

FREIGHTLINER MAINTENANCE & STORAGE TIPS

This month's article is from the Freightliner Custom Chassis Web site, and covers two separate topics.

The first is information regarding radiator and charge air cooler maintenance. The second is on preparing your Freightliner chassis for storage and removal from storage.

Additional information can be found at the Freightliner website, freightlinerchassis.com. Click on motor home owner info then go to maintenance tips.

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. If this is not done, the system can become clogged and can result in engine overheating.

Engine Compartment Maintenance

When camping in remote areas, check the engine compartment for small animals that may have taken refuge for the night before starting your engine. They like the warmth of the engine compartment but will make a real mess if you start the

engine while they are nestled in the fan shroud.

Preparation for Storage

When storing your motor home for an extended period of time (60 days or more), the following steps should be taken to give it maximum protection.

- Note the following:

Date placed in storage:

___/___/___

Mileage on vehicle:

- Fill fuel tank and add a high-quality fuel stabilizer to the fuel (never store with a partially full tank of fuel).

- Change the engine oil and filter (used oil does not give adequate protection).

- Cooling system was originally protected with antifreeze to -34 degrees F. If colder temperatures are expected, adjust the mixture. 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.

- Service the fuel filters.

- Run the engine until fully warmed up.

- Operate the air conditioning.

- If possible, store the vehicle in a dry, well-ventilated area, protected from sunlight.

- Check tires for damage and set tire pressure to maximum as indicated on the sidewall of the tire. Clean the tires using the normal, mild soap that you would use to clean your RV.

- If possible, raise the vehicle onto safety stands. Do not store the vehicle on the hydraulic leveling jacks. Hydraulic jacks will "bleed" pressure over time, lowering the coach back onto the tires.

- Cover tires to protect from heat and sunlight.

- If possible, release the parking brake.

- Remove and clean the battery.

Always disconnect the negative (-) cable first. Store the battery in a cool, dry place and **keep it charged.**

- Lubricate all grease fittings on the chassis and drivetrain.

- Cover all engine and transmission openings with moisture-resistant tape.

Removal from Storage Check List

- Remove covers from tires and thoroughly inspect the tires for damage. Inflate them to the correct pressure for the actual weight on the tires. Consult the Michelin® Tire Guide for correct tire pressure. Weigh your coach if you don't know the coach weight.

- Check for fluid leaks. Repair as necessary.

- Check engine oil level. Add oil if needed.

- Check coolant level in reservoir and radiator (do not open radiator cap on hot engine).

- Check hydraulic fluid level in reservoir. Add fluid if needed.

- Check engine belts for wear, damage or cracking.

- Check engine fan for damage.

- Check fuel/water separator. If empty, prime fuel system per instructions in your operator's manual.

- Check engine compartment for nesting animals. Check for leaks and damage to hoses and wiring.

- Check rear-axle lubricant level.

- Lubricate chassis and drivetrain.

- Check the charge level of the battery. Clean ends of battery cables. If batteries need to be removed or replaced, install a clean and fully charged battery. **Always connect the positive (+) cable first and then the negative (-) cable.** Coat the battery terminals and connectors with a protective sealant.

- Turn the ignition to the RUN position. Verify that the fuel gauge and voltmeter are operating properly.

- If stored on safety stands, lower vehicle at this time and set the parking brake.

- Run engine until warm. Re-check for fluid leaks.

- Check transmission fluid level using the Cold Check method in your Allison[®] transmission operator's manual. Add fluid if necessary.

- Check all exterior lights, and replace as necessary.