

Wheels: An e-mail from Don says, “My son has a 1996 Riviera with the supercharged V6. While getting his oil changed at a quick lube, they noticed that the upper radiator hose was collapsed. They said that it looked like oil was in the coolant tank, but could not be sure. He took the car to a tire dealership, but by the time he got there the hose had re-inflated. To their credit, the shop did not try a repair, but said they thought he had a supercharger problem. My son said the coolant looks murky or dark, but has no clue as to what he is looking at. The lube technician put a rag down into the coolant tank and it came out looking black, according to my son. Do you have any ideas as to what may be wrong or what he should do?”

Halderman: A collapsing upper radiator hose is an indication of a defective radiator cap. The coolant should be drawn from the coolant overflow container when the engine is cool, but if this outlet is clogged or the vacuum valve is defective, a vacuum is created in the cooling system. Air entering the cooling system can cause rust to form so it may be wise to have the cooling system flushed and then replacing the radiator cap should take care of the problem. I doubt that there is a supercharger problem.

