



WHAT MAKES A 'GOOD' WARRANTY AND HOW TO KEEP YOUR AIR COMPRESSOR COVERED

By Jim Pliske

Ensuring the smooth operation of your compressed air system depends on more than a quality product and regular maintenance – you also need to safeguard your investment with a manufacturer's product warranty. The warranty is both a promise from the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) as well as a testament to the OEM's confidence in the compressor's quality. The warranty can provide added reliability (when warranty conditions are maintained) and peace of mind in knowing your investment is protected against unforeseen issues.

A warranty, however, is only as good as the partnership between the buyer and the OEM. Warranty guidelines are put in place to ensure the machinery is maintained throughout the coverage period. If a buyer does not properly maintain an air compressor according to the warranty guidelines, the compressor is at risk of failure.

In this blog, I'll cover what makes an air compressor warranty a 'good warranty,' as well as important tips on keeping your compressor covered - and running its best.

The Promise of Great Performance & The Importance of Warranty Quality

An OEM air compressor warranty is an assurance the product you purchased has been tested and is engineered to perform for a minimum number of years under certain conditions. If, for some reason,



Ensure you have a thorough understanding of the warranty, including maintenance requirements to prevent repair delays and potentially voiding the warranty.

the compressor fails, the OEM honors the warranty and repairs or replaces compressor components based on the warranty agreement. Sounds obvious enough, but not all warranties are the same. Some don't offer access to immediate repair, requiring the compressor owner to first obtain pre-approval from the OEM for any type of failure before the compressor can be repaired for warranty consideration. When air power is down, often so is an entire operation making speedy repairs all the more important.

Other compressor manufacturers may pro-rate warranty coverage based on time in service and payout at a lower rate. For example, if your compressor fails and you have six months left

on your one-year warranty, the OEM will only pay half the coverage. Other OEMs (including Hitachi Global Air Power) cover 100% of the costs for parts, labor and travel - even up to the last day of the warranty.

The quality and contingencies of a warranty may vary depending on the OEM, but good/quality warranties often offer one to two years of coverage on major compressor components with added coverage options for using OEM parts and regular maintenance. The OEM's definition of regular maintenance can include oil sampling with a certified service tech. Good warranties also allow for flexibility in who manages the routine maintenance. Some may mandate approved service technicians while others will allow technician flexibility as long as genuine OEM parts are used. If you can get a warranty program that offers extended terms when OEM parts are used, flexibility with service techs and non-pro-rated coverage, you have found a warranty winner*.

Signs of a great warranty:

1. Coverage is not pro-rated
2. Extended warranty for regular maintenance and OEM part usage
3. Service flexibility

Follow the Instructions

The fastest way to void a manufacturer's warranty is to not follow the warranty terms and conditions. Be sure to read the warranty carefully to ensure you understand the parameters of what is covered and what your responsibilities as the buyer are. Also, be sure to register your compressor as soon as possible after purchasing. This activates the warranty and is necessary should you need to make a claim down the road. Registering your compressor also keeps you up-to-date with the latest product updates or bulletins from the OEM. Finally, registering the compressor helps your authorized service provider find your facility faster; an important benefit if your compressor breaks down and you need service fast.

Any warranty worth its weight will require the buyer to perform regular maintenance to keep the compressor in good working order. Everything from oil changes, filter replacements and regular inspections should be



A good warranty is not pro-rated and offers service flexibility.

conducted according to the terms of the warranty. Make sure to keep detailed records of all service and maintenance. The other crucial part of following warranty instructions, as stated above, is to use genuine OEM parts for repairs. OEM parts are specifically engineered to not only fit the compressor but perform at a higher level. It may be tempting to use a will-fit filter for example because you have one on hand, and it may be less expensive, but this will almost certainly void your warranty and can cause performance issues or unwanted downtime. As the saying goes, you get what you pay for.

Location may also be included in a warranty's terms. Understanding the operating conditions allowed by the warranty will keep you from inadvertently voiding the warranty if your compressor placement is incorrect.

Your Part in the Warranty Process:

- Make sure you understand what coverages are included
- Consider compressor placement
- Total ownership – care and maintenance
 - Regular maintenance
 - Quality aftermarket products – lubricants, filters
 - Education – partner with someone who knows the compressor system

At the end of the day, it is important to fully understand your warranty coverage, even more so when moving from the standard warranty timeframe, to an extended warranty arrangement. Typically, standard warranties have fewer requirements than extended warranty terms. Many people cruise through the standard warranty, thinking everything is great, but have an issue once the extended warranty kicks in; they learn the hard way they were supposed to be doing things like oil sampling and following OEM maintenance schedules.

A good, quality warranty is essential for air compressor owners, providing protection against unexpected expenses. However, it is equally important for compressor owners to understand and follow the terms and conditions of their warranty. By reading the warranty, registering the compressor, and following the maintenance, repair and parts requirements, your compressed air system will be protected, and you can enjoy peace of mind.

**Hitachi Global Air Power offers one of the best warranties on the market and includes all three benefits listed above on Sullair air compressor warranties.*