

Ceramic Coating

By Lee Fowler

It was a dark and stormy night, and all the vehicles were snuggled safely in the garages. The 356 on the top of the four-post lift in the main garage. The 912 parked underneath, and the Boxster next to it. The Toyota Tacoma and Carrera were in the detached garage. Wait! Did that previous sentence say “Boxster?” I had come to the conclusion long ago that we, Suzanne and I, had enough Porsches in our garage(s). I’m not going into the sordid details of how she contrived to add a 2008 Boxster to our “fleet,” but she did. With our four-post lift in the main garage plus the detached garage, we could store five cars. The Subaru, 912, and 356 lived in the main garage, while the Carrera and my beloved Toyota Tacoma truck resided in the detached unit. Blissful coexistence. The Boxster was added to our “fleet” and the Subaru banished to the used car lot at Porsche of Huntsville. No tears shed since we didn’t particularly like the Subaru anyway. And there’s no room in this story to describe how Suzanne completely bamboozled me into buying that Boxster,

But that created a dilemma! Sure, we still only have five cars. But with one car on the lift, the older cars don’t get driven enough. Way too much effort! We have to move the “lower” car. Lower the lift. Back out the “upper” car. Move the “lower” car to the lift, etc., etc. So, the old cars don’t get driven enough because I’m too lazy (old) to put that much effort into it. Solution? Park the truck outside and leave the Porsches on the garage floors. Park my baby outside? Perish the thought! It’s a 2017 Toyota with only about 11k miles. It’s always lived indoors. And that finally gets us to the subject of this missive. Ceramic coating!

In a fit of desperation, I decided to have the entire truck ceramic coated. That way it could live outside and be able to withstand the elements. It was a heart wrenching decision, but I thought it to be fair for all the cars.

I decided to take the truck to AutoworkZ, which does all the new car prep for Porsche of Huntsville. Prin Steward, owner of AutoworkZ, as I discovered is a total zealot for quality and customer satisfaction. We took the truck in on a Tuesday and picked it up on Friday. Ever heard the term “blown away?” Well, that was our reaction. The truck looked a thousand percent better than when it was new. The product AutoworkZ uses is called Gtechniq. The company guarantees

the product for the full nine years. The technicians who work there have to be trained and certified by Gtechniq before being allowed to apply the product. I still hadn't informed the truck that it was being relegated to living outside. When we saw it, gleaming with its new coating we started having second thoughts. Maybe we should still put one of the Porsches on the lift. But when we got home, I parked the truck outside and didn't have the heart to look back as I walked into the house. I'm sure it's sitting out there now, sad and lonely with no walls and roof to offer it security and protection from the elements. In fact, I did sneak a look and saw what I thought was water coming from under the front. I told Suzanne, "My truck is crying about being left outside!" She replied, "You dummy! That's condensation from the truck's air conditioner!" Well at least it has a coating to protect its finish from the sun and rain. But I didn't want to overreact. Sure, the truck looks great but was it the right thing to do? Dave Bender was the lucky bidder for a ceramic coating at our auction and had his 911 done last fall. I wanted to hear his opinion and here is his response. He's sold on it also.

"Washing is a breeze. I use a pH-neutral soap as recommended. The dirt comes right off. I then remove about 95% of the water with a leaf blower and just have to do a quick touch-up with a chamois. I haven't had the opportunity to see how it handles a bug-plastered front bumper like we get here in the summer, but I am betting removal will be easier than I am used to."

Next day, guess what. Our weather alert radio started blaring a warning. High winds and hail expected in Madison County. Suzanne said, "Do you think we could wedge three cars into the detached garage?" "No way!" says I. Even if we were able to get three of the Porsches into the detached garage the truck won't fit in the main garage. The four-post lift takes up too much room. The next thing I hear is, "Why don't you get rid of the lift? You're too old to work on cars anymore anyway." Now how am I to reply to that?

But that's not an immediate solution. The storm is coming and the truck is outside. Obvious solution is to put one of the cars back up on the lift. And that's what we did. The truck is happy back living in the garage with its shiny new coating. And we've been sold on that process. Ceramic coating is the way to go.

We got the nine-year protection plan. At my age I don't know why I'm worried about the truck nine years from now, but I guess that's just positive thinking. We will take it back annually for a free inspection. That's how Gtechniq guarantees the product for a full nine years. Whether or not the truck gets banished to the outdoors is a decision for another day. But we can certainly recommend putting a ceramic coating on the cars. And yes, the other vehicles may get the same treatment.