

SCHUI'S NEWS

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Non-Routine Maintenance

We are normally faithful with regular oil changes, but there are other basic motorhome maintenance items that need attention too. Here are some of the most often overlooked items by do-it-yourselfers that cause problems on the road.

Brake fluid? On motor homes with hydraulic brakes, the brake fluid can absorb moisture and may boil when the brakes are used a lot, causing the pedal to go to the floor just when you need it.

Solution: Replace brake fluid using premium, high-boiling point fluid that's recommended by the chassis manufacturer.

Oxygen sensors on older coaches can fail slowly without triggering the check engine light, resulting in a loss of power and fuel mileage. Replacing the oxygen sensor will help your coach perform better, save money and reduce pollution. Newer systems are more sensitive and the service-engine light will often be triggered just as the oxygen sensor is beginning to malfunction.

You never know when you fill up your vehicle if the fuel tank at the truck stop is almost empty and sucking up sediment and pumping it into your tank.

When was the last time your fuel filter was checked? A clogged fuel filter will strain your fuel pump and reduce the flow of fuel into the engine. It may also clog expensive injectors and leave you stranded.

Also check the condition of rubber radiator hoses and heater hoses. These should be replaced every four years even if there are no obvious signs of wear.

Radiator and Charge Air Cooler Maintenance

On chassis equipped with a rear radiator, it is very important that the radiator and charge air cooler be inspected at regular intervals. Cummins® recommends inspecting the charge air cooler every 7,500 miles. This should also apply to chassis with Caterpillar® engines. This is because air and dust are being blown through the radiator and charge air cooler and can build up and reduce the airflow through the cooling system. This is considered part of normal maintenance.

From the engine side of the radiator, use a flashlight to look into the fan shroud at the face of the charge air cooler. If there is any dirt buildup, this should be cleaned, using a water hose and a mild solvent (Simple Green works well for this). If this is not done, the system can become clogged and can result in engine overheating.

If you have a Freightliner chassis, your cooling system was originally protected with antifreeze to -34 degrees F. If coolant has been in the vehicle for five years or 100,000 miles, flush the cooling system and fill with an appropriate mixture of antifreeze and softened water, and be sure that the coolant contains a rust inhibitor.

If it has been more than 18 months or 24,000 miles since the transmission has been serviced, change the fluid and filter.

Is parking on a hill bad for your tires?

Not for your tires-but maybe for your transmission. Tires get more wear exiting a highway than sitting on a

slant, but parking on a hill puts extra stress on the *pawl*, the piece of equipment that keeps the automatic transmission in "Park." After a lot of hill parking, it may become difficult-or even impossible-to shift the vehicle out of "Park."

What to do: When parking on a slant, apply the parking brake *before* shifting the transmission into "Park." This takes some pressure off the transmission.

Info from David Solomon, Chairman of Nutz and Bolts

A fellow Airstreamer recently shared with me an improvement he made to the windshield privacy curtains on his 390 series motorhome.

The Velcro fasteners on his plastic curtain pulls were difficult to separate once they had been closed. As a remedy he removed the Velcro strips and installed two sets of magnets using epoxy glue, one set at the top and one set at the bottom of the plastic finger pulls. Now all he has to do is slide the magnets side ways to easily separate the two curtains.

Old and Rich

The old gent was backing his Rolls into the last available parking space when a zippy red sports car whipped in behind him to take the spot. The young driver jumped out and said: "Sorry Pops, but you've got to be young and smart to do that." The old man ignored the remark and kept reversing until the Rolls had crunched the sports car into a crumpled heap. "Sorry son, you've got to be old and rich to do that!"

Have a great month and we will see you on down the road.