

Wheels: Edward of New Lebanon writes that his 1990 Chevrolet with the 307 Olds V-8 with 102,000 miles has started using one quart of oil every 260 miles. He has had the valve stem seals replaced and Edward states that there is no visible smoke from the exhaust. Edward says that the compression has been checked and is OK and dye has been installed in the oil and no leaks were found. He wants to know what could be the possible cause of the oil consumption.

Halderman: Valve stem seals are the most common cause of oil consumption and can cause blue exhaust smoke when the engine starts. Because the seals have been replaced and there is no visible blue exhaust smoke, I suspect that a crack in the cylinder head(s) could be the cause. The Automotive Engine Builders Association (AERA) has reported that cracks can occur in the cylinder heads near the exhaust ports. Oil can leak out of the cracks and be burned in the exhaust manifold and catalytic converter without showing any signs of blue exhaust smoke. Unfortunately, the cylinder heads must be removed, cleaned, and then checked for cracks to be sure this is the cause of the problem.

