

HMM PRODUCT TEST:

Metal Rescue

Here's a little tech tip: Don't leave finely machined, bare-steel engine parts exposed to the atmosphere if you live in the Northeast. This bit of brilliance had to be reprogrammed into our brains after leaving a perfectly good billet steel roller camshaft on a bench, unprotected. The presence of moisture in the air led to surface rust, which, even in mild doses, can be catastrophic for internal parts that see direct contact with other metal parts.

Rather than deeming the cam junk, we decided to try one of the new generation of rust removal products on the market; these differ from the acids and naval jellies that most of us are familiar with. Among these new products is Metal Rescue, which is considered a "Rust Remover Bath" by its maker, Armor Protective Packaging. It's also considered nontoxic and contains no harmful ingredients; in fact, unless the product is contaminated with hazardous foreign material, in many cases it can be disposed of legally in a sewer system (but check local regulations first).

So does it actually work? We picked up a cheap basting pan at the market and plunked the camshaft into it, then poured in Metal Rescue, attempting to submerge as much of the shaft as possible. The directions advise that mild rust can dissipate in as little as five minutes, but heavy stuff may take 24 hours. We checked on our part an hour later, and something was definitely happening; the next day, the submerged bits were dark gray, which the directions mention when engaging in long-term soaking.

With some hand polishing, the residue came off, revealing metal that was devoid of rust, with only minor evidence indicating where mild pitting occurred. We were impressed (we've used it on other stuff since, and it really does a nice job). Our cam will probably need some polishing at the machine shop to ensure a proper surface, but the rust is gone. As a bonus, the used rust remover liquid can be saved and reused repeatedly until it turns black.

To prevent rust from happening again, try dousing the part with Dry Coat, a companion product that goes on wet but quickly dries, leaving a protective coating.

Cost: Metal Rescue, one gallon: \$25; Dry Coat, 8oz., \$8.10

Contact: Armor Protective Packaging, 800-365-1117, www.metalrescue.com



Before



After



Synthetic Steering

You may not be aware of it, but your power steering fluid really takes a beating, and like all automotive fluids, it should be changed periodically. Flaming River's synthetic power steering fluid reduces the operating temperatures and fluid expansion, resists foaming, and increases the life of power steering systems by reducing internal wear and tear. It's recommended for all power steering applications. Just drain your current power steering fluid and replace it with Flaming River's blend, which will easily mix with trace amounts of any other fluid that is left behind. Cost: \$14.50 retail. Contact: Flaming River Quality Steering Systems, 866-798-8057, www.flamingriver.com.



Power Plugs

Think there's nothing new happening with spark plugs? Think again: Enerpulse has recently announced its aftermarket Pulse Plug, used to replace conventional spark plugs. Each plug has a patented capacitor that Enerpulse claims can enable the creation of 1,000,000 watts of energy, potentially resulting in a more complete burn of the air-fuel mixture in each cylinder. Best of all, Enerpulse offers a guarantee that your car will not only have increased power, but also yield better gas mileage. Cost: \$10-15 each (retail depending on application). Contact: Enerpulse, Inc., 888-800-6700, www.pulstar.com.

Light Mines

Striker brings a new method of illuminating those dark areas of your car with its Light Mine Professional. These magnetic lights can be affixed to the underside of your hood, undercarriage and other metal surfaces and provide light that is eight times brighter and lasts four times longer than the illumination conventional battery-powered work lamps provide. The kit includes a signal beacon and red night vision light. The 11 magnets allow the user to attach and aim the light accurately and securely in any direction and light up those hard to reach places. The Light Mine is powered by three replaceable AAA batteries (included). Cost: \$19.99. Contact: Striker Products, 704-658-9332, www.striker1.com.

