



# From the Garage

by Paul Hunter

## IS YOUR MODEL A BATTERY DEAD OR JUST SNOOZING!!!

This is a good opportunity to remind everyone of the importance of periodically cleaning corrosion from battery terminals and other electrical connections, such as in the electrical box, generator and ammeter. The battery is the heart of your Model A's electrical system. I am sure that many of us have had the experience of turning on the ignition switch, putting our left foot on the starter button and hello, no one is home, of course, this always happens when you are in a hurry and don't have time to wait on the charger to charge the battery.

*"Too often during routine Model A maintenance the battery is forgotten because it is hidden under the floorboard and hard to get to". quote Steve Driver*

The following are some suggestions for keeping your battery in top-notch condition. These general maintenance tips will extend the life of your battery. Make sure the battery is secured to the battery box so vibration and jolting will not crack the case. Check the water level before every run. It should be just touching the bottom of the refill hole. Refill the battery, when needed, with distilled water. Don't use tap water, which produces corrosion on the terminals. Don't overfill the cells, just to the bottom of the refill hole is perfect. The electrolyte (battery fluid) may boil from the vents in the fill caps during charging. This electrolyte can then form a conductive path between the terminal posts on top of the battery. To prevent this, the battery should be inspected and the top wiped clean with a rag and clear water. If the battery is operated for a period of time with the electrolyte level below the top of the lead plates, the exposed lead plates will sulfate and cause failure. The result is a dead battery.



At this time it is probably a good idea to remove the cable connectors from the terminal posts. Inspect and if corrosion is present, clean the posts and connectors. This is much easier via the use of a specially designed tool for this purpose. These cleaning tools can be purchased from Repco or Super Cheap auto stores. When removing a connector from a terminal, twist it from side to side and pull gently upward, refrain from excessive tugging or prying. When the battery cables are re-connected a coating of dielectric grease will retard this corrosion process (dielectric grease is a non-conductive, silicone grease designed to seal out moisture and, therefore, prevent corrosion on electrical connectors). When reconnecting a connector to a terminal, seat it down firmly on the post. If the corrosion is left unchecked it will eat the metal battery box. I bet many of you have found an original battery box with the bottom plate heavily corroded.



*I highly recommend everyone checking their battery condition and just cleaning it real quick, takes about 15 minutes, it's really simple to do.*

**Good advice,** Whenever you park your car for an extended period of time, pull the fuse out of the holder and stand it on its head in one end of the holder. I have fitted a battery disconnect switch. This way everything except the starter switch is disconnected from the battery