

**Wheels:** An e-mail from Don says, “I have a 1985 Cutlass and I replaced my battery due to bad cells. The very next day, I was driving down the street with my radio and headlights on and my radio cut off and on two to three times. Five to ten minutes later I parked my car and as soon as I cut the car, I tried to cut it back on and the battery was dead. So I then began to check for possible drains but the only component that I figured could drain the battery so fast is the alternator. So I replaced the alternator with a rebuilt alternator. After checking and charging the battery and replacing the alternator, the problem still exists. What is your suggestion? Could it be the rebuilt alternator with a bad voltage regulator?”

**Halderman:** The first thing I would do is check the battery voltage. It should be above 12.4 volts. If it is lower than 12 volts, then the alternator may not be charging. With the engine running, the battery voltage should be 13.5 to 15.0 volts. The most likely fault is a poor electrical connection at the battery, starter or block where the battery ground connection is located.

