

Wheels: A letter from a reader states, “My son’s 1993 Camry’s engine will occasionally quit while at idle at a stoplight. He reports that this happens both when the engine is hot or cold, and only happens once or twice a week. (He drives to school every day and has after school activities.) I called a Toyota dealer service rep and he admitted that since it is an intermittent problem, he has no idea what would cause it and that they would be doing hit-or-miss diagnostics or part replacement in hopes that they could cure the problem. Would you please suggest things I could be isolating or symptoms I could take note of to help in troubleshooting? The car has a 4-cylinder engine and automatic transmission with 132,000 miles on it.”

Halderman: The Toyota rep is correct that there could be many causes of the problem. One that comes to mind first is the weather. It has been unusually warm and the gasoline is being blended for colder weather. The increased vapor pressure could cause the engine to run rough at idle or stall, especially after it has been driven, then parked for a few minutes, and then started again. If this is happening, then simply wait and the problem will go away when we get summer blend gasoline about May 15. A dirty throttle body could also be the cause and this is an easy fix. I hope this information is helpful.

