

# SCHU'S NEWS

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I hope everyone is enjoying the winter months and making plans for their first spring trip. I hope you will have a chance to attend one of the many Spring RV Shows. (See the following list)

A recent customer inquiry about moisture in his motorhomes' headlamps prompted me to do some investigating in to that subject. Here is what I found.

## Composite Headlamps

Airstream Motor Homes are equipped with a composite headlamp system. Composite headlamps are designed much differently than the sealed beam units of the '70-80s; they are a plastic lens and chrome plated reflector assembly designed around a replaceable halogen bulb. Composite lamps produce significantly greater light offering better visibility and safety for the driver. Composite lamps also offer the convenience of a low cost replaceable bulb, making the maintenance of the headlamp an easy task.

Seeing at night is what it is all about, with that in mind we have a few maintenance tips to keep your headlamps functioning properly.

- Maintenance:

- ✓ **Condensation** occurs when the air inside the lamp assembly, through atmospheric changes, reaches the "dew point". When this takes place, the moisture in the air within the lamp assembly condenses, creating a ***fine mist or white fog*** on the inside surface of the lamp lens or chrome reflector surfaces. The headlamps are designed to remove accumulated moisture vapor by expelling it through a vent system as the light warms up. The vent system operates at all times, however it is most effective when the lamps are on and the vehicle is in motion. Since most RV's are parked for long periods of time, they have a greater chance of condensation build up.

- Check headlamp regularly for condensed water drops (daily in high humidity areas).
- If small drops of condensed water are noted, drive your RV with headlamps "ON" or just turn "ON" the headlamps. This will evaporate the condensed water drops and will avoid water being accumulated. Depending on the size, shape and location of the lamp on the RV, and the atmospheric conditions occurring, the amount of time required to clear the lamp may vary from 2 to 6 hours.
- Check your vent tubes (*some headlamps may have just a hole with a cloth like covering*), this will be a small rubber hose or plastic cap located on the back of the light, make sure that they are free of dirt and the rubber is not cracked and dried out. If the vent tubes are clogged or cracked and dried out the vent system will not work correctly, allowing condensation to build up in the lamp. If the tube is cracked or dried out please replace it.



Typical vent tube



Vent system built directly into the light housing

✓ **Cleaning** is the most effective maintenance that you can perform on your lights, dirt and road grime build up can cut light output by 40% or more.

- When cleaning your headlamps, please observe the following: do not rub them dry, and never use abrasives or strong solvents. Remove dirt and contamination, such as insects, by soaking with shampoo and then rinsing with plenty of water. Always use a deicer spray to remove accumulated ice and snow; never use a scraper.
- Headlamp seals should not be directly sprayed with high pressure (home or industrial) wash systems. Damage to the seal can occur, causing the housing to leak water.
  - **Chemicals:** Composite headlamps have a polycarbonate lens, which is very sensitive to a variety of chemicals. Contact with certain chemicals can cause crazing, softening or cracking of the lens, which would require replacement of the entire lamp housing. The following chemicals are suspected to cause similar results. **Mild soap and water is recommended for the cleaning of your lamps.**

Acetone  
 Agitene®  
 Ajax®  
 Benzyl  
 Carbon Tetrachloride  
 Chlorinated  
**Citrus Orange Cleaners**

Diversol®  
 Gasoline  
 Kleenol Plastics  
 Lemon Joy® (phosphate free)  
 Lestoil®  
 Liquid Cleaner - 8211  
 Liquid Detergents  
 Lysol®

Methyl Ethyl Keyton (MEK)  
 Oils  
 Pink Lux® (phosphate free)  
 Stanisol Naphtha®  
 Texiz-8006, 8129, 8757  
 Toluol  
 Tricholor  
 Triclene®

✓ **Replacement** of the halogen bulb:

- When replacing the halogen bulb do not touch the glass portion of the bulb with your bare hands since even small amounts of impurities burn into the surface and reduce the service life of the bulb. Use a clean cloth, paper napkin, or similar material to hold the bulb during installation. With most bulbs you will not need to touch the glass part to install the bulb.
- Whenever working on any electrical system, switch off the electrical accessory you are working on or refer to the electrical system section of your owner's manual. Failure to do this could result in short circuits.
- To prevent injuries and damage, comply with any instructions provided by the bulb manufacturer.

Here is a list of some of the March RV Shows featuring Airstream products.

**March**

2-6	Windish RV Center	RV Sports Show	Nat' l Western Complex , CO
2-6	Can-Am RV	Toronto RV Show	Toronto, ON
3-5	Weekley Motors	Detriot RV Show	Detroit, MI
3-6	DJ RV Center	Fort Washington RV Show	Fort Washington, PA
3-6	Airstream of Detroit	Camper Travel RV Show	Ford Field, Detroit, MI
3-6	George Sutton RV	Eugene RV Show	Eugene, OR
4-6	Colonial Airstream	20th Atlantic City RV Show	Atlantic City, NJ
4-6	R&R RV Sales	Peoria RV Show	Peoria, IL
8	Bob Caldwell RV	Columbus Fairgrounds	Columbus Fairgrounds, OH
10-13	Caravane Taschereau, Inc.	Montreal RV Show	Montreal, Canada
18-20	Safford RV	Virginia RV Show	Virginia Hampton Conv., VA
21-24	DJ RV Center	FMCA	Perry, GA
31-3	RVs of Sacra.& Manteca Trailer	Cal Expo RV Show	Sacramento, CA
31-4	Caravane Taschereau, Inc.	Quebec RV Show	Quebec, Canada

ARVing lady was picking through the frozen turkeys at the grocery store, but couldn't find one big enough for her rally group. She asked a stock boy, "Do these turkeys get any bigger?" The stock boy replied, "No ma' am, they' re dead."

Have a great month and I' ll see you on down the road!

*If you have a topic for this column, please send your suggestions to:  
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*If your topic is published, you will receive a "Schu's News" t-shirt!*