

Wheels: EJD writes, “My son has a problem with his 2003 Malibu, V-6, with 83,000 miles, in good shape in that he’s losing some antifreeze. Last March while in South Carolina, we had to add some Dex-cool 50/50, may be a pint or so. When we arrived home, the level appeared to be the same. The oil level was not high. About June, he added some more and never could find any drips where he parked to suggest a leak. Last week while in for service, the antifreeze level was down (they added about the amount that the overflow tank holds) and he told them he had been losing some antifreeze. On checking, they found a drop or so on the left side of the block.

He asked them for an estimate to put in a new gasket and was given a price above \$700 plus parts. The oil level and Dex-cool level has remained the same for the past week.

In summary, we’re not talking about a bad leak. He could get used to adding a little fluid every now and then. I’m the eternal pessimist and wonder if a little found its way into the oil, what would happen? Probably nothing good. Other than the dipstick level, is there any way to tell, maybe froth or foam on the oil dipstick? There used to be a radiator stop leak that seemed to work, when we used alcohol and glycol. Is anything like that recommended these days?”

Halderman: The most common reason for this situation to occur is a leaking intake manifold gasket. Because coolant flows through the passages, the coolant is drawn into the engine and burned. This would explain why it is possible to lose coolant, but not see a leak. If you have an extended warranty, this will usually be covered. Check around to dealers and shops as this is a common repair. I would not recommend the use of a stop leak product.

