



By Bob McKenna
NAPA President

Battery Program to Provide More Sales Power

For a number of years, there have been two manufacturers supplying batteries for the NAPA AUTO PARTS stores across the country. Our battery program and the service provided by these two manufacturers has been good. However, time and time again I've heard from stores and Distribution Center personnel that despite our "good" coverage, there must be a way to make our battery program, and thereby our battery sales, better.

This past summer, NAPA Headquarters reviewed our battery program carefully. In detail, we considered the system with the two manufacturers we were currently using. And, we examined ways to make NAPA AUTO PARTS stores the largest supplier of batteries in their marketplaces.

One fact which became apparent was that with two battery manufacturers, it was difficult — if not impossible — to make our battery program as good as it could and should be. National promotions, advertising, merchandising — all those extras which help to make a line work its hardest were not working as hard as they should have been because we had two manufacturers to coordinate with instead of one. NAPA needs to have the most aggressive battery program in the aftermarket. With two manufacturers, we simply could not have that.

So, we met with both battery manufacturers and challenged them to come up with the best and most aggressive national program they had to offer. With our goal of gaining a stronger hold

on the battery business, we wanted each manufacturer to tell us what they could, and were willing to, do to help NAPA AUTO PARTS stores double their battery sales.

I have to tell you, it was a difficult decision. Both manufacturers came back to us with good and effective programs. At this point it became a process of deciding which of the two manufacturers could best meet the challenge we had laid before them.

After carefully weighing the proposals of both, we felt that Exide (formerly known as General Battery) could provide NAPA AUTO PARTS stores with the best all around service and coverage. What's more, Exide understands how important our traditional customers are to us. And, with Exide, our battery program will have its main thrust into the traditional marketplace. Now, that doesn't mean that the retail or do-

it-yourself market will be ignored. It simply means that we will be able to continue our commitment to our largest customer base without slighting the other.

The official changeover date to Exide is November 1, 1987. Beginning on that date NAPA Distribution Centers will stock Exide Batteries. Now, we know that this is one of your key selling seasons for batteries. Because of this we have arranged the transition to Exide so that it is as smooth as possible for you.

The transition will be made by means of a "running change." If you are currently selling batteries manufactured by Johnson Controls, you can continue to sell them for as long as necessary. Warranties and stock adjustments will be handled as normal by your Distribution Center. Batteries manufactured by Exide will be used to fill any order you place after October 31st.

Also, look out for some changes in the part numbers as we make this transition to Exide. The number of changes, will be few and your Distribution Center will be alerting you to these changes shortly, if they have not already done so. Please keep in mind, that while some part numbers will change and we are changing manufacturers for some of you, one thing will remain consistent — the quality of NAPA batteries.

I hope that you are excited about what is to come in the future of our battery program. We believe that with this switch to one national supplier NAPA AUTO PARTS stores will have what they need behind them to increase their share of the battery business. And, helping you to increase your business is what we at NAPA Headquarters strive to do.

Benefits of the new NAPA Battery Program:

- extensive national advertising;
- local advertising with co-op funds available;
- a new merchandising package;
- a special billing program for traditional customers;
- very competitive pricing;
- greater field sales support;
- improved promotional programs;
- improved profitability on the master installer program;
- longer warranties on select battery series.