



TECH TIPS

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HEADER EXHAUST SEALING PROBLEMS

Many customers complain about replacing exhaust gaskets repeatedly on vehicles equipped with headers. The problem is not the exhaust gasket itself, it's usually the header. Here is some tips on how to make exhaust gaskets last longer.

1. Inspect the weld-bead located on the inside of the header flange, this is the part that actually seals the header to the exhaust gasket and cylinder head. Some header manufactures use a belt grinder to grind the weld-beads flat, sometimes instead of being flat they end-up having a high and low spot. The weld-bead must be completely flat or sealing problems can occur and the gasket will fail (blow-out) prematurely because uneven clamp-load applied to the exhaust gasket. To correct this problem, determine where the low spot is located on weld-bead and remove material using a flat file to make the weld-bead height equal from top to bottom and side to side.
2. If the header set has a one-piece flange inspect the header flange to be sure it is straight, if the flange is not straight you may not be able to provide the proper clamp-load to seal the gasket. To correct bend flanges, cut the flange to separate each exhaust port, this will allow each port to be tightened individually and provide proper clamp-load to seal the gasket.
3. Re-torque header bolts once the engine has completed a heating and cooling cycle. Wait until the engine has cooled sufficiently and re-tighten all header bolts or nuts if studs are used.