PREVENTION ZONE

Helping you to stay in "Good Hands®"

Jump Starting Your Car

Winter's snow covered roads, decreased visibility and icy temperatures can make any drive a challenge. When temperatures drop below freezing, your car may be hard to start (even with proper maintenance) due to the negative effect cold has on your vehicle's battery. In fact, at five degrees Fahrenheit, a fully charged battery has only half of its rated capacity. So, what if you find yourself with a dead battery, or one that's too weak to start your vehicle? One solution that can get you quickly back on the road is to jump-start your vehicle by following these simple steps. As always, keep safety in mind and call a professional when needed.

SAFETY FIRST

- Gases emitted by automotive batteries are flammable. Keep any flames, sparks and even lit cigarettes away from the area as they might ignite battery gases and cause an explosion.
- Never connect the negative jumper cable (Black) to the negative battery terminal (-) on the vehicle receiving the jump. A spark could cause the gases that surround the battery to explode.
- Avoid contact with battery acid--it can cause a chemical burn. If you accidentally touch battery acid, rinse the affected area with water and seek medical attention.
- If you are uncomfortable with jump starting a vehicle, call a towing service or roadside assistance to perform the procedure for you
- Remember to stay clear of fan blades, belts and any other moving parts
- To avoid possible electrical surges, turn off the heater/air conditioning fan and any other electrical accessories

GETTING STARTED

- Park the booster vehicle close to the hood of the vehicle with the dead battery, making sure that the vehicles do not touch, then shift both vehicles into PARK and set the parking brakes

CONNECT THE JUMPER CABLES

- Connect the positive jumper cable (Red) to the positive terminal (+) on the "dead" battery
- Connect the other end of the positive cable to the positive battery terminal on the vehicle providing the jump
- Connect the negative cable (Black) to the negative terminal (-) on the vehicle providing the jump
- Connect the other end of the negative cable to an exposed metal part of the vehicle with the dead battery (e.g., unpainted components like brackets, bolts, etc. provide the best ground and should be easy to spot)
- Do not attach the negative cable (Black) on the disabled vehicle to the engine, alternator or any aluminum parts

READY, SET, JUMP

- Start the vehicle with the good battery (vehicle providing the jump) and run the engine at a moderate speed (a bit above idle usually works best – keeping the car in PARK, have the driver press lightly on the gas pedal to raise the idle – "rev" the engine)
- Start the disabled vehicle
- Let both vehicles run for two to three minutes before disconnecting the jumper cables (see instructions below)

DISCONNECT THE JUMPER CABLES

- Remove the black cable from the ground point on the previously disabled vehicle
- Remove the other end of the negative cable from the battery of the vehicle providing the jump
- Remove the positive cable from the battery of the vehicle providing the jump
- Remove the positive cable from the previously disabled vehicle

Once you get going, if possible, have someone follow you to make sure you arrive without any further problems. Depending on the age of your battery, you may want to take your car in for service and have your battery checked. Also, consider keeping a set of jumper cables in your trunk as part of a winter car safety kit. They can be purchased at most auto parts retailers.

Visit Allstate Be Aware and Prepare and the Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety for more, helpful information.