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Washing under water restrictions!

While water use may now be restricted in your city or town, that doesn't mean you have to drive a dirty car. Here's how an expert keeps cars that can't be washed looking better than new.

As the current droughts worsen, motorists have been asked to join in water conservation efforts by not washing their cars and trucks. Fortunately, being a good citizen need not condemn you to driving a dirty vehicle. In fact, most of the world's most pampered cars--vehicles shown at such exclusive competitions as the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, are never washed.

"Ninety-five percent of these show cars simply can't be washed or exposed to rain because of the way they have been restored," said Chuck Bennett who is the founder of Zymöl. He has overseen the final cleaning and preparation of many of the lavishly restored classic cars that ultimately go on to take best-of-show awards at Pebble Beach and other premier car shows around the country. "These cars do get dirty, make no mistake about it," said Bennett. "Even though they are shipped in enclosed trailers, they get dusty and grimy", "then, as part of the show, they are often driven in tours and over grass and dirt surfaces where they can get just as dirty as your car or truck."

The same techniques Bennett uses to clean multi-million dollar classics without using a garden hose can also work on your car or truck. A word of warning, however. "Really dirty, muddy or sandy vehicles do need to have the surface irrigated," said Bennett. "Nothing cleans as well as water. But dust and road grime can be removed without damaging the finish and without using traditional washing techniques," he added.

Here's how to do it:

"For light dust, a wool duster works well," said Bennett. "It uses a static charge to lift the dust right off the paint." No water is needed.

"People who have access to a small air compressor have another way of removing dust and dirt," Bennett added. "Simply use the compressed air to blow it off the paint. Even a small, inexpensive air compressor will do the job. Just be sure to keep the nozzle at least six inches away from the car and cover the nozzle with a cloth to keep oil and moisture from striking the paint." The oil could come from the compressor itself, since many units use it for lubrication. As for the water, humidity in the atmosphere often condenses and forms drops when air is compressed. Add some road grime, however, and the duster and air compressor will have met their match.

"For road grime, a field glaze works well. Simply spray it on in large doses and then let it sit for a while before wiping it off. Be sure to use a soft cloth that you move slowly and gently over the surface. Use slow, straight, back-and-forth strokes.

Don't remove the field glaze using a circular rubbing motion," Bennett warned. Field glazes are designed to do a light cleaning without using water. Zymöl offers one that is very effective and free of silicones. For dirtier surfaces, it is still possible to get a car or truck clean while using very little water. "Use about one-half teaspoon of auto wash—not a detergent—with eight ounces of distilled water in a spray bottle," Bennett suggested. "If you can't irrigate the surface, it is important to use distilled water." Then, Bennett suggests spraying an ample amount of the mixture on the surface and letting it soak in. "Remove it with a 100-percent cotton towel with a long tuft," he suggested. The towel should be either used or un-sized. Most new towels are treated, or sized, with chemicals to make them look new and crisp on the store shelves. These same treatments, which are removed after several launderings, can damage a vehicle's paint, even if the towel itself is pure cotton.

"As the water and auto wash mixture is removed, it is important to use a slow, straight and gentle wiping motion," Bennett said. "And you must flip the towel over frequently. As you do the job, keep flipping the towel."

Using any of these techniques, it should be possible to keep a car or truck clean without using very much, if any water. Once cleaned of surface dirt, dust and grime, giving the vehicle a deep cleaning and then protecting the finish with wax can provide even more protection. This is especially important during periods when car washing is being discouraged. For additional suggestions and useful products, contact your Zymöl Licensed Detailer, Authorised Reseller or Zymöl Studio today.