

Wheels: *Jeff S. from Dayton asks: “In a previous column, you mentioned how to dispose of used coolant but did not mention that it can harm pets if they swallow it. Is this an issue that you can address? Thanks.”*

Halderman: All antifreeze used in vehicles from the factory is ethylene glycol with about 3% additives. This is mixed with about half de-mineralized water to create the coolant. You are correct that ethylene glycol is sweet tasting and animals, including dogs and cats, tend to want to drink it if left out in the open. Some antifreezes use propylene glycol instead of ethylene glycol, which is not sweet tasting and is less harmful to animals if ingested. However, this type of coolant does not mix well with ethylene glycol and therefore the entire system has to be flushed completely before using. Also, some vehicle manufacturers do not recommend the use of propylene glycol coolant. Many states now require that all antifreeze/coolant have an agent added to make it bitter tasting so that animals will not drink it. As more states adopt this ruling, most antifreeze manufacturers are now adding this bitter ingredient to all their antifreeze so that it can be sold in all states. However, it is wise to dispose of coolant correctly and not leave it in an open container where pets and animals can get access.

