12 October 2023

Dear %custfullname%

This month’s newsletters content is a result of discussions we have had with customers over the past month or so and we felt it good to share some of this information with everyone.

**Battery Monitors**

We have installed some Victron battery monitors to motorhomes over the past few months. They use Bluetooth to communicate with the Victron App on your phone and can provide a lot more information about what is happening with your 12V electrical system including the start battery. They are straight forward to install and a very reputable brand. The shunt cost is $235.75 inc GST. Installation cost is dependent on the battery location. The best part is there are no additional display panels or the need to run cables through the interior which makes installation simple.

If you would like to know more or have a Battery Monitor installed in your motorhome or caravan, please contact the service team at service@uccmotorhomes.co.nz or 03 349 7747 option 2.

**Inverters**

If you are considering installing an inverter in your motorhome it is very important that you consider the items you want to power from your inverter. For those who are unfamiliar with inverters they take 12V from your house batteries and change this back to 230V. They are used when you are freedom camping.

As an example, if you were to use an inverter to run a Nespresso machine which draws approx. 1300w you will need to supply 108 amps @12V. As a general rule of thumb, we work on an inverter efficiency ratio of 90%. This then takes the current draw up to 120A. In a typical motorhome with 2 x 100A/Hr deep cycle batteries you will use all your available power in approx. 50 minutes.

Based on this example you must be very careful managing your power consumption with high load appliances. You also need to be able to recharge your batteries reasonably quickly, which in most cases means a larger solar system.

You also have some options on how you connect to the inverter. The simplest is to connect directly to the output of the inverter. The next is to have some dedicated socket outlets located in a convenient position in your motorhome or caravan. The last option is to have your inverter connected to all the existing socket outlets in your caravan or motorhome. To achieve this, you can have a manual change over switch to select between mains power or inverter supply or install an inverter that does this automatically for you.

The most common things we are installing inverters for are E-Bike chargers, C-Pap machines, small coffee makers, toasters and charging laptops.

If you do have an inverter, PLEASE DO NOT use it to boil an electric jug. It is a huge load on your batteries and will lead to premature failure. There is a perfectly good gas hob that will do the same thing with no load on your batteries.

If you don’t have an inverter but would like to have one installed, please contact the Service Team to discuss the various options that are available. service@uccmotorhomes.co.nz or 03 349 7747 option 2.

**Safety Drain Valve**

My twice-yearly reminder about the safety drain valve in most European built motorhomes.

If you find your water pressure is very low and/or see water coming out a blue pipe under your motorhome it will be because the Safety Drain Valve has been activated by very low temperatures. It is located on the floor inside the motorhome immediately above the blue pipe that is leaking water. Press in the small blue button that is on the side so it stays in. Turn on a hot tap to activate the pump and refill the hot water cylinder.

This fitting is usually only found on motorhomes built in Europe and not from the UK or NZ manufacturers.

**Fridges**

We have had a few calls about 3-way fridges not working on LPG after a bottle change. The most common issue is the LPG line needs to be purged. This can be done by lighting a gas hob burner and let it run for 20 seconds. This will remove any air from the line. A gas fridge uses 35gm of LPG pe hour while it is cooling. A typical single hob burner will use approximately 80gm per hour while on full. At this level of LPG consumption it can take multiple start cycles for your fridge to clear any air from the gas lines.

To reset a gas failure on a 3-way fridge you will have to turn it off and back on again for the fridge to go through it’s start up sequence.

**Cab Steps**

If you are having difficulty getting into a Fiat Ducato cab because it is such a big step up we have Cab Steps available that mount to the underside of the cab and effectively halve the height of the first step up. They are very robust and easy to fit. Contact the Service Team if you would like some more information. service@uccmotorhomes.co.nz or 03 349 7747 option 2.

**Grey water tanks**

From time to time, we have customers asking us to identify the source of an unpleasant smell inside their motorhome or caravan. The smell is usually sulphurous. This is always caused by the grey water tank.

Toilet cassettes always receive a rinse out and have new treatment added after each empty however most grey water tanks are challenging to rinse out and usually receive no treatment. You can imagine how a mix of warm water, food scraps, shower water etc can mix with some bacteria to “fester” and create an unpleasant smell.

We strongly recommend that the grey water tank receives a treatment at least at the end of a trip or more regularly depending on how it is being used. There are a range of options to do this from dedicated grey water tank treatments, using the same chemicals as you use in your toilet cassette, to various “home remedies” that you may see discussed on various social media forums.

We do not recommend using anything that is corrosive in your grey water tank. Most tanks are emptied via a ball valve with has a coated steel ball inside. This can seize in place if the wrong type of treatment is used.

UCC has a Thetford Grey Water Tank Freshener in stock.

**Fiat wheel trims** **16”**

We have also found some used but tidy genuine Fiat plastic wheel trims that fit a 16” steel rim. If you have lost one and need a replacement, give the Service Team a call. service@uccmotorhomes.co.nz or 03 349 7747 option 2.

Pricing is $65.00 each plus shipping, GST included.

**Parts, accessories, and general advice**

If you need some advice about parts accessories or just some general advice, please don’t hesitate to give the Service Team a call or email. service@uccmotorhomes.co.nz or 03 349 7747 option 2.

Kind regards

The Team @ UCC Motorhomes and Caravans

If you do not wish to receive these emails from UCC Motorhomes & Caravans please reply to service@uccmotorhomes.co.nz with “unsubscribe” and your name in the subject line