



Airstream Tech Help Group

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This group, part of the WBCCI Technical Standing Committee, has been established to help the membership with any of their technical RV problems. Examples of questions that might be of interest to many members will be published in the *Blue Beret*. We will respond directly to you, in response to your email or letter describing a problem you are having. We hope you will find this new service of value in the care and feeding of your RV. You may contact us as follows: techhelp@wbcci.org or by mail: Howard Lefkowitz, 11508 Colt Terrace, Silver Spring, MD 20902

Powered Stabilizer Not Working

QUESTION: I am hoping that you might be able to assist us. We have a 2001 70th Anniversary 30' Airstream. One of the rear power stabilizers is not lowering. I looked in our Airstream technical notebook and did not find anything on the operation or repair of the powered stabilizers. We are debating on whether it is a quick fix or one that requires a trip to an RV service shop.

ANSWER: There are two usual failure modes for a non-working stabilizer.

1. Broken power wire (12 volt line) or ground wire
2. Burned out switch

Check the wires first and then check for 12 volts at the switch terminal. If the input voltage is correct, check the output of the switch. The rating for these switches is marginal especially on the older trailers. If you suspect the switch, try a jumper across it. If you have to replace the switch, find a unit that has at least a 20-amp rating. Very often you can smell burnt material on a defective switch.

Some installers use 15 amp rated switches and this is marginal. These are momentary type, which means you have to hold them on for the stabilizer to work.

Howard

Furnace Disconnected

PROBLEM: I have a problem with the furnace. It is a suburban M/M NF 30S and has never worked. Previous owner disconnected the gas line and installed a small gas space heater, which I removed.

I removed the furnace from the coach and set it up on workbench rigged with a 12V battery. I jumped out the t-stat and the blower came on. I checked all switches and they seem to be OK.

I get no power to valves or electrode. My guess is a bad module board.

Would appreciate any info you could provide to either repair or replace.

ANSWER: Not likely! We know it worked when new. If the previous owner could not easily find the problem (since he replaced it with a portable unit), it must be a somewhat difficult one. My guess is the fan switch, which actuates when the air is blowing and allows power to be sent to the electrode and valve. You cannot check the rest of the heater without propane. I am enclosing a Seminar on fixing the heater. It describes the operation sequence, how the heater works and things to check. Let me know if you need anything else.

Howard

Diesel Motorhome Battery System

PROBLEM: I have a 2001, 390 Land Yacht motorhome with a 330 Cat engine. The coach was built in 2001 but was titled in 2002. My question is: Will shore power charge both batteries and not overcharge them if left plugged in while in storage for perhaps 2 weeks? I understand if I hit the disconnect switch by the entry steps and don't plug into a landline that the batteries will still be used to supply the electronics in the coach and run them down. Does this apply to one or both sets of batteries? Do I need to remove and isolate the negative cables on one or both sets of batteries when left in storage with no landline power for say a couple of months? Thank you for your time and effort to answer my questions.

ANSWER:

1. Both of your battery systems are being charged from shore power, the generator or the engine. When you are using the landline (shore power), the Trace inverter/charger provides the proper charge level regardless of the batteries charge state. It has a computer controlled charging system. When your batteries are fully charged, the Trace will go into a trickle mode. This means you can connect to shore power and just leave it connected until you are ready to use the motorhome. I leave my charging

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- system on all of the time when I am home.
2. The disconnect switch removes the coach battery supply to your Intellitec Battery Control Center. I have enclosed a manual for the Intellitec Battery Control Center. **Figure (1) Disconnect-Switched Coach Battery – Fuses** is a list of what is turned off when you operate the disconnect switch. Your RV only has one disconnect relay/switch and it is on the coach battery. This includes many lights, several fans, furnace, refrigerator, water pump, etc. Some RV's have a second switch that disconnects the engine battery.
 3. You do not have to remove the ground cables on the batteries when you store the rig. If you activate the disconnect switch (remove power to the Intellitec from the coach battery) all of the heavy-duty loads on the coach battery will be removed. The engine battery does not have any significant loads on it and should be able to start the rig after several months of sitting without being charged.
 4. A more serious problem is that if you are located where there is severe freezing weather and have lead acid batteries, if they are not in a reasonable charge state they could freeze and ultimately crack the case. This is not a problem if you have AGM batteries.

