

RUST CONTROL – needless expense or smart investment?

Greg Lawrie, Pro Fleet Care

With the introduction of pre-emergent salts, rust has become an added cost of doing business for fleet owners. Automotive manufacturers have been successful in increasing the life span of their vehicles, but no one anticipated the impacts of these next generation salts. Although local governments, environmental groups and the snow contracting community have embraced these salts, fleet owners are extremely distraught.

Not taken into account were the effects these salts would have on vehicles and infrastructure. Many fleet owners are experiencing severe body rot as well as wiring harness issues, brake table rust jacking, wheel and wheel fastener disintegration, LED system malfunction, weakened brake lines, suspension and fuel tanks – all due to rust corrosion.

These new salts are able to stick to the vehicles longer and are more active at lower temperatures. These materials are destructive because of their ability to re-crystallize as they dry out. Anti-icing chemicals attract and absorb moisture from surrounding environment, keeping them in a semi-solution state for extended periods of time, which multiplies their corrosiveness. The new de-icing chemicals are even more destructive and will attack

paint, aluminum and aluminum wheels. New de-icing solutions will even wick down a split wire casing shortening the life of all components

Many Canadian fleet owners have been using some sort of rust control for years. Studies have shown that effective rust control products can return six times their cost in reduced rust-related expenses and increased vehicle resale value. Fleet owners have found that they can extend the number of years they keep their vehicles while maintaining a clean rust-free image in the market place.

It's important to recognize, however, that not all rust control products are created equal. There are generally four types of products in the market place: cathodic protection, wax and tar products, powder coating and oil products.

Cathodic protection is only effective when used on items that can be grounded such as ships, pipelines, and monuments. While wax and tar products dry out and crack over time allowing moisture to get trapped, further perpetuating the problem. And while powder coating is effective in the short term, over time tends to bubble and peel leaving a rusty surface exposed.

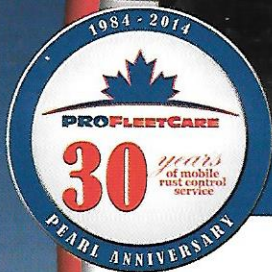
Oil products are most commonly used in the Canadian market place. Oiling is effective as it penetrates hard to reach

areas and neutralizes the harmful effects of rust. Oiling a rusty vehicle will help stop the corrosion process in its tracks. In fact, many body shops that repair rusty vehicles will only warranty their work if the customer oil sprays the vehicle. When using an oil product, look for one that has been designed specifically for corrosion control. Used oils may contain acids, which are more harmful than helpful.

The Automotive Protection Agency (APA) suggests most modern vehicles will experience mechanical and body deterioration due to corrosion after five or six years and that rust deterioration will usually result in increased maintenance and repair costs, or a reduced market value for the vehicle on resale. With the varying rust control options available, it essentially comes down to the product and process that will determine if rust control is a needless expense or smart investment. However, an effective annual rust control program can be worth its weight in gold.

About Greg Lawrie: Greg has been involved in the Rust Control Industry since 1984. He is President and Co-Founder of Pro Fleet Care, North America's only Mobile Rust Control franchise. In Alberta contact Shawn Purdy at 403-596-9081 or shawnpurdy@profleetcare.com. ■

ARE YOUR VEHICLES PROTECTED?



- Rust control service at your farm or business
- Increase equipment and vehicle life
- Reduce equipment and employee downtime
- Reduce operating and repair costs

Protect your investment now, contact us 403-596-9081.

www.profleetcare.com

FRANCHISES AVAILABLE