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Maximize the Service Life of your Emergency Generator

INTRODUCTION Over the years The Hartford Steam Boiler Inspection and Insurance Co. (HSB) has investigated numerous emergency generator failures. The primary causes for these failures were insufficient coolant or low lubricant levels. The reason for not properly maintaining these fluid levels are poor or non-existent preventive maintenance programs.

To help you achieve the maximum service life of your unit, ask yourself the following questions.

PRE STARTUP Most emergency generators are tested on a periodic basis. All of the pre start-up checks to the unit can be done by you or your staff.

Prior to start-up:

- Do you check that water level in the radiator?
- If it is necessary to periodically add water, is there leakage in the system?
- Are water hoses firm with no cracks?
- Do you pull the dipstick and check that the oil level in the crankcase is correct and the oil is clean?
- If there is oil on the engine, are gaskets, piping and gage lines in good condition?
- Do you determine that the air louvers to the unit are free to move and that the radiator core is not clogged with dirt and dust?

OPERATION When the engine is starting:

- Do you listen for crankshaft knocking or unusual engine noise?
- Do you remain with the engine to make sure all operating pressures and temperatures have stabilized and are within design parameters?
- Do you record the reading as part of a permanent operating record?

EMERGENCY The term EMERGENCY applies to any situation of a serious nature that develops suddenly and unexpectedly, demanding immediate action. If power failed now, are you confident that your engine and generator will see you through the crisis?

COST

- The cost of unscheduled and unwanted breakdowns of your emergency generator can be more than you might expect.
- Even when insurance is available, the deductible alone may still account for a considerable out-of-pocket expense.
- Having insurance may be of little comfort when your emergency generator is down and you are left in the dark.
- In addition, if you have tenants or are trying to run a business, you don't need the added headaches of irate customers because your emergency system is down from minor maintenance oversights.

SERVICE

- Most day-to-day checks on your unit are routine and can be handled with a minimum of training.
- The service personnel can examine instruments and controls to determine that they are operating properly.
- Qualified service personnel should periodically check the coolant so that antifreeze solution may be added or renewed.
- Generator vents can also be checked to allow for proper air circulation.
- All electrical connections can be tightened and inspected
- The oil in the engine can be chemically analyzed to reveal conditions of wear, acidity, viscosity change, moisture content and concentration of additives.
- These tests are recognized by unit manufacturers as valuable predictive and preventive maintenance tools.

HSB HELP

Your HSB inspector will help you find a concern who will look after your emergency generator needs. Please give us a call!

Our advice is intended to complement the equipment manufacturers' recommendations - not replace them. If you have doubts about any particular procedure, contact your equipment service representative.