

## The Changing World of Parts

How can a local parts store always have the part we need? It's simple. Always look for a part for a new car and they will most likely have it. As vehicles get older though, and call for specific parts for older vehicles diminish, inventories are rotated making sure they keep the top sellers and parts for the older vehicles are not stocked. They must have a certain "turn" of their inventory investment to stay profitable and this fact is what is affecting us with parts for our "Classic GMC" motorhome.

Not for consumable parts such as spark plugs, oil and air filters but for more coach specific parts like shocks and suspension, transmission and engine parts and certainly interior and exterior accessories. It is getting increasingly difficult to expect your local parts supplier to be able to stock many coach specific parts. When vehicles are newer and the manufacturer is promoting specific models, after market suppliers jump on that promotional bandwagon and work hard to cater to the needs of these vehicle owners. But think about it, how many GMC motorhome or middle 70's Toronados, for that matter, are in your local area. A parts store would have to have a huge inventory investment to stock parts for vehicles of that vintage and as vehicles age and new models come in to excite the car buying public -well you can see the trend and the problem.

This is where specialty parts houses come into play. If a parts store has an inordinate amount of customers asking for certain parts, they are able to stock them because they are able to realize a "turn" on those parts much more than a store that does not have that customer. These are called specialty or vehicle specific stores and the GMC community is blessed with several GMC specific dealers throughout the country. Why do we have them? Since almost 13,000 coaches were produced there are enough customers nationwide to support them. They are very important to the future availability of the selection of specialty parts we need to keep our "Classic GMC" on the road and vital. Without good parts availability, the GMC would be relegated to a corner in some museum as many unique vehicles have been over the years. As our coaches get older and parts become more scarce, in many cases obsolete through the normal parts. distribution network, we must rely upon and support our GMC specialty parts dealer base.

Will you pay more for parts through specialty dealers? On easily available parts such as oil filters and such, the GMC parts dealers will have pretty much the same cost as most any parts house. These parts are easily available through most anyone, but for things that must be hand made or only available to dealers through secondary manufacturers, you must understand and expect to find some parts starting to increase in price. Suspension components such as steering shafts, relay levers and hubs have not been available from a local parts store for years. The only place you will find them is through a specialty

parts dealer. Shocks and other components, while still on an aftermarket brand's listing, will usually not be in stock at a local parts store. These parts are, however, probably available through a specialty parts dealer and one call can usually land those parts right at your doorstep. Understand that the goal is to find the parts and whether it is at a parts store around the corner or from a specialty parts dealer as close as the mailman out front, getting the part is the goal and this is what we should seek.

Our parts interchange book is to help you identify parts you may need and a line on how to access it. Rather than being an end in itself, as our parts get increasingly difficult to find, we seek to continue to help you find what you need using not only local parts houses but also the specialty parts dealers we have out there to help us stay on the road. Where possible and needed, do not hesitate to contact one of the GMC specific dealers we list in this interchange index. Cultivate a relationship and rely on these dealers to help you with your parts needs. You will find them knowledgeable and eager to help you, since after all, "YOU ARE THEIR ONLY CUSTOMER". We need them and they need us, so working with them is a "win-win" proposition. As our coaches get older these dealers will become increasingly important to us and our "Classic GMC" so turn to them when you need something special.