

MK Battery

THE POWERLINE

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF MK BATTERY



Volume 24
October 2004



Join Us At Medtrade
October 26-28, 2004
Orange County Convention Center
Orlando, FL
Booth# 2933

MK BATTERY ADDS NEW SERVICE CENTERS

MK Battery route service provides delivery, stock rotation and spent battery pickup by MK personnel for all of your battery needs, typically on a weekly basis.

Although slightly delayed by the hurricane season in Florida, MK Battery is pleased to announce the opening of its Port St. Lucie, Florida warehouse that will provide weekly route delivery service to all of southern Florida including the cities of Miami, Ft. Myers and Naples.

Planned for a November 2004 opening is our service center in Las Vegas, Nevada which will service the metropolitan areas of Las Vegas and Henderson with daily and weekly route delivery.

New Medical Device Brochure

MK Battery would like to announce that we have enhanced our battery offering to include the most common lead acid battery types used in the medical device field.

Many of our home healthcare dealers have requested specific battery types that fit into non mobility type applications such as infusion pumps, respiratory equipment, defibrillators, etc. and we are pleased to announce that many battery types are now available.

We have developed a Medical Device brochure that should help you in choosing the correct battery for your application and you can also depend on the superior battery performance you've come to expect from MK Battery.

Please phone us today and get a quote for the medical device batteries you need!

**We'll See
You
At The Show**



Is Your Customer Really A Small Battery Candidate?

Selecting the appropriate size battery for your power operated vehicle application (POV) is key to customer satisfaction and independence.

We are seeing situations where people are not able to be as community mobile as they need or expected to be with their power equipment. At a recent Mobility Roadshow in the UK MK Battery was approached by many consumers complaining that the range of equipment was not more than three to five miles on a charge.

Typically, these people were in newer, less costly chairs or scooters using battery sizes as small as 12 to 17 ampere hours. While most of these POVs had specifications indicating "indoor use, limited range and weight capacity" some of these people were probably too large or too active for the model provided. Some had actually doubled up on their batteries. Two sets on the same chair. This was the only way they felt sure of getting home.

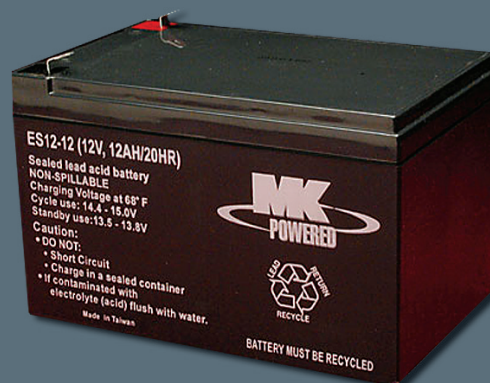
Battery capacity (ampere rating) is the equivalent to a gas tank, the larger the battery the more distance you can cover. With power-wheelchairs and scooters using smaller size batteries to reduce cost and weight we may be running into the analogy of using a ten-gallon gas tank on a Humvee, sure it would work but not well and not for long.

A point of differentiation in design for most manufacturers is split between power mobility equipment provided for use primarily indoors or less community mobile consumers; and the Rehab, Bariatric, or active users who need significant range or performance daily. Many of the "K11" or indoor scooter mobility products are being provided with smaller batteries, some as little as a third the size of the typical U-1 32AH batteries, which has long been an industry standard. If a consumer attempts to use these smaller size batteries heavily on a daily basis they will find the batteries will lose performance quickly and may not meet their needs or expectations.

Over utilizing the batteries capability will create a frequently heavily discharged battery.

Heavily discharged batteries require more time to recharge. Most people would think that 8 hours (the ISO 7176 Wheelchair Standard) of charging would be sufficient to recharge the batteries but that may not be the case. The problem is that when batteries are very deeply discharged they become more resistive to taking a charge so the necessary recharge time is significantly increased. This also increases the chances of early battery failure.

While funding and cost have a role in the equipment choice providers cannot let that be the overriding determination in product selection. The key to a successful match of equipment and user is in following the manufacturers' guidelines for user type, range capabilities, and performance expectations. And be sure your customer understands the design objectives of their mobility device. Proper application will better assure a satisfactory outcome for everyone.



Reminder...

MK carries alkalines!

