

Wheels: An e-mail from Bart says, “I have a 2006 Chrysler Town and Country van with just over 16,000 miles on it. On a recent trip from Ohio to Florida, it developed a perplexing problem. After about 250 miles into the trip, I noticed a humming when I would press down on the accelerator, but the major noise was when we pulled off the expressway to get gas – there was a much louder ‘revving’ sound coming from the engine. After the car sat for a few minutes, I started up again and there was no sound. This pattern continued and in North Carolina I stopped at a dealership to have it checked out. They drove the car about 30 miles and heard nothing (I didn’t expect them to hear anything-not driven far enough) and they checked out all belts, hoses, etc. and all were okay. Also, no warning lights had come on either. The dealership thought it was okay to continue our trip and to have the car checked out when we got home. On the rest of the trip to Florida and then coming home, the same pattern followed-drive 200 miles, hear loud revving when stopping and after car rests, no problem for another 200 miles. While driving short distances in Florida for two weeks, we heard no strange sounds. The dealership at home hooked the car up to the computer and found nothing either. Any idea what this problem could be? I would love to solve the mystery before the 3 year, 36,000 mile warranty is up.”

Halderman: I think the noise that you are hearing is the electric cooling fan operating on high speed. I would say that it would be typical when driving in warm weather. There are other times that the computer commands the fans on high and that is to reduce steam from the exhaust from being seen by the driver if driving on wet roads. If driving slowly, this steam could be seen as coming from under the hood and this would make the driver think that there is a fault. To counter this situation the fans are commanded on. If the noise is heard when the windshield wipers are on then I believe this is the reason for the noise. If this is not the case, try to determine exactly when this occurs. For example, your van may be equipped with a rear air conditioning unit. If so, then maybe the noise of the refrigerant flowing to the rear is what is being heard. Try turning different accessories on and off. Knowing when the noise occurs and which accessories are on will help the service technician find the root cause.

