



Bus Nut Review: TireTraker Tire Monitoring System

by Paul Lawry

I have been wanting to purchase a tire pressure monitoring system (TPMS) for a few years to help monitor the tire pressures on our Silver Eagle and toad. We like to stop every hour or two to stretch our legs, and I always check the tires and temps the old fashioned way. Even though we have a back-up camera, I felt it couldn't hurt to install a system to alert us of any potential problems during the trip. I talked with Gary Hatt, he told me about one that he had but never used. Our conversation turned into him offering to let me use his on our upcoming trip. We had been staying in Murrieta, CA for the winter and had made plans to travel up to Oregon to spend the summer workamping at Crane Prairie Resort near Bend. This trip would be approximately 1,350 miles with plans to stop along the way to visit several bus nut friends.

The TPMS that Gary had was the Tire Traker TT-500. It came with eight sensors and all of the necessary parts for the installation. I read the manual to insure that my installation would be done correctly, (us guys always do that right LOL!) I checked all of the tire pressures with my trucker's gauge, so I would have a correct baseline to start with. I would recommend getting an accurate digital tire gauge to make sure the readings are where they need to be, and also a method of double checking accuracy. It was pretty straightforward to install the sensors; I did not install the locking rings that are included. I decided that was not necessary because it would be difficult to make any adjustments to the tire pressures during the trip if I needed to. It was pretty easy to get them all installed by using the wireless monitor that comes in the kit. I did not install the power booster initially because I wanted to see how accurate the signal was without it. Our coach is 40' long with an additional 20' for the toad. During the first leg of our trip from Murrieta to Indio, I did have a high-pressure warning on one of the outside duals. It was not high enough to pull over and check the tire pressure, so we continued on our trip. I also noticed that one of the toad sensors was not being monitored, so the power booster was a definite need for our installation.

After our arrival in Indio to visit with a long-time bus nut couple, I checked the suspect tire and found nothing to be alarmed about. We spent the evening visiting and sharing stories about our love of Silver Eagles. They have a gorgeous Silver Eagle M15 Marathon Coach; we went inside it to see all of the interior work they had been doing. I won't go into detail on what changes they had made, but the work they were doing was first class. It was around dinner time, so they asked us to stay the night and enjoy some food and drink. They had just finished installing a new grill, sink and under counter refrigerator in their new patio, so we decided to help them break in their new grill.

I decided to install the power booster in the engine bay the next morning before we continued our trip. After finding out where I could get the 12-volt power needed to power the booster, I wired it up. We said our "Until we meet again" to our friends and started our journey to our next stop, Parker, AZ. During this leg of the trip, we experienced no alarms, and all sensors seemed to be working properly.

We enjoyed our stay at La Paz County Park for a couple of days visiting with another bus nut couple. They showed us around the waterfront and even took us on a wild journey to The Desert Bar. If you have never been, be prepared for a bumpy, dusty, and gravel road into the desert, but it was worth the trip.

We made several more stops along the way to visit some of our bus nut friends, Pahrump NV, Gold Hill, NV and Crater Lake RV Park. Nothing to report about the TT-500 during this section of our trip.

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Back to the story about using our Tire Traker. On day 7 I had a NoS appear so I followed the instructions to do the Auto Update Mode and it solved the problem. I also compared the psi readout with my digital tire gauge and found about a 2-3 +/- difference in readings. The TT was a little higher. I checked my two front steers, and the digital said they were at 115# cold. So I took them down to 100 psi then read the numbers on the TT-500 monitor. That is a good reason to make sure you get an accurate tire gauge to make comparisons. I know I've already said that but it bears repeating.

I monitored the system for the remainder of the trip and did not have any further alarms. That does not mean that one should not check your tires by a visual inspection. The Tire Traker is just another tool to help monitor your vehicle's tires during a trip. You could run over something that could cause a puncture, which could possibly result in a slow leak. It will notify you when a problem occurs. I mounted our monitor up on the driver's windshield next to my phone so I could easily see it.

Each sensor has its own battery, and can be replaced as needed. When not traveling it's a good idea to remove the sensors and batteries if you are going to be parked for long periods of time. Mark each sensor with the tire location so when you need to make another trip, they will be in the correct location. If they get mixed up, you just have

to reset the complete system and start over, which is really no big deal as it's fairly easy to do.

The kit comes with everything needed, four tire sensors, monitor with window mount, and manual. Depending on how many tires you have, you might need to purchase more sensors. There is also an optional signal power booster is available for purchase. Follow the directions on setup and read the manual completely. If you do have any problems, contact Daryl. His contact information is included. He will respond quickly, as he did with me on a few occasions.



Paul and Becky Lawry are retired full-timers and have lived in their 1968 Silver Eagle for seven years. They built their bus conversion to fit their lifestyle. Inky, their two year old Mini-Schnoodle, is their furry companion. You can learn more in Paul's blogs; one is about the bus build and the other is about their travels.

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