

David Southcott writes in to remind us about antifreeze to protect our cars.

ANTIFREEZE

The first frosts have already occurred in the more rugged North of our County, so it's time to think about antifreeze.

When we buy antifreeze for our cherished Austins, we tend to go for the best. You see them on the shelf and look for the one that says it will give you the best protection. And it's three pounds or so more expensive than the bottom shelf stuff, so it must be good. And then we tip it in - bad move! In older cars where lead, lead solder, lead alloy bushes, graphite/lead water pump lubricated rope are used, expect trouble.

All are usually BS 6580 compliant so no help there. The Orange ones are "Organic Acid Technology" (OAT); and should not be used in older classics. It is longer lasting, having an in-car life of five years and cheaper to make but will also attack conventional silicon gasket sealing compounds, Hylomar and its derivatives, the traditional rubber and fabric based water hoses and so on.

Another one to avoid is the "Hybrid Organic Acid Technology" (HOAT) antifreeze: Daimler/Chrysler's one is orange and Ford's is yellow. Also avoid the "Nitrate Organic Acid Technology" for as it says it's an OAT with Nitrates added.

BEWARE: Halford's sell a blue-coloured 'Advanced' antifreeze which has a label containing the phrase: '*Older vehicles can further benefit...*' but on looking closely it was discovered that this product does indeed contain OAT and therefore cannot be recommended for historic engines.

The one to use in our older cars is, the older "**INORGANIC ADDITIVE TECHNOLOGY**" (IAT) **ANTIFREEZE**, normally blue in colour and often referred to as "conventionally inhibited". It has only a two year in-car life and is normally **ETHYLENE GLYCOL (EG) BASED**. There is one downside in using EG based antifreezes, they are very toxic. 30ml can be fatal in adults and 4ml will kill a cat! So please avoid spillage and dispose of it carefully. If you want to be safe, green and environmentally friendly you should use a Propylene Glycol but finding this is difficult.

David Southcott