

# 12 VOLT MONITORING

If you do much dry camping it pays to know the true state of charge of your Airstream house batteries. If your RV original equipment sensor says Battery Condition and registers 12, 11, 10, and 0-9 volts like mine does, it does not provide me with enough information. I recommend purchasing Item 19983, a 12 volt liquid crystal display Voltage Meter from Camping World for about \$15.00. It plugs into 12 volt sockets and gives a digital reading like 13.2 volts. In my motorhome I can get a reading for the house batteries, and after moving the meter, a reading for the engine battery. When you know the exact voltage, you can compare it to the following chart:

<b>Voltage</b>	<b>Charge %</b>
12.6 or higher	100
12.4 – 12.6	75-100
12.2 – 12.4	50-75
12.0 - 12.2	25-50
11.7 – 12.0	0-25
11.7 and below	0

I recall awakening at night in February in the middle of a very cold Florida dry-camp rally to the sound of a central heat fan going very slowly. When I checked the battery meter the voltage was 10.6 volts and was not strong enough to open the fan sail switch. This switch ensures sufficient fan speed before the gas is ignited. We were so cold I needed to run the generator in the middle of the night. Fortunately both of our immediate neighbors had already left for home. The more aware we are of 12 volt reserve battery capacity, the more successful will be our camping experience.