

Diagnostics, testing, and parts

Diagnostics & testing is a significant part of RV repair. Many service calls are initiated with a message from the customer stating “Furnace not working,” for example. Our approach will begin with an attempt to walk the customer through some basic steps to get the component going. If that doesn’t work, we will initiate a service call. The important thing to understand here is that the service call must and will begin with diagnostics.

The diagnostic process can take many forms. Some are quite simple and require only simple fixes like a fuse replacement, for example. Others may require us to disassemble major areas of the coach to accommodate component removal. There may be one continuous part failure, or multiple part failures that compound themselves. The problem could be intermittent. And the real challenging ones may have multiple failures that are all intermittent.

Given this range of potential scenarios, when we provide an estimate for a repair that requires diagnostics, the estimate will generally include one hour of on-site time that represents a starting point and rate disclosure. There are cases when complex diagnostics prove to require more time than will be represented on the estimate. Conversely, the estimated time may prove sufficient for diagnostics and in some cases the estimated time will even be sufficient to diagnose *and* correct the problem. This will all be unknown until we arrive at your location and begin our work.

Parts

For context, repairs in your home are most often attended by specific tradespeople for each system, i.e. plumbers, electricians, etc. Not so the case with RV repairs. There’s a miniaturized version of each home system in many RVs, with one trade to attend to them all; RV Repair services. Because of this, and the vast number of variations there are for each component and system, RV Repair services keep inventory that is limited to universal parts and common failure point parts. Thus, parts procurement is often required for repairs to be completed.

To compare RV repair to yet another analogous trade, consider the parts procurement process for the automotive repair business vs. RV repair. When a part is needed, an auto repair shop can get on the phone with a local parts supplier and, in many cases, have the part delivered to their door within a couple of hours or the next morning at no additional cost. No such delivery service exists for RV’s and there are far fewer parts suppliers. If your repair is non-urgent, and the part is identifiable, we can often source them from the internet. If the repairs don’t meet these criteria, travelling to one of the very limited number of local RV parts stores is required.

Your Role

We at RV Wizards are obsessive about being your advocate and do our very best to provide the most cost-effective service possible. In this spirit, we’d like to pass along ways you can proactively keep the diagnostics and testing process to the minimum possible cost.

Firstly, the more information you can give us, the more prepared we can be when we arrive at your location. We encourage you inform us of the issue that you are having along with the symptoms you are seeing. Does your refrigerator work on shore power but not LP? Does your furnace fan run but not

generate heat? Model and serial number of the component in question is also good. A picture of the data tag is a quick solution here.

Then, there's diagnostic preparation. Unlike automotive repair, RVs often sit idle for long periods and are therefore often not in the ready condition. Creating the conditions for conclusive diagnostics and testing, which is roughly the condition the RV needs to be in prior to use, can often consume a significant amount of time. Here are some simple steps you can take to keep it to a minimum:

- In nearly all cases, regardless of what diagnostics are needed, adequate power is required. We suggest that you charge your batteries as best you can before we arrive. Even if you think they need to be replaced, they must be charged to the maximum possible level for us to test them.
- In cases where plumbing repairs are needed we often do most of our troubleshooting using compressed air that we provide. Compressed air is a superior medium for testing plumbing integrity, however it does not work in every case, so we suggest that you have some water in your freshwater holding tank and/or access to a garden hose spigot within fifty feet.
- In order to test the LP consumers, LP gas is required.
- And so on....

We come equipped to create diagnostic conditions in almost all cases whether you take steps to prepare your RV or not. Just be aware that our rates are between \$ 129/hr. and \$225/hr., depending on the number of technicians your job requires and the time of day/week we visit. That means that the time we spend doing the things we listed above cost the customer between \$2 & \$4 a minute.