be running. All appliances and electrical devices will show the amperage they use. Add them up, you will be surprised on the total.

If you have any questions, please forward them to dirfygenerators@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