



Hints For Homeowners

Top Ten Battery Basics

(NAPSA)—If your home is like most, you have some 26 different battery-operated devices—from flashlights to smoke detectors to cordless phones—around the house.

To keep things running smoothly, homeowners should include testing those devices and replacing the batteries with fresh ones and discarding properly of old batteries, according to Interstate Batteries' Gale Kimbrough, also known as "Mr. Battery." Here is a good spring checklist to make the most of your battery-operated devices.

1. Smoke Alarm Test: Test smoke alarms once a month and change the batteries at least twice a year. Ensure there's at least one working smoke alarm on every level of your house, particularly in or near sleeping areas. It's also time to replace the batteries if the detector emits a warning sound, such as chirping or beeping. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, about 3,000 people in the U.S. lose their lives in residential fires every year—you don't have to be among them.

2. Flashlights For Emergencies: Make sure flashlights with fresh batteries are stored in multiple places in the house and car—in a cabinet or drawer, near your bed and in the glove compartment.

3. Charge Batteries After Storage: A battery will eventually lose its charge if unused. Check to see if your stored batteries need recharging.

4. Keep the Batteries Clean: Clean dirty battery contacts with a cotton swab and rubbing alcohol. This helps maintain a good connection between the battery and the portable device.

5. Don't Mix Batteries: Don't mix old batteries with new ones to prevent the potential safety hazard that can come from the battery leaking or rupturing and possibly injuring someone or damaging the device.



Test smoke alarms monthly and change the batteries when they beep but at least every six months.

6. Organize Batteries: Consider getting a battery organizer with varying battery sizes to accommodate a wide range of household devices. Have a storage unit to hold AAA, AA, C, D and 9V alkaline batteries with a built-in tester and store it in a drawer or mounted on a wall for easy access.

7. Weather Preparedness: A power outage is a bad time to realize you need new batteries in your portable battery-powered radio.

8. Prep Your Camera: A digital camera can quickly drain the life out of an alkaline battery. Be camera ready by installing alkaline batteries specially designed for high-drain applications.

9. Recycle Batteries: Discarded batteries, if not properly recycled, can deposit lead, acid and mercury into lakes, streams and landfills.

10. Test Your Car Battery: Have your auto battery checked to make sure it is fully charged.

Kimbrough says Interstate All Battery Center makes battery maintenance easy, with thousands of different batteries available to help with just about any household gadget: "Powering the Things That Make Life Better."

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