

## HORTICULTURE PRODUCER

POWER SOLUTIONS  
CASE STUDY of  
**MIDWEST  
GROUNDCOVERS**



## MPS: THE SCALABLE SOLUTION FOR A GROWING OPERATION

### UNITS

600 kW Diesel  
Modular Power System

### LOCATION

Virgil, Illinois

For growing businesses, Generac's Modular Power System (MPS) is a cost-effective solution for backup power requirements. This multiple generator system provides powerful advantages as operations expand, offering flexibility, scalability and redundancy at reduced cost. With onboard paralleling capabilities built right in, MPS eliminates the need for expensive stand-alone switchgear, and brings paralleled power within reach for a broad assortment of power-intensive applications.

Like building blocks, Generac's modular gensets and automatic transfer switches can be cost effectively added as needed. For major projects, this reduces the initial capital expense, and allows the cost of additional equipment to be spread out over future years. Better yet, it is no longer necessary to invest upfront in a large, expensive system to meet anticipated or projected needs that may or may not develop.

Midwest Groundcovers of Saint Charles, Illinois is a growing company, in more ways than one. This horticultural producer, founded in 1969 and now one

of the Midwest's premier growers, is in the business of raising a wide variety of plants for landscaping companies, garden centers, nurseries, municipalities, and wholesalers. Currently, the company focuses on four different segments of the market—groundcovers, perennials, shrubs, and roses. Midwest is one of just six growers nationwide that is authorized to grow the popular Flower Carpet variety of rose, making its inventory of those plants especially valuable.

Midwest's expanding business has prompted the purchase and development of a 250 acre growing site in rural Virgil, Illinois, twenty miles from the company's headquarters. Operations began there in 2002, and a multi-year construction program is well underway. When completed in future years, there will be five major outdoor growing areas plus several greenhouses making up the complex.

With an operation of this magnitude, and millions of dollars of fragile inventory,

“Ultimately, we expect to have four units operating in parallel and backing up each other, with up to 2400 kW on call in the event of an outage,” said Robert Adolph, construction and maintenance manager. “With this system, we won't ever have to worry about being without power.”

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*Generac's Digital Control Platform is an advanced control system that exemplifies its engineering innovation.*



Midwest cannot afford the risk of a power outage. Electricity is absolutely crucial for a variety of the company's activities, notes Robert Adolph, construction and maintenance manager. "Power is essential to all our operations," he says, "from office computers and communications, to pumping water and circulating the air inside the greenhouses. One of those structures has a flexible plastic roof that is kept inflated by air pressure inside the building. If an outage occurs, we lose that air pressure and maybe the roof also, if it's windy at the time. In a matter of hours, all the valuable plant material inside that building could be lost, and that would be devastating to our business. Because our utility supply is prone to interruption, a backup generator system was a must."

Generac's Modular Power System provided the best solution to Midwest Groundcover's dynamic expansion plans, because of its flexibility and scalability. For the first phase of the project, a single 600 kilowatt MPS diesel unit is providing backup power to the site, housed within a dedicated building that has plenty of room for

up to three additional gensets in the future. The genset features Generac's PowerManager® Digital Control Platform (DCP), the latest advance in control and paralleling technology. For this installation, the versatile DCP functions as both a generator controller and system controller. The first genset was operational in January of 2004, and within weeks was covering power requirements during a half-hour outage.

"As our expansion proceeds, we'll add a second 600 kW generator," Robert Adolph says. "Ultimately, we expect to have four units operating in parallel and backing up each other, with up to 2400 kW on call in the event of an outage. With this system, we won't ever have to worry about being without power."

## **GENERAC®**

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