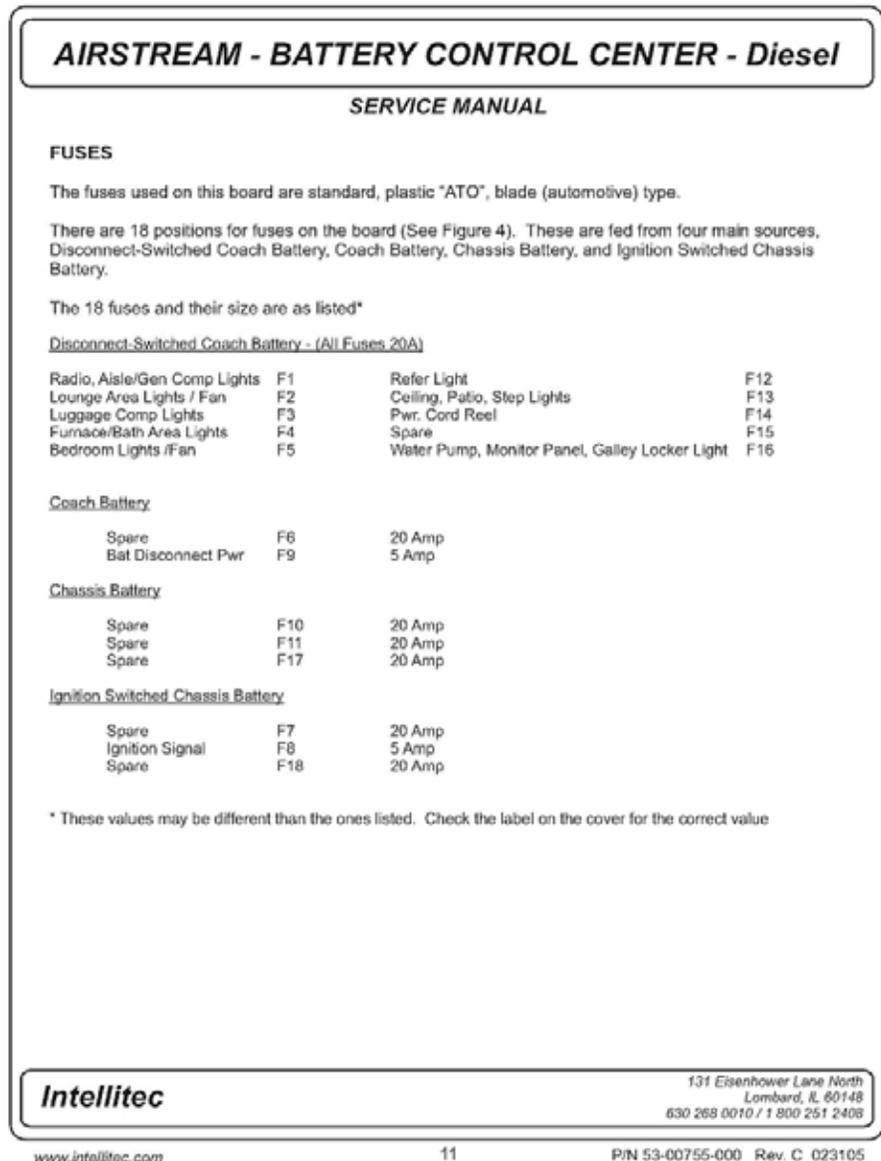


Figure (1)

Hydraulic Jack Fluid Leak

PROBLEM: I have a very small leak near my hydraulic jack pump on my Class A Motor Home. Is this serious?

ANSWER: This can be the beginning of a sudden complete loss of the entire tank and all of the hydraulic fluid. In some of the models, there is a design defect in the tank mounting. The plastic tank has a rubber end bonded to it. There is no support provided for the entire tank

and rubber end cap. The tank is mounted between two angle iron bars with no attachments. The tank end screws go through the rubber end cap gasket and into the pump assembly. When you fill the tank the fluid weight combined with the motor home bouncing produces small rips in the rubber end and will eventually tare it open. You have to support

the main tank and take the stress off the rubber end. You can use two very large plastic ties (1/2 inch) going to the angle iron on both sides of the tank. If you cross them, for good support, that should solve the problem. I recommend this for all hydraulic tanks on the Class A units that are not properly supported.

Howard