

## **WINTER BLUES IN A FLAT**

By Don Whitehead

As a majority of the Members of MASCC live in the Northern parts of the US like me, there comes a time when its time to put the "Baby" to sleep for a long winters nap. There are a few things that could help keep your cherished Corvette snug for the winter.

I offer these as suggestions and welcome any other ideas that members have come up with over the years. This is an important time for your cars well being.

The biggest enemy of winter is moisture. Unless you have a climate controlled environment, or keep your car in one of those plastic car bubbles, you are relegated to the garage. So think "Moisture is my enemy!" It gets in/on everything, especially those copper wires that always want to turn green and lose contact or even weaken and break, usually at night on some lonely road in the country while coming home from an event.

Moisture likes to seep up through the garage floors too. One of the first things to do is try and put down some type of vapor barrier on the floor. A heavy plastic tarp, or better yet, a rubber backed carpet could help. Plywood will also absorb moisture under the car.

Fuel tanks hate moisture too. How many of you have had to replace it on your cars. Filling up the tank eliminates the empty space where moisture can condense, reducing the amount of water that will gather during the winter. Fuel stabilizer will also help to preserve that fuel for starting in the spring.

Put the top up and close the windows. Mid-America sells large bags of Desiccant which is a moisture absorbing material that is used to help eliminate it from closed areas. It's the same material that is shipped in electronics devices from the factory, only larger. I am sure you have seen them. I put two of these in the interior and one in the trunk

If you have the budget, relatively inexpensive dehumidifiers can be purchased to plug in the garage and help keep the moisture down. But, if you need to keep opening the garage daily, it's of limited value. Also, a special type of de-humidifier must be used if the garage gets cold, as the coil in a home type will not function below freezing. A special absorption type, such as Ruby-Dry must be used.

A good coat of wax is always good for the exterior. On the large chrome surfaces like the bumpers, I even leave it on without buffing it till spring. It's a little harder to get off, but I know it's on there good and keeping the chrome from pitting.

I also change the oil. In every internal combustion engine, some fuel eventually finds its way into the engine, as well as other contaminants, even moisture. You don't want to leave them there festering over winter.

Disconnecting the battery, and even storing it in a warmer place will help to preserve it. It will also prevent electrical fires, especially from the old points driven electrical clocks and any short that may develop. (Putting the battery on one of those low level float chargers sold by Lectric Limited will help the battery to last. Editor)

Some folks also seal up the exhaust, a vulnerable part of the car if you do not have stainless. They run the car for a while, and then insert the tapered ends of a sawed off wooden baseball bat into each exhaust. Don't insert them too tight so they can be removed in spring. As the exhaust cools, it contracts and helps seal. I would expect any type of large rubber plug etc. could work.

A good spray of lubricant on the door hinges, hood, springs, etc. will also help them from becoming stiff over the winter. A lubricant on the weather seals and the convertible top seals is good to, but be careful if you use silicone based to keep it off the paint.

Pump up the tires and over inflate them a little which will eliminate flat spots, or use some jack stands if you are ambitious.

And last but not least, a good cover. It's important that it breathes and does not trap moisture under it. I also have a few of those heavy quilted moving blankets that I place over the cover on the sides of the car that are exposed to "people" traffic. This helps to prevent that accidental scratch as you are moving the snow blower out of the garage or the kids are carrying out their luggage when leaving to go back to college.

Don't be like my friend in Lakewood who left his out last winter!

