

Power factor-What is it anyway?

Power factor is a measurement of the electricity being used efficiently in your home or business. The operative word here is **efficiently**. To measure the power factor for the electricity you are paying for is not difficult but you will need special tools to do so. It is safe to assume that the average home has a power factor of 60-75%. Business can be much lower than that because of the greater need to draw more power for inductive loads.

Ideally, everyone should be operating at 95% efficiency. That means anything less than that represents the percentage of power you are paying for but not using. A simple example would be: If your power factor is .60 and realistically you should be at .95 then you are paying for but not using from 30-35% of the power flowing into your system. This is important, especially for small business owners because most power companies have the ability to penalize customers who have a low power factor by charging a penalty fee. You may not even realize this is happening because believe it or not, the power companies don't always label this fee in a way that you would recognize it.

Everyone needs to be concerned about this because, a low power factor causes a strain on your electrical distribution system and the wiring in your home or business. This strain heats the wiring and causes a loss in wattage. This means that all of your motors and circuits have to work harder to run efficiently and you end up paying for power you do not use.

Now that energy capacitors are readily available for residential homes and small business there is no reason anyone should be operating inefficiently or paying for more than they actually use. Do your homework and make sure you do not pay too much. I have seen residential capacitors being sold for as much as \$1500 and small business or three phase panels for as much as \$4,000. The return on investment can be a lot longer than necessary. It is possible to have a hard wired capacitor installed in your home or business for under \$500.00 – DON'T PAY TOO MUCH! Check the testing and the certifications and trust your distributor. Some are better than others and the technology is getting better all the time but the reality is the mission is the same. Increase your power factor and all of your appliances, electronics and equipment will run more efficiently and you will save substantial dollars each and every month.

While we are on the subject of "paying too much", another great product on the market today is foil insulation. Different companies label the product as Radiant Barrier, Utility Shield, Energy Saver RB, Energy Blanket, Foil Blanket ... whatever the name most have the same range of weights and types and all products are comparable and do the same job. This product works in all climates, especially in the southeast by keeping the sun's rays out of the attic and cutting down on the cost of cooling one's home or business. This product is usually marked at dinner shows where you are invited to get a free dinner in exchange for listening to a presentation about the product. Then comes the pitch-but you will not know what the price is unless you allow the sales person into your home so they can measure your attic. The price will end up being between \$1.50 and \$3.00 a sq. ft. installed. Just buying the product and installing it yourself is not usually an option when buying from one of the companies that market in this way. This product does work and those who have installed it do save energy and money. You can have this product drop shipped to your home for under .50 sq. ft. and install it yourself or hire someone in your area to do it for you for about reasonable price. Do the math and you will save a lot more money and your return on investment will be much quicker. Get more information from A-1 Energy Doctor and then make an informed decision.

Remember, the higher the power factor, the less amperage you will need to run your home or business. You will use less kilowatt hours and increase the efficiency of your inductive loads and most importantly you will reduce your energy bills. For additional information or inquiries, contact Linda Morneau info@alenergydoctor.com or go to her site <http://www.alenergydoctor.com>

