

**Wheels:** and e-mail from Kevin says, “I have a 1994 Dodge Caravan SE which over the course of the last 18 months or so has had two oxygen sensor replacements. The last one was installed around the later part of April of this year. The symptoms are usually the same. The engine will start running very rough, the van will barely reach 20 mph, if not cut out in the process. Sometimes after turning it off and letting it sit for 10-15 minutes, it will crank right up and run like nothing every happened. (This is usually the case soon after the first signs of a problem, but later it will occur more frequently.) This past weekend was the first occurrence since the replacement in April. With “no” prior signs of a problem, I had been driving the van for about 40 minutes (short hops around town) when I pulled up at a red light about a mile from home, and almost as soon as I came to a stop, the engine started to run rough (my only clue at the time was that the van started to shudder with the engine running rough). I put the van in neutral and revved the engine until the light changed, but as soon as I put it in drive and accelerated, the van jerked, sputtered and died. I put it in neutral, cranked it and revved it until the next light change, at which time I gently pressed the accelerator and eased around into the parking lot of a nearby store (barely got up to 5 mph). The engine died yet again once in the parking lot. I let it sit for about 15 minutes and then cranked it right up and drove home with about 15 minutes and then cranked it right up and drove home with no apparent problems (no warning lights displayed during this entire time). I did not drive the van the next day, but today I drove it to work (about 4 miles away) without any signs of a problem. However, back in April, a similar thing happened and it was not many days after the first occurrence that it happened more frequently. I am planning on taking it to the service station and having them replace the oxygen sensor yet again, but I was wondering if you have some insight into why this seems to happen so frequently. It definitely seems to be running lean every time this happens. I am not using leaded fuel or additives in the coolant, and no engine repair has been done either. Your input would be greatly appreciated.

**Halderman:** It appears that your oxygen sensor is becoming contaminated. The most common source is oil from defective valve stem seals. Does the engine use oil? If so, have the valve stem seals and/or guides replaced and then drive the vehicle at highway speeds to clean the oxygen sensor.