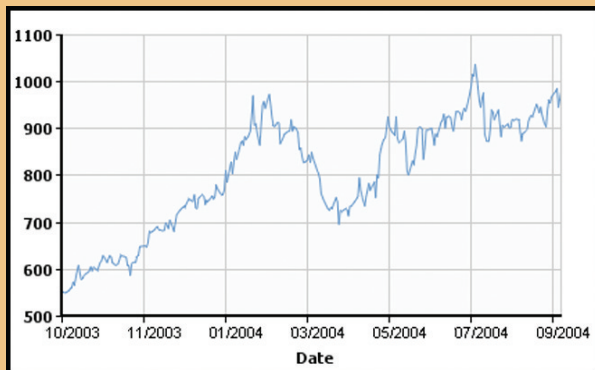
For AA, AAA, 9 Volt, C & D Batteries

Just call us at **800-372-9253**

Or visit us on the web at... **www.mkbattery.com**

LEAD SURCHARGE UPDATE

We would like to update all of our customers with information regarding the current price of lead and how it directly affects battery pricing for all of us. You may recall the price graph that was distributed in April 2004 which showed lead pricing at historically high levels. The most recent price graph submitted on September 27, 2004 shows that pricing remains quite high with analyst forecasting little relief in the near future.



A Bit Of Useful Information About Lead:

The largest market for lead is in battery production, consuming approximately two thirds of the lead produced in the western world. The worldwide cost of lead was predictable, relatively inexpensive (\$400-\$500/ton) and stable for many years however during the fourth quarter of 2003 lead market pricing began to rise. The rise in lead prices (now over \$900/ton) has been attributed to rather unique market conditions converging at the same time.

Domestic primary-production (mining) has been cut due to years of unprofitable market prices. Domestic secondary Production (recycling) has been reduced due to regulatory actions, increased production costs (energy), labor strikes and years of favorable market pricing. At the same time China's demand for lead significantly increased. Presently reported lead inventories are at record lows with stock

falling to 38,925 tons, down 64% from the end of 2003. This reduction in supply and increase in demand has created pressure on pricing and lead prices have risen steadily.

Our hope was that lead prices would come down sooner rather than later

Where are we headed?

We should recognize that even though we see no immediate relief in sight, this situation will not last forever. Our hope was that lead prices would come down sooner rather than later and we could eliminate the 3.8% lead surcharge to an already challenged mobility industry.

Current conditions have not allowed us to remove the surcharge and in fact there is discussion about further price adjustments coming from our manufacturers. So for now we propose to keep the lead surcharge in place and to remember that everyone is in this together, and by cooperating, coordinating and communicating, we will make it through to more stable times.

Thank you for your patience and understanding, and more importantly ... your most valued business.

MK Battery Introduces...

Flow Cell Inventory Management System

This ergonomic station is ideal for battery storage and inventory rotation ensuring that older batteries are utilized first reducing the risk of product obsolescence. The wheeled system allows for movement of inventory when readjusting or cleaning your warehouse. Steel frame construction with 7 year warranty stores up to 40 batteries.

Come by and see it at our booth - #2933.





MK Battery

1645 South Sinclair Street

Anaheim, CA 92806

800-372-9253

Fax 714-937-0818

www.mkbattery.com

**POWER YOU CAN
DEPEND ON**

Participating Member Of:..

AAHomecare (NAMES 1985)

AT/ReHab Council

NRRTS - Charter Corporate FON

RESNA (Rehab Engineering Society of N. America)

CAMPS

NEMED

PAMES

MAMES

"You get what you pay for . . ."

an old phrase that proves itself time and time again. In 1999 I started out, unlike most of us with little cash, but a lot of courage, conviction and determination. Throughout the last 5 years I have progressed my business through growth and change. Upon entering the D.M.E. business I considered batteries as a mere source of power, and nothing more. In time I found that a vast majority of costly service calls were simply bad batteries. I spent much time and money on repairs, until a repair technician came to me and said, "Always start with the batteries in repairs 90% of the time you can solve it there. Second ... always buy a good battery." Until the last two years I had been using less expensive batteries to save money. I recently switched to MK Batteries, and time spent on repairs has decreased considerably as profits increased. In the end, for me "time is money". Thanks to Gary, our MK representative, my shelves are restocked every two weeks with the best ... MK.

Deborah White President, Majors Medical Supply



See Us at Booth #2933

MEDTRADE FALL

October 26th - 28th, 2004

**Orange County Convention Center
Orlando, Florida**

