

Be Car Care Aware[®]

Five Steps Toward Better Battery Behavior

(NAPSA)—Here's hot news about your car battery that may seem surprising: It's not so much the cold that gets it down as it is high heat.

Heat causes battery fluid to evaporate, thus damaging the internal structure of the battery. That's why it's a good idea to check your battery as the seasons change from hotter to cooler or if you've been driving in a hot part of the country.

Here's what else to do about your battery.

Battery BATTERERS

Another reason for shortened battery life is overcharging. That is, a malfunctioning component in the charging system, usually the voltage regulator, can allow too high a charging rate, leading to slow death for a battery, explained Rich White, executive director, Car Care Council.

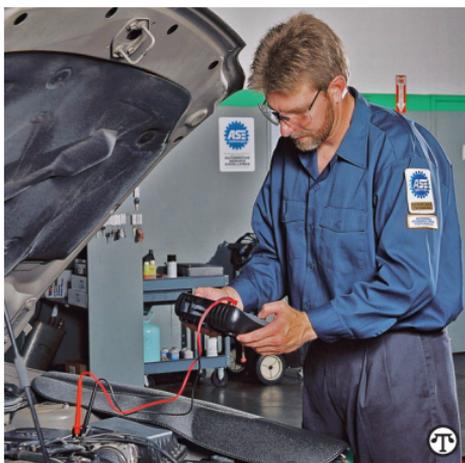
In addition, colder temperatures can increase the thickness of the engine oil, making the engine harder to turn over, causing the battery to have to work more. These factors lead to harder starting.

What You Can Do

To get the most life out of a battery, the Car Care Council suggests the following simple steps:

- Be sure the electrical system is charging at the correct rate; overcharging can damage a battery as quickly as undercharging.

- If your battery is the type that needs to be topped off, check it regularly. Add distilled water when necessary.



Don't let the weather get your car down. Check the battery when the seasons change.

- Always replace a battery with one that's rated at least as high as the one originally specified.

- Have the battery checked if you notice headlights and interior lights dim, accessories that fail to operate, or the "check engine" or battery light illuminated.

- Keep the top of the battery clean. Dirt becomes a conductor, which drains battery power. Further, as corrosion accumulates on battery terminals, it becomes an insulator, inhibiting current flow.

Learn More

The Car Care Council is the source of information for the "Be Car Care Aware" consumer education campaign promoting the benefits of regular vehicle care, maintenance and repair to consumers.

For a free copy of the council's popular "Car Care Guide" or for more information, visit www.carcare.org.