

Wheels: *Wayne G. writes by e-mail: "I have been enjoying the articles Saturdays in the Dayton Daily News. I am having a few problems with my 1997 S-10 4 cylinder, with a 5-speed manual transmission. The truck sat idle for about a year and have been using it again regularly for the past 2 months. I changed the fuel filter a few years ago but I think the fuel pump is the original. The car has about 150,000 miles and the timing belt was changed at about 100,000. With rising gas prices it is a valuable truck to keep running. Below is a description of the problem(s).*

Truck is getting harder and harder to start after it has been sitting. The problem feels to be a fuel-related issue not electrical. Sometimes after it is started and you take off it hiccups a few times like its being starved of fuel. If you get it started and drive it somewhere and are only gone a short while, it will start right up. Also, sometimes when cruising at highway speed, the truck will hesitate and you have to release the accelerator pedal for it to start running okay again. Other times it runs like a scalded dog. Do you have any ideas?"

Halderman: From your description of the problem, it does appear to be a fuel-supply problem. Being about 15 years old and having 150,000 miles on the truck, I am surprised that the electric fuel pump inside the gas tank has lived this long. Your symptoms match that of a weak fuel pump. The fuel system on this truck does not have a Schrader valve so checking fuel pump pressure is difficult. Instead of paying a professional to check fuel pressure and volume output, I think it would be wise to just go ahead and have the fuel pump replaced. These are a pattern failure item on your truck. The problem could be the rubber fuel line connecting the pump to the sender unit but this will not be known until the tank has been removed from the vehicle and the pump assembly removed. I would advise that a new fuel pump anyway when the tank is down even if the rubber hose is found to be the cause of the problem. Good luck with getting your little S-10 working right again and enjoy the fuel savings.

