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V8

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Condensation in the RV8 VDO Minor Instruments



RV8 owner, Steve Hunter posted on the V8BB regarding a problem he'd suffered with his RV8 since he's owned it. The minor VDO instruments, namely the temperature, voltmeter and fuel gauge instruments, which are all plastic sealed units (but not the clock which has a metal casing and a removable lamp) all suffered by misting up with condensation on warm days or when the heater was on. As he had the dash out of his car to repair the vinyl cover on the top of the dash, now was the time to address this annoying habit.

There was no obvious way in which water vapour could easily enter (or more importantly escape) the casings and so Steve's conclusion was that the moisture was trapped within during manufacture, or it was penetrating in some way during ownership. He therefore considered drilling two 1mm holes in the back of the instruments to enable natural ventilation to take place and asked other members for their thoughts.

Bob Owen responded, suggesting that one possible solution could be to change the wiring within the car such that the lamps came on at all times when the ignition was switched on. Being filament lamps, they would provide a small amount of heat to reduce the relative humidity within the gauges.



Steve thought this over and, in the meantime, had attempted to remove the condensation by cycling them through hot and cold temperatures. The misting remained within the instruments. Not

wishing to remove the dash a further time in the future, this suggestion was discarded. An interesting side line to the main query was posted by Peter Varley who pointed out that the glove box light only operates with the headlights on. This is a useful tip in itself and may surprise some RV8 owners – although there is a logic to this wiring arrangement.

After further thought, Steve decided to use a small soldering iron to melt two small holes of around 2-3mm diameter in the back of each instrument, hence no swarf. After making the holes, the Instruments were thoroughly dried out and ventilated using warm, dry air. After fitting to the dash and reinstalling the dash (a job which Steve vows never to repeat!) success was finally achieved. In hot and cold conditions there has been no further sign of condensation in any of the instruments.

Fitting an Electric Water Pump (Reprise)

Further to our piece on fitting an EWP in the May edition, there has been considerable interest in this topic. This has resulted in putting a few members in touch with each other, including a Healy 3000 owner who has fitted an EWP and is sharing his knowledge. The true Marque of Friendship.