

Painting The Distributor

by Tom Endy

An old rusty cruddy distributor found at a swap meet that will sell for less than \$10 is hard to pass up, especially if you own a bead blaster. If the housing is not cracked around the bushings and the ears are not broken off they can be made to look like new again and put back into service for little cost.

After disassembly the housing should be de-greased and the bushings carefully removed without cracking the housing. A 1/4" drill bit should be run through the oilier port to push the usual accumulated crud out. Bushings can be installed and reamed either before or after painting.

It is important that the housing be properly prepared prior to painting. Crucial areas should be masked off for grounding purposes.

Carefully mask off the bottom of the housing where it sits on the engine head. This includes the area that sits flush on the head and the portion that extends down into the head. Mask off the little locating pin on the bottom of the housing as well. Mask off the top of the shaft tunnel where the point cam sits.

Cut a small rectangular piece of masking tape and carefully place it over the screw hole where the ground strap of the condenser attaches. This is for the purpose of providing a good ground connection.

With a pair of tweezers carefully push small pieces of paper towel into the two screw holes where the lower plate mounts and into the oilier hole to prevent paint clogging.

Obtain a 3/8" pipe plug from your favorite hardware store and screw it into the boss for the ignition cable. This will prevent paint from getting on the threads and will provide a solid ground.

Take a short length of insulated wire, about 16 gauge and press it into the circular slot where the upper plate resides. This area is an important ground for the upper plate and it should not be clogged with paint.

The housing is ready for painting. Black Rustoleum works very well.



A 3/8" pipe plug and a length of insulated wire.



A cruddy swap meet distributor head blasted and ready for masking and painting.



The finished product after painting.