

TECH TIP

Heater Hose Replacement

Many technicians, when changing a heater core, cut the heater hoses off at the core and then stretch the old hoses onto the new core. It's easy to do and they think they are saving time. But are they really saving time?

Several problems can develop when old heater hose is reused.

- If the heater hose is shorter than needed, engine vibration may be transmitted to the inlet/outlet tubes of the heater core. These tubes are not capable of handling engine vibration without the tube or the solder joint developing a leak.
- Hose length is important to avoid stretching from engine torque. The loss of a few inches could allow the engine to pull or break the tubes off the heater core.
- Excessive force may have to be used to work the old heater hose onto the new heater core. This excessive force may equate to the cracking of the solder joint or causing internal damage to the heater hose.
- If the hoses have been on the vehicle for four years or more, internal wear of the hoses could lead to leakage if the hoses are stretched.

Try explaining to the customer that Yes, you did replace the heater core, and No, you did not replace the heater hoses that just started leaking. So much for "time saved". A comeback, and an unhappy customer.

Most customers would rather pay a little more money while the car is in the shop, and have a complete repair, than to have to bring it back for a warranty repair.

The installer will be providing the customer added value by making sure that the repair will not cause other problems, and will give the customer a quality service. Also, the additional sales will increase the profitability of the installer. This is truly a "win/win" situation.