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Document ID# 26990
1998 Chevrolet/Geo Blazer - 4WD

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Transmission Fluid Checking Procedure

Checking fluid level, color, and condition at regular intervals will provide early diagnostic information about the transmission. This information may then be used to correct a condition that, if not detected early, could result in major transmission repair.

Refer to General Information for maintenance information and servicing intervals.

Important

New automatic transmission fluid is red. Red dye is added in order to help the assembly plant distinguish this fluid from engine oil and antifreeze. The red dye is not permanent. After some driving, the transmission fluid will look darker. Eventually, the fluid may appear light brown.

- Wait at least 30 minutes before checking the transmission fluid, if the vehicle has been driven under the following conditions:
 - Outside temperature is above 32°C (90°F)
 - At high speed for more than 15 minutes
 - In heavy traffic during hot weather
 - While pulling a trailer
- In order to get the correct reading, the fluid should be at a normal operating temperature, which is 82°C-94°C (180°F-200°F).
- Do the following for a hot check: Warm up the vehicle by driving about 24 km (15 miles), when the outside temperature is above 10°C (50°F). If the temperature is colder than 10°C (50°F), you may have to drive the vehicle longer.
- Do the following for a cold check: Do a cold check when the transmission temperature is 24°C-29°C (75°F-85°F). Let the engine run at slow idle for 5 minutes, if the outside temperature is 10°C (50°F) or higher. If the outside temperature is colder than 10°C (50°F), you may have to idle the engine longer than 5 minutes.
- Do the following for a hot or a cold transmission fluid check:
 1. Idle the engine.
 2. Park the vehicle on a level surface.
 3. Place the shift lever in the P (Park) position.
 4. Apply the parking brake.
 5. With you foot on the brake pedal, move the shift lever through each gear, pausing for about 3 seconds in each range. Then, put the shift lever in P (Park).
 6. Idle the engine for 3 minutes or more.
- Now, do the following in order to check the fluid level:
 1. Pull out the dipstick. Wipe the dipstick well with a clean rag or a paper towel.
 2. Push the dipstick in all the way. Wait 3 seconds. Then, pull the dipstick back out again.
 3. Check bolt sides of the dipstick, reading the lower level.
 - For a cold check, the fluid level must be in the COLD area.
 - For a hot check, the fluid level must be in the HOT or crosshatched area.
 4. If the fluid level is OK, push the dipstick back in all the way.

Notice

Do not overfill the transmission. Overfilling will result in foaming, loss of fluid, and possible damage to the transmission.

5. If the fluid level is low, add only enough DEXRON®-III (or, if unavailable, DEXRON®-IIE) to bring the fluid level up to the COLD area for a cold check or the HOT area for a hot check. Generally, this will require less than a pint of fluid. Do not overfill.
6. After adding the fluid, recheck the fluid level as described above. When the fluid level is correct, push the dipstick in all the way.
 - Transmission fluid should be red in color when the fluid is new.

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