

# **“GENERATOR CAUSES HOUSE TO CATCH FIRE”**

This is my fourth article, and the most asked question to date has been “what went wrong with the generator that caused the house fire a few weeks ago”.

The short answer is “I don’t know”. I have not seen or heard any information that has been documented, although I have heard many rumors, probably the same ones that you have heard. If anyone has more information on this fire, feel free to forward it to me.

I will however, cover some ground on what could cause a fire, and what you could look for in your installation to determine if you are at risk.

If you are in doubt, call a company that specializes in generators, many reputable companies will do a free evaluation of your system.

## **COMMON PROBLEMS THAT MAY CAUSE FIRES:**

1. Wire is undersized. This happens quite frequently when the generator is located a long distance from the house, and voltage drop is not taken into account. As a result, the wire will overheat.
2. Wrong type of wire is used, Wire is rated for different applications, and installers sometimes will use the incorrect wire. Sometimes the installer is unaware, other times they will use what they have.
3. Improper bonding. Due to space, I can’t go into a lot of detail, but have had to trouble shoot a case of a customer smelling smoke, and shut off her power. I had to bond the transfer switch. The electrician told me he never had to bond it before
4. Unit is too close to a building, especially the exhaust
5. Fuel line is improperly installed, or the flex hose is installed in the wrong position
6. Conduit is too small for the wire. This results in a lack of air space for heat distribution, the wire heats up, and causes a problem
7. Improper electrical and gas connectors
8. Some of the generator safety measures were either bypassed or disconnected
9. Structures built over the generators
10. Brush, leaves, scrap wood, and other combustibles stored too near generator
11. Generator is undersized
12. Loose connections

There are more possible causes that could be listed, but due to space, we can’t list them all.

I don't know why the generator started the house fire a few weeks ago, it could be for a variety of reasons. It would be very rare for this to happen if it was installed correctly and all the safety measures were operational

**BEST PREVENTION:**

Purchase your generator from a company that specializes in generators, and have it installed by a company that has the experience with all the hidden hazards as well as the obvious ones. If you have any concerns about your installation, call a generator installer for a evaluation, some will do this at no charge.

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

In the next article, we will talk about the top ten complaints customers have two years after purchase of their generator.