

Liftgate Cable and Connection Maintenance

It is important to maintain all electrical assemblies, and plug and socket connections on a vehicle. The liftgate cable and connections are no exception. They are just as susceptible to corrosion as any other interchangeable electrical assembly on the vehicle.

The liftgate assembly and its electrical connections are the gateway for power to travel from the tractor to the trailer to charge the liftgate batteries. If corrosion is allowed to enter into the electrical system via this union, it could lead to costly repairs and possible downtime if the liftgate batteries are not receiving the necessary charge to cycle the liftgate due to corrosion build up.

A leading factor that contributes to corrosion at the connection includes lack of proper maintenance with regards to corrosion and moisture intrusion. It may be impossible to stop the intrusion of water and contaminants completely, but proper maintenance can slow down the corrosion process.

Maintenance

Items Needed:

1. To clean the plug: Brass wire bristle tube brush. Suggested sizes: 9 -15 mm diameter, depending on plug pin size
2. To clean the socket: Small/mini brass wire bristle brush (toothbrush size)
3. Water Source

Steps:

1. It is recommended that the liftgate plug and socket interface be cleaned at every preventive maintenance interval, or more often if the vehicle is exposed to magnesium or calcium chloride in cold weather areas.
2. Inspect the liftgate cable for any type of damage. Replace if cracks or deep nicks in the jacketing are found that would allow for corrosion causing moisture and contaminants to enter and "wick" their way into the electrical charging system. Sagging cables with poor recoil memory may need to be replaced or require additional cable support to prevent damage from dragging on the deck plate.
3. Clean the pins on both plug ends of the cable with the appropriate sized tube brush and water, (no soap!) (Fig 1)
4. Clean the pins on both the tractor and trailer sockets with the small/mini brass wire bristle brush and water, (no soap!) (Fig 2)
5. Ensure the plugs and sockets are completely dry before re-coupling back together.



Fig 1



Fig 2

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TIPS

- Liftgate socket and plug connections are just as susceptible to corrosion as any other connection on a vehicle and should be cleaned at every preventive maintenance interval.
- It is recommended to use a tube brush and mini wire brush (both with brass bristles) and water to clean the socket and plug union.
- It is equally important to check the cable for any damage and replace where necessary.