



TRAILER BOATS



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GRADY-WHITE SQUEEZE PLAY- BY BRUCE W. SMITH

Flow-Rite's Qwik-Fill system simplifies battery maintenance

If you are like many Trailer Boats readers, keeping an eye on your boat's batteries can be a pain in the neck — literally. Improper water levels in the cells are one of the most common causes of battery failure in marine, RV and commercial vehicles. Yet, on many boats, the batteries are in a location that is not easy to access when it comes to checking battery water levels.

Flow-Rite, known for its livewell and baitwell water management systems, is also a leader in single-point battery watering systems. The company has taken its battery maintenance expertise in the commercial realm and used it to solve the battery maintenance problem on boats with an innovative automatic system called the Qwik-Fill.

The Qwik-Fill system replaces standard wet-cell battery caps with a pair of manifold-like caps that allow the cells to be filled perfectly without even seeing or touching the batteries.

Perfect Every Time

Flow-Rite offers Qwik-Fill kits for both single- and multiple-battery configurations. The "A" kit we installed on a 208 Grady White Adventurer, for example, is designed to connect two batteries for easy and quick filling. This kit contains four manifold caps (two for each battery), tubing and the primer bulb filler assembly. It also includes photo instructions on the inside lid of the kit.

Installation is very simple: Remove the stock battery caps. Cut the black tubing supplied in the kit at the marks designated by battery type (Group 24, 27 or 31) and use that piece to connect two of the manifold caps end to end. The next step is to snap the two manifold caps into the open battery cells.

After the connected manifolds are in place on each battery, you'll need to cut a short length of clear plastic tubing from the hose supplied with the kit, and attach it between a manifold on one battery and the closest manifold on the second battery. You also need to cap off one of the two remaining hose barbs, located in the middle of each manifold, with a little red cap also included in the kit.

The last step is to attach the open end of the 8-foot-length of clear tubing with the quick-disconnect fitting to the remaining open hose barb. This is the filler tube, and it can be located wherever is most convenient. This setup allows water to flow freely from one battery to the other as the cells are filled to their proper levels. On boats that have banks of three or more batteries, you can daisy-chain them together so the single filler tube flows distilled water into all the cells at the same time. On the Grady, where the batteries are located inside a stern compartment on the

starboard side, we ran this tube through the steering cable boot so the quick-disconnect fitting was accessible from the splashwell. This makes it convenient to service the batteries while the boat is on the trailer without climbing aboard. Setting up the two-bank kit took us about 10 minutes, with the only tool being a pocketknife.

Easy Maintenance

To maintain the batteries with the Qwik-Fill system, the squeeze bulb in the kit is connected to the filler tube via the quick-disconnect fitting. The other end of the primer bulb setup is placed in a bottle of distilled water. Squeezing the primer bulb until it's hard automatically fills the batteries to the proper level.

The filler bulb forces water into and through each battery's manifold caps. When the float in each cell rises to a pre-determined level, it shuts off water flow to that cell. Within seconds, every cell in the bank of batteries is filled to within 1/16-inch of optimum level. You can't over- or under-fill.

Retail price for a dual-battery kit is \$58.00 from JWP. That may sound expensive, but the Qwik-Fill system allows you to use standard wet-cell batteries instead of maintenance-free types that can be a lot more expensive.

Once the kit is installed, you'll never again find yourself standing on your head or developing a pain in the neck to check the boat batteries.

The Qwik-Fill manifold caps have built-in floats that automatically shut off the flow of water to each cell when filled to the proper level. Manifold caps replace the stock caps, and are connected via a tube, allowing water to flow from one battery to the next. The primer hose is connected to the filler tube via a plastic quick-connect fitting.

Once the Qwik-Fill system is in place, keeping batteries filled to the proper level is as simple as squeezing a primer bulb.

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