

Above and Beyond Auto Repair

About Your Battery & Charging System

The environment your battery and alternator has to live in is quite hostile. Under hood temperatures can exceed 350 degrees. Combine this with everything you expect from the battery and alternator and its little wonder they last as long as they do.

As our environmental conditions change from one extreme to another so does the requirements placed on these components. During the sub-freezing temperatures, we expect our vehicles to start and during the sweltering heat of summer, we want our air conditioning to cool us down. Both of these extremes are very hard on the vehicles electrical system. The battery must maintain a minimum operating voltage and hold a reserve charge to be used for starting. The alternator must provide all of the electrical demands we place on the system (lights, defrosters, A/C, radio, etc.) and still charge the battery back up to optimum operating voltages.

If a battery has become weak and cannot perform the necessary functions, it places extra demand on the alternator. When the alternator is forced to work constantly, it will not last as long, increase fuel consumption, increase engine operating temperatures, wear out other vital components (belts, idler-pulleys, etc.,).

Generally a 60 – 70 month battery will only last three to four years before a decline in performance is noticed. Having the battery tested before the extreme of any season is upon us is the best way to detect if your battery/charging system is starting to become weak and will only take a few moments.

Ignoring a potential problem in the charging system will result in many problems with the electrical system of your vehicle, including computer problems, drivability, performance, reliability, fuel economy and vehicle dependability.