

Wheels: An e-mail from Don says, “I have two cars that have not been started for four months. Are there any precautions I should take before starting and driving these vehicles?”

Halderman: There could be three concerns:

1. Is the battery fully charged? If not, or if you don't know, I suggest that a battery charger be used to bring the battery to full charge before starting.
2. The gasoline is over three months old and may not have the volatility needed to allow the engine to start. Try to start the engine and, if it does allow it to run, drive to a gas station and fill the tank with fresh fuel.
3. Have the oil and oil filter replaced as soon as possible. Use the oil viscosity recommended by the vehicle manufacturer; usually SAE 5W-30 or SAE 10W-30. Keep in mind that all Hondas and Fords recommend the use of SAE 5W-20 engine oil in most of their vehicles. This lower viscosity oil results in better fuel economy.

That should do it. There are many other things that may need to be done if the vehicle had been stored for a longer period.

