

Wheels: Bruce of Boston writes, “I have a 1995 Mercury Grand Marquis 4.6, V-8. Last night while on the highway my battery light went on (40 miles from home). I made it 35 miles until everything was dead and got AAA towed the rest of the way home. Today, I tested and replaced the alternator (slow charged the battery all night, too). The battery light is still on and no heat even through my fan works fine. Is there a way to reset this? I have a digital dash and the gauge shows warm when it first starts up and there’s no way that is true. Even after a 5-mile test drive, there is still no heat and the battery light is still lit. Any ideas?”

Halderman: Boy, that is a good one. First the alternator – be sure that it is properly plugged in. These alternators are known to have problems with the connector. Some replacement alternators come equipped with a replacement pigtail connector. The charging voltage should be 13.5 to 15.0 volts with the engine running at idle with everything off. The dash and heat may be related. When you lost power, the computer may have also lost its memory. I would try this: disconnect the negative battery cable at the battery and depress the brake pedal. This should clear out the memory. The brake lights will drain any charges built up in the capacitors in the electrical system and erase all stored computer information. Reconnect the battery cable and start the engine. Hopefully, everything will be back to normal. If not, consult a qualified service technician in your area.

