

Anti-Freeze Caution For Older Cars

The antifreeze solutions that we are most familiar with are Ethylene Glycol based and became available in 1937. It was originally marketed as "permanent antifreeze," since the high boiling points provided advantages for summertime use as well as during cold weather it was considered as an all-weather year-round coolant. Most solutions also contain rust inhibitors and a water pump lubricant. Although advertised as "permanent" antifreeze, Glycol antifreeze solutions are usually green in color and should be replaced every two years.

CAUTION: Ethylene glycol antifreezes are poisonous and should be kept away from any person or animal (children and especially dogs & cats) that might be tempted by its sweet taste.

Many newer cars are filled with an organic acid technology (OAT) antifreeze (such as Dex-Cool®) which has an extended service life of five years. Although these still contain some glycol, OAT solutions may not be compatible with conventional inorganic-based coolants containing glycol (e.g., with silicates, borates, phosphates) and, if changing from one type to the other, the cooling system must be thoroughly flushed with clean water. Typically OAT antifreeze contains a red, orange or pink dye to differentiate it from the conventional inorganic coolants (blue or green).

The most recent technology OAT coolants claim to be compatible with all types of Ethylene Glycol based, OAT type and inorganic-based coolants. These most recent coolants are typically green or yellow in color.

CAUTION: Both the original OAT and the newer "universal-type" OAT coolants can cause severe damage to older radiators not specifically designed for its use. When in doubt, use only the original "permanent-type" antifreeze.

- Kaiser Bill