

What Size Generator Do I Need?

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There's great peace of mind that comes with finally getting a standby generator for your home. In a coastal state like New Jersey, it's even more of a relief to know your family's electricity supply is protected when the next big storm rages through the area and knocks out the public power source for days or even weeks again. But, there are a few key questions you need to ask when you're planning to buy a home generator. We'll help answer these here for you:

Should I Buy a Generator to Run My Whole House or Just Essentials?

You'll need to decide how important it is to you and your family to have a constant backup electricity supply in your area. If you live in an area where power outages are relatively frequent or prolonged when they occur, it may be worth it to install a whole home generator that enables you to run your home normally without any interruptions in power, no matter what happens to the public power source.

Buying a bigger generator that costs more could be an excellent long-term, investment in your quality of life and in the resale appeal of your home. You could also live with the peace of mind that comes with knowing you will not be at risk of living without electricity for extended periods.

If you choose to install a smaller generator to power only some of the electrical items in your home, you will probably want to include the heating and air conditioning system, refrigerator, freezer, lights, TVs, computers, and any other items you run continuously or at least for some period every day.

Most homeowners can expect to be able to run the majority of the essential household electrical appliances and other equipment with a generator rated to produce around 7,500 running watts.

What Size Generator Do I Need to Run My Whole House?

First, list all the essential appliances, HVAC system, electronic devices, lights, and other items you need to run during a power outage. Generally, a standby generator of around 10,000 watts is sufficient for most homes. But, each household has unique electricity usage needs. So, on each electrical item, look at the label that displays its *starting wattage* and *running wattage* either in watts or amps, and add that information to your list for calculating the total wattage used in your home.

If you know either the amps or the watts a device consumes, you can simply calculate to find out the other, so you can calculate a total for all your electrical items expressed in either amps or watts. To convert either one to the other as needed, just use either one of these two simple formulas:

watts = amps x 120 and amps / 120 = watts.

For each household appliance and device, list the amount of wattage required to start it and then to run it. For a few examples:

Electrical Item	Starting Watts	Running Watts
Air conditioner (10,000 BTU)	3,600	1,200
Electric Water Heater	4,000	0
Refrigerator	2,200	700
Coffee Maker	1,000	0
Light Bulb	75	0
Washing Machine	_____	_____
TV	_____	_____
Laptop	50	0
Add more items...	_____	_____

Choose a Generator Slightly Bigger Than Your Needs

It's far better to have more watts available than you need than to find your generator suddenly shutting down because it's overloaded. Additionally, running a generator at its full load capacity can severely reduce the life of the unit. A generator running at 100% capacity also makes much more noise.

So, to illustrate: If you need a total of 6,000 *running watts* to power your chosen household electrical equipment and 7,200 *starting watts*, you should install a generator with about 7,500 running watts and around 9,500 starting watts.

How Much Does Standby Generator Installation Cost?

The cost of whole house generator installation varies based on the kind and size of equipment you choose. The installation costs vary too, based on the location where the equipment will be installed, rural or urban, and the location on the property, above ground, underground, and the distance from the home, and annual maintenance options chosen, among other factors.

Best Value in NJ Generator Installation – DK Electrical

We provide our customers with our industry's best quality of equipment, installation workmanship, and customer service in New Jersey.

For information about standby generators or other electrical installations for your home, call DK Electrical Solutions at (609) 604-5490, or contact us here on our website anytime.
