



Airstream Tech Help Group

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This group, part of the WBCCI Technical Standing Committee, has been established to help the membership with any of their technical RV problems. Examples of questions that might be of interest to many members will be published in the *Blue Beret*. We will respond directly to you, in response to your email or letter describing a problem you are having. We hope you will find this new service of value in the care and feeding of your RV. You may contact us as follows: techhelp@wbcci.org or by mail: Howard Lefkowitz, 11508 Colt Terrace, Silver Spring, MD 20902

Advice on a 2013 Flying Cloud

Question (1):

Refrigerator Fan: The Flying Cloud has a counter top above the refrigerator and the outside cowling is too low to allow adequate ventilation to the coils without the assistance of the fan. Unfortunately, the fridge does not work well without the fan switched on. The fan oscillates on and off as required, however, it is loud! I am wondering if anyone has come up with a substitute fan unit that operates more quietly.

Answer (1):

There are a number of sealed bearing, 12-volt DC, computer-cooling fans that are considerably quieter. Just make sure you get one that will not be affected by the dust, dirt and occasional moisture in the outside fridge compartment. You are correct about the lack of airflow when you have a horizontal exhaust instead of a roof vent. A few tips:

1. Always cool the fridge down to operating temperature before putting the food in. I usually turn it on 2 days before I load it for a trip.
2. Try never to allow the fridge to lose its temperature, particularly on hot days. If it does, it will take a cool night to bring the temperature back to below the 40-degree level.
3. Wire a fan thermostat bypass-switch and mount it so you can control the fan operation from inside the trailer. On hot days just

turn on the fan and let, it run all day. You will actually use less power since this will help keep the temperature at a safe level and reduce the need for turning on the propane or electric heating systems.

4. Get a switch that has a built in light that works when the switch is turned on. Then you can easily see when the fan has been set to the on position. You will need a 12-volt source wire, in addition to the two switch wires. One wire goes to the trailer ground, one to 12 volt plus and one to the fan. On a cool day, with the switch off, your fridge will function just as it does now.

Question (2):

Bubbly Hot Water after Winterization: I winterized the unit myself and this spring flushed out the RV antifreeze from the system as best I could. I ran the hot water side 10 minutes or so, drained the hot water heater a bit, both from the bottom plug and from the relief valve at the top. I still have foamy, bubbly water at the sinks on the hot side. I assume this means either an air gap somewhere or traces of anti-freeze. Can you suggest what I might do to remediate? I used the bypass valve when I winterized and drained the water heater completely. I did not fill it with antifreeze but just let a little run into it to make sure trace water

that might have been in there would not cause a problem.

Answer (2):

You should completely fill the hot water heater from a shore source hose and then open each outlet one at a time to completely drain all of the antifreeze. Before you fill the heater, partially drain the tank with the bottom plug and then tighten the drain plug. Snap the relief valve a few times and then fill the tank and drain all of the faucets. You will have an air cushion in the tank top that will prevent the relief valve from leaking.

Question (3):

Lower Hinge Pin on Main Door: The lower hinge pin on the door to the unit slowly rides up above the hinge as you operate the door over time. I have knocked it back several times with a punch when it gets to a 1/4" or so. Is there a trick to securing this naughty pin for once and for all?

Answer (3):

You need to slightly expand the pin top with a small punch. With the pin properly seated, put a small sharp end punch (about 1/16 of an inch in diameter) into the center of the pin and give it a few good whacks. This should expand the head and lock the pin in place.

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Question (4):

Window Gaskets Sticking: Is there a compound I should treat the window gaskets with from time to time to reduce the window glass from sticking when you try to open them?

Answer (4)

Yes! Get some 303 from a good auto parts supply store or an RV store. Apply this to all of your gaskets (windows, door compartments, fan shroud seals, etc.) with a folded up paper towel every year when you go thru your get ready to go camping maintenance. This will protect the seals and keep them clean and pliable. If the seals are too dirty, wash them with soap and water and dry them before using the 303.

In addition, when winterizing put about 1/4 inch of vegetable oil in your toilet to keep the toilet seal from hardening over the winter. About 20 years ago, I

had a leaking toilet seal so I purchased a new one to replace it. I started with the vegetable oil, softened the seal and to this day, have never used the new seal.

Question (5)

Exterior Treatment: I understand we should wax our unit after cleaning thoroughly from time to time. Can I use the car wax of my choice or is there a particular wax that is recommended? Also with cars, I have been in the habit of using an auto polish first and then waxing over it. Is this a good idea on Airstreams?

Answer (5)

Airstream recommends Walbernize Super Seal wax or a high quality clearcoat-safe wax after washing, on a monthly basis. The older trailers also used Walbernize but it is a different product designed for the older clearcoat. As long as the wax is non-abrasive, it

should be OK. Your User Manual has a lot of info on external care and removal of caustic substances. The frequency of washes and waxes is dependent on how many trips you take per year, winter camping, and your local environment.

Question (6):

The trailer has about 8,000 miles: When do I need to have the wheel bearings greased?

Answer (6):

Airstream recommends that the wheel bearings should be done after 10,000 miles or at least every 6 months. Trailer Life recommends 10,000 miles or at least once per year. If you do several trips during the winter months in snow areas, I would do the bearings more frequently to get the road salts and sand out of them.

Howard



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