Starting Strong All Winter Long: Winter Battery Tips from AutoZone

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MEMPHIS, Tenn., Dec. 5 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Winter weather is tough on a vehicle, but it is the battery that suffers the most when the temperatures drop. Your vehicle's battery loses 33% of its power when the temperature dips below freezing and over 50% of its power when the temperature falls below zero. To make matters worse, your vehicle requires more power in the winter to turn over the engine and run the heater and defroster. A weakened battery can easily fail to start your vehicle, leaving you stranded in dangerously cold temperatures.

Fortunately, performing proper battery maintenance can help you avoid getting stuck when the weather turns cold. AutoZone, the nation's leading retailer of automotive and light truck parts, recommends that drivers follow these guidelines to help their batteries survive the winter:

- Clean your battery's terminals -- Corrosion of your battery terminals can be a major source of problems in cold weather. The corrosion keeps power from flowing freely from the battery, reducing the power that is available to start the car. To avoid this, clean your battery terminals with a wire brush or spray some battery cleaner on the terminals. Just be sure to wear safety glasses and take proper safety measures when working with a battery.
- Give your battery a good check-up -- If your battery is three years old or older, you should have it tested to make sure it can survive the coldest winter months. And don't forget to have your battery tested before you take a long trip or after it's been recharged.
- Don't give up on your battery -- Just because you needed a boost to start your car on a cold morning doesn't necessarily mean that you need a new battery. Your battery depends on a properly functioning charging system, so make sure the system is working well before buying a new battery. Your local AutoZone can test both your battery and your charging system for free, helping you save money and time by identifying the real problem.
- Be smart when you jump-start-If the battery fails, and you need to jump-start a vehicle, be sure to follow the vehicle manufacturer guidelines. Jump-starting incorrectly can be dangerous and can damage the vehicle's electrical system, so always exercise caution when working with the battery and other electrical components. Once again, you should always wear safety glasses and take all appropriate safety measures to prevent injury.

For free battery and charging system testing, and for more information on proper battery maintenance, visit your nearby AutoZone store.

About AutoZone

As of August 31, 2002, AutoZone sells auto and light truck parts, chemicals and accessories through 3,068 AutoZone stores in 44 states plus the District of Columbia, 39 AutoZone stores in Mexico and online at http://www.autozone.com. AutoZone also sells automotive diagnostic and repair software through ALLDATA and http://www.alldatadiy.com .

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/CONTACT: Media: Ray Pohlman, +1-901-495-7962, ray.pohlman@autozone.com, or Financial: Jay Cook, +1-901 495-7005, jay.cook@autozone.com, both of AutoZone, Inc. /

/Web site: http://www.autozone.com