
Surge Suppression and Battery Backup

Handi Quilter strongly advises the use of surge suppressors. However, we do not endorse specific manufacturers or models of surge suppressors. Most manufacturers rate their products by the number of Joules it can absorb. This is not the best measure of the ability of a suppressor to truly protect your machine. Instead, look for the let-through voltage of the suppressor you are considering purchasing. This should preferably be at least 330 volts (V) but less than 500 volts. A product marked UL1449 compliant will have a 400V or less let-through voltage. Not all manufacturers put this rating in their specifications.

Absorbing damaging surges takes a toll on components inside the protector so another purchasing consideration is what happens when the protection circuit no longer functions. Ideally, the suppressor would no longer allow power to pass to your machine; otherwise you wouldn't know that your machine is no longer protected. Some suppressors have an LED indicator that shows if the product has been damaged, which is the minimal indication you need. If power surges are common and your suppressor strip does not have such features, it is wise to replace the suppressor every two to three years. Remember that surges don't just come from the outside world. They can also come from within your home to your power outlet from a shop table saw, refrigerator, or other large motor operating in your home.

For additional confidence, purchase a product that offers a replacement warranty. However, be careful of the fine print.

Some examples of suppressor power strips that comply with these recommendations include:

Any of the APC SurgeArrest product line, including the inexpensive P8T3-LM

http://www.apc.com/resource/include/techspec_index.cfm?base_sku=P8T3-LM&tab=features

TrippLite PROTECT IT! Striker:

<http://www.tripplite.com/en/products/model.cfm?txtSeriesID=824&txtModelID=133>

If you use an HQ Pro-Stitcher system and have occasional power outages, you may wish to consider an uninterruptable power system (UPS) product. A UPS provides both surge suppression and backup energy that gives you time to power off your machine during a power outage, preventing damage to your quilt. A power rating of 1000 VA or better should be sufficient to give you time to perform a graceful shutdown of the quilting that is in process. Again, look for the let-through voltage protection rating mentioned above.

The Handi Quilter warranty states that machines must be unplugged from the wall outlet (not merely turned off) when not in use. The random nature of lightning strikes can also nullify the protection offered by surge suppressors so this is still the best protective measure you can employ.