

breakaway switch

One of the components of your Airstream braking system that doesn't get much, or in some cases any attention, is the breakaway switch located on the A-frame of your Airstream. This switch is a critical safety feature and since it is exposed to rocks, road chemicals and other damage, it can become corroded or damaged to a point where it will not function when you need it the most.

The break-away switch will lock the trailer brakes if your Airstream separates from the tow vehicle while being towed. This will only happen if the switch, wiring and RV battery are inspected and maintained. You always want to have the cable attached with an individual quick link or hook and not simply attached to the safety chains, never wind the safety cable through the chains.



Before heading out on any trip verify that your brakes and break away switch are working properly so they will be ready when you need them.

Testing Brake away switch

*Before testing your brake away switch make sure the 7 way cord is disconnected from the tow vehicle. Failure to do so can severely damage an electronic brake controller.

To test a break-away switch, jack up one side of your trailer and have someone spin the tires on that side. The tow vehicle does not need to be connected for this test but you must have a properly charged battery on the trailer. While they are spinning, pull the pin from the break-away switch; the brakes should immediately lock

up. Or you can test this unit for proper function by pulling the pin and trying to move forward with the trailer plug removed, preferably on a gravel surface. The wheels should drag if it is working properly.

If they do not, there is an opening in that circuit and further troubleshooting is in order. You will need to use this test on both sides of the trailer. **You never want to tow without a fully functional break-away switch.**

Newly installed Bargman break-away switch

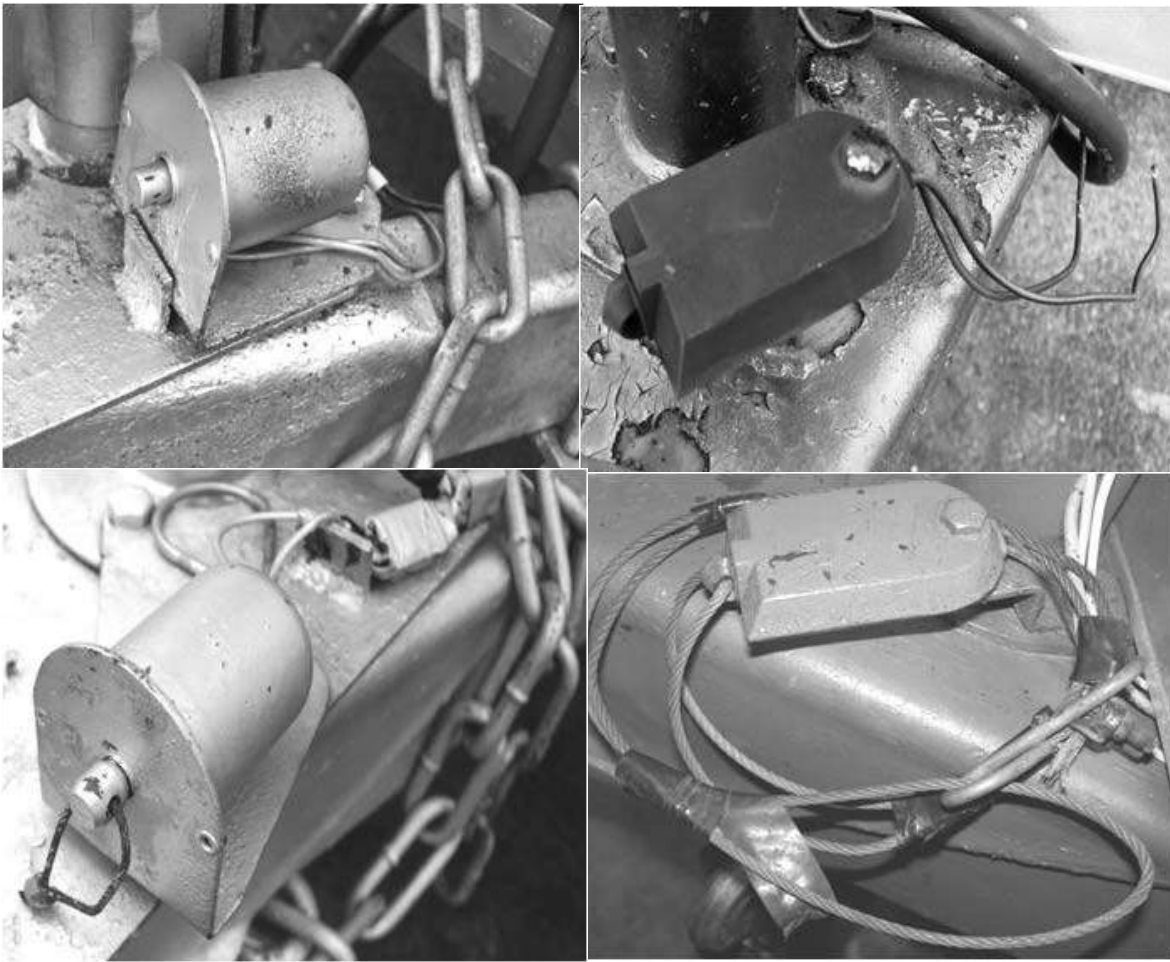


Important Facts

- Always check trailer battery condition.
- Make sure your break-away switch can pivot on the mounting bolt.
This is important so if the cable is pulled it will be pulled straight out of switch.
- Never hook cable to safety chain loop or hitch ball. Never weave cable through safety chains.
- Check safety cable for wear or damage—never let cable drag on ground. If cable is broken replace with a new one-splicing back together with tape or wire connectors is a no –no, yes I have seen it done.
- Be sure to check all wiring for damage and that all connections are secure.
A short or open circuit can cause your brakes to not activate when you need them.
- It is recommended to change your break-away switch every 3-5 years.
- Airstream uses a Bargman break away switch. Suggested retail is around \$12
- For technical information on your Bargman break-away switch you can call 1-888-785-5832 or go to www.tekonsa.com.

Examples of switches needing attention

These are some pictures from trailers that have come into our Service Center; it would appear that the switches have not been tested recently!



I know I will go to heck over this one but....