

Consumers Digest

Gas-Saving Additive

One of the biggest scams to hit the gas-saving races was "Teflon Coating" oil treatments. The theory was good: Teflon is a tremendous lubricator, and if there was some way to get it to coat an automobile's engine metal parts, it would reduce wear, lower running temperatures, improve performance, and therefore increase mileage.

The major oil companies agreed that the idea was great in principal, and their well-funded labs went to work. In the meantime, any number of products swept onto the market, loudly proclaiming the use of suspended Teflon to perform miracles of all kinds. The catch is, none of them worked. Teflon had to be applied to metal surfaces mechanically, and it would not suspend well in any oil solution. In fact, DuPont (for whom Teflon is a trademark) slapped a few lawsuits around to get their name off fraudulent products—none worked, plain and simple, and the petroleum labs soon downgraded the whole notion.

That is, until [redacted] marketed by Petrolon, Inc., Box 79019, Houston, TX 77279, hit the scene.

In the July/August, 1981, issue of CONSUMERS DIGEST, we admitted a lack of knowledge about the product ("Questions & Answers"). A deluge of inquiries and testimonials followed, so we investigated further. We were somewhat skeptical at first, but it turns out that [redacted] does exactly what Petrolon claims it does. In fact, the more we looked, the more facts stacked up on the product's side.

Containing what Petrolon calls "TFE Resins" (short for polytetraflouraethylene, or Teflon); the substance does, in fact, suspend in oil, and it will, in fact, adhere to engine parts—both the stum-

bling blocks have been resolved. The process by which this is accomplished is a closely guarded secret.

[redacted] does reduce engine heat and ordinary wear, and our informal tests indicate that it will improve gas mileage by about 2 or 3 miles per gallon.

Test Results. The fact that [redacted] reduces engine wear—that it does attach to metal parts—has been verified by tests conducted at the Franklin Institute, the University of Utah Engineering Experiment Station, and by La Tourneau College in Texas. The FAA has approved a similar Petrolon product for use in aircraft, and another product for small engines (motorcycles, lawn mowers, and so on) has also been favorably tested. In addition, the U.S. military plans to use [redacted] in its vehicles.

Perhaps most dramatic, the Automotive Services Councils for Pennsylvania, Inc., torture-tested [redacted] with excellent results. Three cars, with between 75,000 and 129,000 miles on them, were treated with [redacted]. Six months later, the oil was drained from each vehicle, and the cars were driven, without the oil plugs, for about a half hour. The water temperature never rose, and the engines sustained no apparent damage.

You apply the product one time, leaving it in for 3000 miles. Some people re-treat after 3000 miles, but Petrolon doesn't recommend it—they feel the first treatment will coat the engine parts. One possible exception: Ford or Chrysler cars with 400 cubic inch V8s, which need to be "flushed" before the coating will adhere.

[redacted] costs \$29.95 per quart, and the amount needed varies with engine size. However, it seems well worth the expense.

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