Keeping Your Car Battery On Track For Winter

(NAPSA)—Preventing a frozen battery in the winter is easier than you may think if you take some time to check out the situation before nasty weather sets in.

To ensure that your car battery starts dependably, no matter how outrageous the weather, Interstate Batteries cold weather expert Gale Kimbrough offers some simple tips to protect your car battery against severe cold conditions:

Test the starting power: The cold weather can dramatically reduce a battery's available starting power, so have the vehicle's starting and charging system tested every three months or every oil change.

Charge the battery: Use a battery charger to maintain charge levels and keep the battery in good condition. If the battery is more than three years old, it should be tested to make sure it can survive the coldest winter months.

Test the battery: Have the battery tested before taking a long trip or after it's been recharged.

Inspect the battery cables, posts and fasteners: Preparing your car for the winter doesn't end with the battery itself. You need to inspect your battery cables, posts and fasteners. Make sure the cables are in good shape and are secured firmly to the battery. Corrosion keeps power from flowing freely from the battery, reducing the power that is available to start the car.

Keep it clean: Clean the battery terminals with a wire brush or spray some battery cleaner on the terminals.

Here's a cool idea: Be sure your car's battery is in good condition before venturing out into the cold.

In just 30 seconds, Interstate All Battery Center locations can provide motorists with a free printout analysis of their vehicle's battery condition—from projected battery life to cranking performance. It's important to have the battery and electrical system checked by a professional. Sometimes the naked eye cannot detect the presence of corrosion because it is hidden under the metal between the connection and the post.

A fully charged battery is the best defense against cold weather and vehicle nonstarts because engines require more cranking amps in colder weather. The cold also reduces a battery's efficiency, reducing its charge acceptance and ability to start an engine. An engine at 32 degrees Fahrenheit often demands more than 150 percent cranking power from the battery than it does at 80 degrees. At 0 degrees Fahrenheit, it can be 250 percent.

For more information, visit www.interstatebatteries.com.