

The Preventive Maintenance Series

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Continued from last month, 10 more things that can happen:

1. Early model cars have the blower motor resistor pack located in the right side defroster duct behind the glove box. On low or medium speed the coils are red hot and will ignite loose foam from the rear heater box causing smoke. There is no easy cure, switch to the high speed (resistors not used) or remove the heater box and reline the insulation.
2. Always tighten your wheel lug nuts with the tool you would use if changing a tire on the road. Tire stores now over tighten nuts to avoid the chance of a lawsuit. When I got my last set of new tires I could barely get them loose with a cross bar wrench – I could never have used the Corvair tire tool. Lightly grease the contact end of the lug nut (not the threads, just clean them).
3. Be sure your negative battery cable is grounded firmly to the engine and that you have at least a 10 gage wire grounded to the body. If the engine ground is loose or non existent, the starter draw will burn clutch cables, shifter cables, parking cables and heater hoses as it attempts to reach cranking amperage. If the body ground is bad, the charging system can be erratic.
4. A rolling or whining noise that does not change from acceleration to deceleration is probably a wheel bearing. If it does change, it is probably a loose differential pinion shaft or a worn out ring and pinion. A loose shaft is the most common, particularly on a Powerglide.
5. A small but pervasive oil leak from the “pit” area at the back of the engine that appears to be a mystery may be either the oil pump dummy shaft area or oil coming up one or more of the four studs that run through the rear cover. The rear housing gasket design may leak internally and run down the studs. Use a two part epoxy on the dummy shaft after cleaning and sanding and use sealer under and around the four nuts and the skid pan as a temporary fix.
6. An accelerator pedal that gets stiff is usually caused by a rusted pivot that has pinched the two plastic bushings and caused the shaft to bind. Remove the pedal assembly from the floor, carefully remove the bushings, dress up the shaft and bushing areas and lubricate. The two bushings are available if you need them. Be sure to index the pedal to the shaft before removal.
7. A cheap and fairly easy way to make your car almost impossible to steal by hot wiring the ignition is to add an 18 gage black wire to the negative side of the coil and route it to the left underside of the dash (or wherever suites you). Mount a single throw switch and connect it to ground. If you have a tachometer, simply splice in to the wire at the front and add the switch to ground.
8. Poor idle, loss of take off power and pinging can be dirt in a carburetor idle and transition circuit. With the engine running, block off one carburetor while quickly accelerating the engine. This creates a very high vacuum and usually will suck the dirt on through. Also remove the idle screw and blow through that hole as well as the larger of the two small holes in the top of the venturi cluster.
9. Carburetor diagnosis can be aided by using a can of Gumout carburetor cleaner. Gently spray a mist over each carburetor while the engine is running – the

problem side will cause the engine to speed up, the good side will keep the rpm the same or lower it.

10. The shop manual tune up guide discusses putting a small amount of lubricant under the rotor; this lubes the advance shafts. If this has been ignored over the past 40 years, it will cause rough running, pinging and hesitation. Check the play in the shafts simply by removing the rotor and try moving the outer shaft (with the lobes) back and forth across the inner shaft. There should be almost no movement.

More next month!