

## Establishing A Proactive Maintenance Program

Air conditioning units, UPS devices, generators, and the like are all pieces of equipment that support mission critical facilities. Quite simply, they determine the reliability of the facility. Yet all too often, facility managers lack a proper maintenance program for the equipment. And that translates into high risk.

Consider this: According to The Uptime Institute, the momentary failure of a single 20 amp circuit breaker can result in hours of information disruption to end users and can easily cost millions of dollars in unrecoverable revenue.

When a poor maintenance program is in place, personnel respond to problems (such as the above) after they have affected operations. And equipment is repaired after the failure has occurred. This leads to an increase in equipment downtime, which means lost revenue and unhappy customers; a decrease in equipment life, which means higher life cycle costs; and an increase in equipment repair costs, which means higher annual operating costs.

### **Ready to establish a proactive maintenance program? Follow these steps:**

First, determine what your maintenance objectives are. For example, set standards for availability, identify single points of failure, identify current maintenance method's strengths and weaknesses, and develop price tolerances. These objectives will be used as a benchmark to measure performance now and goals for the future. [/su\_column]  
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Second, determine who your maintenance stakeholders are. This may consist of IT personnel, facilities and engineering personnel, vendors and contractors, or executives. It is important to make sure that the stakeholders' needs are met and that they have input on your program. They will determine the methods of communication and the problem/issue escalation.

Third, determine what assets you want to maintain. Include everything that can adversely affect your ability to deliver information—items such as the CRAC, UPS, generator, fire detection and suppression system, etc. Don't forget commonly overlooked components such as TVSS and cleaning of your facility.

Fourth, determine who will be performing your maintenance. Depending on the level of in-house resources and expertise, maintenance may be performed by your facility staff. Often, though, maintenance services are outsourced so that staff can remain focused on core business operations. In either case, on-going training of maintenance personnel is vital in ensuring maximum facility reliability and availability.

Once these four vital steps are accomplished, it's time to get down to business and define your maintenance process. We suggest that your process include the following phases:

- » Develop specification
- » Develop maintenance schedule
- » Conduct site tour with service provider, if applicable
- » Activate schedule
- » Perform maintenance
- » Activate schedule
- » Perform maintenance
- » Monitor adherence to schedule
- » Document service
- » Perform annual audit

By following these steps, you will be able to implement a proactive maintenance program that is well defined and complete. According to The Uptime Institute, good maintenance programs pay for themselves on a ratio of four outages prevented for every outage caused. Start saving today!

Bick Group has subject matter experts in this and many other topics. Talk to a Bick Preventative Maintenance Services expert by emailing: [sdavis@bickgroup.com](mailto:sdavis@bickgroup.com).