

# How Dependable is your Electric Utility?



**C**onsider all the hazards to your electric service such as natural disasters, earthquakes, floods, storms, ice or fire. Add in the fact that many electric utilities are reaching their maximum capacity, making rolling black-outs and brown-outs far more common than ever before.

The fact that you have either purchased or are considering an Emergency Standby Power System indicates you understand the importance of your business and that it must remain operational even if the local utility is not.

**Simply Installing a  
Standby Generator  
is NOT Enough!**



**How** can you be sure your  
generator will perform when  
needed?



# Solution: Load Banks – Electrical Loads for Testing Standby Generators



In an **EC&M** article, a Service Manager of Onan Corporation wrote,

*"Vital to the operation of any engine-generator is a well-planned preventive maintenance program. An effective plan helps to ensure that when the utility power outages occur, your standby power generator set will start and continue to run for as long as needed."*

The article states that part of the preventive maintenance program should always include running the generator set under actual load.

This philosophy is shared by virtually every manufacturer and trade organization.

*"The greatest single cause of inoperable standby generator sets is the lack of maintenance..."*

– **Caterpillar, Installation Guide**

*"...Most generator failures, ...were caused by lack of exercise... improper maintenance..."*

– **EC&M Magazine, 1994**

*"...Maintaining on-demand emergency power must never be over-looked."*

– **Generac, 2002**

*"...A Load Bank provides the practical means to test the power system without interruption to the critical loads and assures performance at full load capability."*

– **EGSA, 2002**

*"...This test should be an integral part of the engine/generator PM program."*

– **Caterpillar, 1995**

*"Running a generator set under light load can lead to engine damage, reducing generator set reliability."*

– **Cummins, 2002**

*"Approximately 60-70% of maintenance problems are directly attributable to wet stacking... using load banks at the local maintenance facility is recommended."*

– **Department of Defense, 2001**