

# GENERATORS

A reasonable set of spares for your generator would consist of the following:

- Sparkplugs and points (for gas generators)
- Oil, fuel and air filters
- Special oil if required

Since these are usually unique to your generator, even if you cannot do the repairs yourself, they will be available for any mechanic to use. Be sure you have the proper oil for the generator. All of them will stop running if the oil gets low which of course will occur while your wife is preparing dinner. They are designed so that you will always be left with enough fuel to get the RV to the garage and fill up.

One common failure mode is a loss of AC input voltage from either the generator or the AC mains. This is usually due to the switchover relay that is used in all RV's that have generators. The relay has three poles (three wire input circuit) which automatically change from Shorepower AC to Generator AC. The relay is wired to be in the campground AC position and changes once the generator starts to put out AC voltage. In a 50-amp system, there are two relays with three poles each. Over time, the relay contacts arc and burn. A carbon build up eventually prevents good electrical contact in the relay. The fix, after turning off the shore power and the generator, is to clean all of the relay contacts with a scotch pad (I don't like using steel wool because of the possibility of getting metal chips in the relay). Make them nice and shiny.

Be sure and check your manual for recommendations on running the generator during the winter months. More failures occur by just turning it off and leaving it for several months than actively using it. It should be run up to operating temperature on a regular basis and allowed to operate under load to keep the armature clean and remove moisture. Typically, the generator should be run at least 20 to 30 minutes, under high load, at least once per month.