

The Preventive Maintenance Series

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

1. A stuck rotor could have caused a previous mechanic to pry up on it for removal. This bends the retainer underneath and allows the advance weights to fly out into the housing. The advance no longer works and the weights eat up the aluminum. You can usually see aluminum dust on top of the breaker plate.
2. Original distributor breaker plates have a pivot that can wear out and allow the points to float back and forth, changing ignition timing every time the vacuum advance moves the plate. Replacements generally have a bushing.
3. Replacement vacuum modulators currently sold by vendors may cause a minor slip during the up shift. Apparently caused by the age of the transmission seals.
4. Anytime you have an upper crankcase stud out, be aware that the stud threads are special; you cannot use a thread chaser on them. You must use anti seize when you put them back in or you risk the threads galling in the aluminum – in some cases you can't get them to go in or out.
5. Late model front shocks can loose the squeeze fit at the lower mounting bolt and make noises every time you hit a bump. Look for rusty dust around the bolts – the nuts have run out of threads and cannot be tightened any further. An easy cure is to add a 1/2" flat washer and retighten.
6. Hot restart problems are usually caused by vapor build up in the carburetor bases. The 64-69 carburetors have vapor vents that must be adjusted only after all other balancing and idle adjustment have been made because raising the idle speed will cause the vent to be non-functioning. Prior to '64 there was a service bulletin fix which locates a 1/8" hole in the side of the base, above and left of the mixture screw. I tried this on early models and it does work.
7. A creaking noise heard at low speed during turning is usually a frozen idler arm joint. By the time it creaks, it may be too late, but installing grease fittings where none exist is highly recommended.
8. A very sharp metallic knock when going over a bump with one wheel only is usually a missing or split outer sway bar bushing (if your car has one). If both bushings are bad, you get twice the noise. The upper bushings can also cause the problem, but not as common.
9. A quick squeak when hitting small bumps at low speed is usually a worn out pitman arm bushing. It will be accompanied by play in the steering wheel. Cars only, and replacement is the cure.
10. **At this point in time**, it appears that the best mechanical fuel pump is the Airtex pump manufactured after June 2011. This pump has well staked valves, good material in the diaphragm, an elevated boss in the center to keep leaks out of the oil and has a good record of service in the KC area. If you do not have this pump, it would be wise to install it. It can be identified by hex head screws, no tag on the top and the part and lot number stamped on the underside.