Conversion:

EMP Resistant GMC

One man’s idea for making his 1976 GMC 350 truck less vulnerable to nuclear attack...

By Don Cable

A nuclear attack will ruin the HEI ignition in your 1975 or newer GMC/Chevy truck.

If you know the National Guard and Red Cross will save you and hand out coffee, doughnuts, blankets and sympathy — stop here. You don’t need my advice. I am not an expert on anything — just an old “shade tree” mechanic. Yet I changed my 1976 GMC V8 350 (K25 4WD PU) from HEI to points-type ignition in an afternoon.

PLEASE NOTE: These instructions apply only to the 1976 GMC V8 350. If your truck is not a 1976 GMC V8 seek competent advice before attempting this project.

1. Read ALL instructions THREE TIMES.
2. Steam clean engine.
3. Pull spark plugs, flat file electrodes, gap to 0.035-inch and install them.
4. Buy these parts for a 1974 GMC V8 350: distributor with cap and rotor, coil bracket, coil, resistor block, and spark plug wires; also a roll of #12 insulated wire and some connectors.
5. Cut an 8-inch and a 15-inch piece of #12 wire. Attach connectors. Connect wires to “+” side of coil, and to resistor block.
6. Number the receptacles in the distributor cap.
7. Remove the air cleaner assembly.
8. Disconnect the NEG battery cable from the alternator bracket. Tape it to a heater hose.
9. Cut the red wire at a point about 3 inches from HEI distributor.
10. Remove spark plug wires and HEI distributor cap.
11. Note position of rotor. If rotor points to 3 o’clock, write down “Rotor to 3 o’clock.”
12. Disconnect the vacuum advance hose from the distributor. Plug the vacuum advance hose.
13. Loosen hold-down bolt and remove HEI distributor.
14. Install points-type distributor. Take care that the rotor points the same way as before.
15. Finger tighten hold-down bolt. (You will need to turn distributor by hand.)
16. Install distributor cap and spark plug wires.
17. Install coil bracket, coil and resistor block on firewall. Connect long wire from bottom of distributor to “-” side of coil. Connect wire from center of coil to center receptacle of distributor cap.
18. Connect 15-inch wire to red wire.
19. Reconnect NEG battery cable to ground on alternator bracket.
22. With starter turning engine, or engine idling, turn Allen wrench to set Dwell to 30. (Book specs 29 to 31.)
23. To set timing: with engine idling, turn distributor CCW to attain max idle RPM, then CW to a point 200 less than max.
25. If your engine lacks power, or “pings” or “rattles” on acceleration,
repeat step 23. . . but this time set idle RPM at a point 300 RPM below max. Then repeat step 24.

26. If your timing is still not right, seek help.

This method of timing works for my truck at 5,000 feet above sea level.

I sincerely hope we will never undergo an EMP attack . . . but just because you are paranoid does not mean they are not out to get you. ☠

ABOVE — Note position of rotor.

ABOVE RIGHT — Disconnect NEG battery cable from alternator bracket. Tape it to heater hoses.

RIGHT — Set dwell to 30.