

Car Care Articles

Bad News: An Engine "Totaled," Good News: A Remanufactured Engine



It was among travelers' worst nightmares and a very expensive trip for this motorist. His beloved pickup blew the engine and had to be towed 250 miles home. The temperature gauge didn't work, nor did the check engine light. By the time he realized the engine was overheated the damage was done.

Exploring his choices, he and his technician considered the pros and cons of trading in the truck, having a new engine installed, overhauling the old engine or installing a remanufactured engine.

Trading in the truck, like "throwing the baby out with the bath water," was out. The costly option of a new engine was also out. How about overhauling the old one? Also expensive, said his mentor, possibly costing about the same as installing a remanufactured engine.

However, the remanufactured engine would carry a strong factory warranty. The remanufactured engine would not only be as good as the original, in several respects it would be better. Hand-built with the finest equipment available, these engines are built to more exacting standards than original. Further, a "reman" has the added benefit of a "seasoned" block, a metallurgical phenomenon which extends engine life and enhances performance.

Several lessons can be learned from this owner's experience and that of others who have "blown" their engines.

Lesson #1: Don't gamble with inoperative instruments and warning lights (the latter, when working properly, light up when the ignition first is turned on).

Lesson #2: At the first indication of overheating pull off the road and shut off the ignition. You may be able to avoid totally destroying your engine.

Lesson # 3: If, by failing lessons #1 and #2, you've ruined your engine, you have some viable options beyond disposing of your vehicle.