

Wheels: *Tim B. from Dayton writes by e-mail: “Jim, I read your articles weekly. I have a 2000 Ford Windstar van with the big V6. It has 178,000 miles and runs on 87 octane fuel. Over the last 50,000 miles it has developed what I believe to be pre-ignition rattle after the engine is up to operating temperature. The one shop I took it to said the problem is carbon build up in the combustion chambers. The carbon gets hot and creates the pre-ignition condition. He suggested using a product called “Seafoam” to remove the carbon from the upper chamber but this would not solve the problem but may reduce it. I read the article published a few weeks ago about the machine that was used to remove carbon from the combustion chamber on a Cadillac to free up piston rings. Is this a possible solution to my “rattling problem?”*

Halderman: Yes it is. There can also be a clogged exhaust port from the EGR valve to the intake. This cannot be fixed using a chemical, but instead the valve and tubing will need to be removed and the carbon cleaned out. The passages on your van are located under the intake manifold so there will be some labor involved getting to them. This is a very common problem with the 3.8 liter V-6 and can be fixed, but it could involve some expense for labor. Except for gaskets and cleaning supplies, there should not be any other parts involved. Check with a professional technician to have the ports cleaned as it can be an involved process for the do-it-yourselfer.

