

WHEELS: *Alicia W. writes by e-mail: "My mom has a 1999 Nissan Altima. Lately, when you barely press the gas the car kind of "bucks" almost like it is bogging down until you apply more gas. Also, there is a bad vibration in the steering wheel. We have had several different people look at the car and no one can quite figure out what it is. So far we have replaced the brakes, calipers, stabilizer link, master cylinders, tie rod, one CV joint boot, and also put on brand new tires. One person thought it might be the EGR but we cleaned it and it appears to be working. I was writing in hopes that you would be able to help me. I am at a loss and without the income to keep trying things that are of no help. Thank you so much for your time, and if there is any more information I could provide, please let me know. Thanks again."*

Halderman: Thanks for writing. Both issues could be the result of a dirty throttle body. This can cause a hesitation when accelerating and a rough idle which might be what you are referring to a vibration in the steering wheel when the vehicle is stopped with the engine running. If the steering wheel vibrates during braking, this condition is usually caused by warped disc brake rotors. Replacing the brake pads and calipers would not fix this concern. It appears that in an effort to save money, many parts have been replaced. I suggest that in the long run, paying a professional service technician to diagnose the cause of the problem is usually money well spent. For the hesitation concern, I suggest that you ask a professional technician to check for any stored or pending diagnostic trouble codes and perform a thorough visual inspection. Often, a procedure called "decarbonization" is needed to solve hesitation problems which could include the following:

1. Running a carbon cleaning solution through the fuel injectors will not only clean the injectors but will also help remove combustion chamber deposits.
2. Cleaning the throttle body assembly and air intake system. This will also help remove deposits that accumulate on the intake valves. These intake valve deposits can often cause the engine to stall or run poorly after a cold start.

