

Wheels: An e-mail from Art says, "I have a 1996 Ford Windstar with the big six-cylinder engine. I have trouble with the engine missing at start up after the engine has been shut off. The temperature outside has some to do with how long after you stop the engine. In colder weather if you start the engine in about 10 minutes, it will miss for a while; after a minute or two, it will run fine. With the temperature getting warmer if you start the engine in about 30 minutes, it will do the same thing. If it sits longer, it will start just fine. I have taken the car to a shop at six times now, and they even had a Ford dealer reprogram the computer. They have done numerous things, but nothing seems to help this situation. What could be wrong?"

Halderman: The first thing that I thought about was that one or both head gaskets are leaking some coolant into the combustion chamber. It would act exactly as you described and it is often difficult to diagnose. If this is the case, then the coolant level may be down slightly although it doesn't take too much loss of coolant to cause the problem.

