



Your Reliable Guide for Power Solutions

To fulfill our commitment to be the leading supplier in the power generation industry, the Buckeye Power Sales team ensures they are always up-to-date with the current power industry standards as well as industry trends. As a service, our **Information Sheets** are circulated on a regular basis to existing and potential power customers to maintain their awareness of changes and developments in standards, codes and technology within the power industry.

TESTING GENERATORS SETS - RESISTIVE VERSUS REACTIVE

1.0 Introduction

To ensure a backup generator system will perform as specified, it is necessary to carry out a fully witnessed test off-line at the time of initial installation, as part of the commissioning process. It is also important to perform load tests during periodic planned maintenance checks.

This information sheet discusses the use of portable load banks used for generator testing and the differences between resistive load bank testing and reactive load bank testing.

2.0 Provision of Test Equipment and Testing

Distributors for the principal generator set manufacturers have the equipment and technicians throughout their dealer networks to perform the required testing.

Testing should only be carried out by trained, experienced personnel and conducted as directed by applicable codes and by the manufacturer. This information sheet details some of the testing procedures specified by the National Fire Protection Agency code NFPA 110 for standby generator sets.

3.0 Resistive Load Testing

This is the most common means of testing a generator set with its intended load. It will allow the owner to be sure the set produces 100% of its output at 1.0 power factor by connecting full kW loading. This load test measures whether the generator is producing at its full power rating, dissipating the required amount of engine exhaust gases and heat, and producing the required amount of thermal energy into the engine cooling system.

Resistive load testing verifies that the engine and generator system will produce and maintain full load without overheating and shutting down. It also evaluates other critical engine systems such as oil and fuel, assesses whether all components of the standby system will work together as designed and intended, and can identify any potential weaknesses under controlled conditions. Also it can be used to burn out any carbon deposits in the cylinders or exhaust system, thereby reducing any wet stacking problems due to frequent operation with light electrical loads.

Normally, it is sufficient to run a set with an artificial load between 4 to 8 hours. Some government and military specifications require 18- to 24- hour duration tests.

4.0 Reactive Load Bank Testing

A reactive load equal to 75% of the resistive rating can be paralleled in combination with the primary resistive load bank to measure the full kVA nameplate rating at 0.8 power factor of the standby generator set. This also allows for proper calibration of load sharing and voltage regulating systems in parallel operation installations. Installations with critical large motor loads might warrant this testing. As this has a higher cost, it is normally only used for new installation start-up, as the generator kVA will not deteriorate or change once tested and proven initially.

5.0 Frequency of Load Bank Maintenance Testing

Depending on the critical nature of the installation and if there is insufficient building load that can be applied,
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we recommend that the standby generator undergo an off-line load bank test for a minimum of two hours annually.

6.0 National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) 110

NFPA 110 indicates standards for monthly maintenance and operation of standby generator sets and recommends that sets be exercised monthly at 30% of nameplate rating or loaded to achieve the minimum engine exhaust temperature recommended by the engine manufacturer. If the loads to be served cannot endure a brief outage during transfer and re-transfer between sources, a load bank can be used to isolate the generator from the electrical distribution during this testing.

Any Emergency Power Supply System (EPSS) must meet NFPA 110 regulations for one of the two levels.

Level One: An installation where failure of the EPSS to perform could result in loss of human life, health hazards or serious injuries. These normally include health care facilities or assembly of occupancies greater than 1,000 persons. Level 1 systems are required to test the generator under load for the duration of their class rating **OR** a minimum of four hours, whichever is greater, every 36 months or three years.

Level Two: For systems installed where failure of EPSS to perform is less critical to human life and safety.

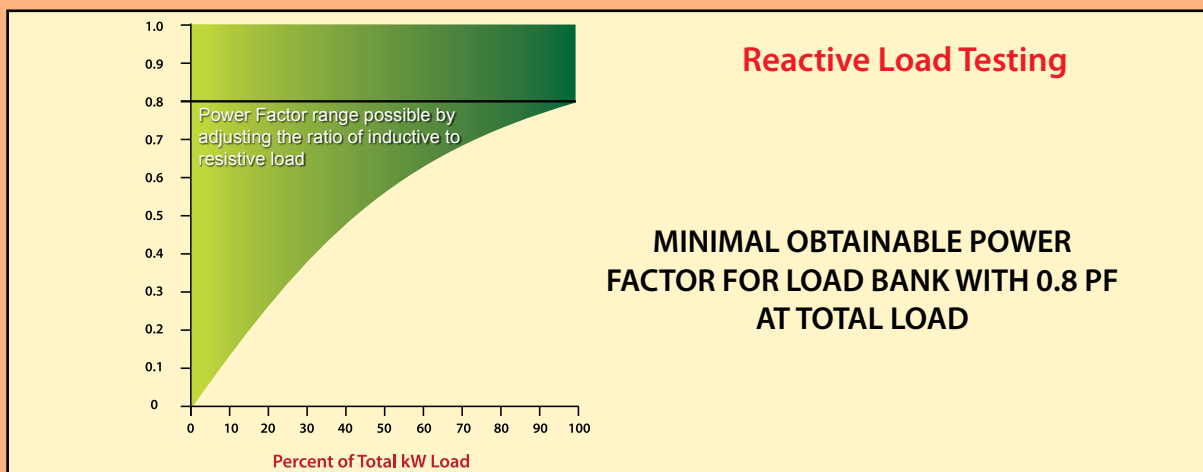
7.0 Web Site Addresses for Reference on Load Testing

The following are useful web sites for suppliers of load banks with details of the equipment available.

- Avtron Loadbank Inc. www.load-bank.com
- ComRent International LLC www.comrent.net
- Simplex Inc. www.simplexdirect.com

TOTAL LOAD kW	TYPICAL LOAD STEP kW RESOLUTIONS	
200	240/480 VAC	5, 10, 10, 25, 50, 100 kW
250	240/480 VAC	5, 10, 10, 25, 50, 50, 100 kW
400	240/480 VAC	5, 10, 10, 25, 50, 100, 100, 100 kW
400	480 VAC	5, 10, 10, 25, 50, 100, 100, 100 kW

VOLTAGE RATING (3 PHASE, 60 Hz)



Columbus, OH
 6850 Commerce Court Drive
 P.O. Box 489
 Blacklick OH 43004-0489
 (614) 861-6000
 (800) 523-3587
 (614) 861-2291 fax

Cincinnati, OH
 7782 Service Center Drive
 West Chester, OH 45069
 (513) 755-2323
 (800) 368-7422
 (513) 755-4515 fax

Cleveland, OH
 8465 Tower Drive
 P.O. Box 394
 Twinsburg, OH 44087-0394
 (330) 425-9165
 (800) 966-2825
 (330) 487-0229 fax

Indianapolis, IN
 1229 Indy Place
 Indianapolis, IN 46214
 (317) 271-9661
 (800) 632-0339
 (317) 271-0242 fax



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