

TOOLBOX TALK

January 2018

Charging Vehicle Batteries Safely

Batteries contain acid and can explode and/or catch on fire. When a battery explodes, acid and explosive gases are released. When acid contacts the skin, extremely painful burns result. Blindness will likely result if this acid contacts the eyes.

Charging batteries may be hazardous, especially when connecting the battery charger to the battery.

Connecting the wrong polarity (red/+ to black/-) may cause a short-circuit which could result in explosion of the battery.



Connect red/+ to red/+ and black/- to black/- and always follow manufacturer's operating instructions for charging.

- ◆ Ensure the battery charging unit is de-energized before making your connections.
- ◆ Once the connections are made, turn on the charging unit.

When batteries are being charged, small amounts of hydrogen are produced. Heat and sparks can ignite this gas causing a fire or explosion. **All smoking, open flames, and spark-producing items such as grinders, welders, or other electrical equipment, should be kept well clear of batteries.** Surface leakage is a condition caused when dust mixes with spilled electrolyte on the battery, creating a low resistance path that can cause the battery to “short” and potentially cause a fire.