

# MAFES Dawg Tracks



January 19, 2009

Safety Tips: Battery Safety



Battery safety is a subject that none of us probably take very seriously. I have experienced first-hand what a battery explosion can do for you, through an experience where the battery actually exploded in my Dad's face. He had glasses which shielded much of the acid from his eyes but had facile burns. We must be careful and respect batteries as we do other equipment.

Lead-acid batteries are chemical machines that produce power on demand. Typically, batteries have many individual cells containing layers of lead plates immersed in sulfuric acid. As the sulfuric acid contacts the lead plates, power or energy is produced. The batteries have two main posts, a positive and a negative. Batteries will usually have vent caps on top, which serve two purposes, to check and maintain water and acid levels and to allow fumes to escape when the battery is charging.

## **SAFETY TIPS FOR WORKING WITH BATTERIES:**

- *Keep sparks & flames away from batteries.*
- *Remove wrist watches, which might make electrical contact and create sparks.*
- *Wear safety goggles or a face shield when cleaning or inspecting a battery.*
- *If acid penetrates the eye, flush with running water for 30 minutes and see a doctor.*

- *If acid contacts the skin, wash the affected area immediately with plenty of water.*
- *Avoid chemical burns by not rubbing the eyes or skin while working with batteries.*
- *Wash your hands immediately after completing the battery work.*
- *Clean up all acid spills and flush clothing with a solution of water and baking soda.*
- *Make sure that vent caps are on tight and level. Placing a damp cloth over the vent caps when charging may act as a flame arrester.*
- *Keep batteries away from children.*
- *Smoking or open flames should never be present in a battery area, and ventilation is very important.*
- *Batteries should be stored in a cool, dry place. Temperatures in the storage area should be between 32 f. & 80 f. degrees.*
- *Don't make live connection directly to the battery. Explosive gases can be set off by a match, incorrect connection of battery cables, and careless use of tools around the battery.*
- *Use proper lifting techniques when moving batteries. Batteries are small, but heavy and awkward to lift.*

I hope that you will heed these tips when working with batteries, thus avoiding the possibility of an accident occurring, resulting in a harmful injury.

**USE SAFETY AS A VITAL TOOL~  
AT WORK IT'S THE  
"GOLDEN RULE"**