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Nothin' hotter than a pair of late-'60s/early-'70s GMs—especially when they're the caliber of Mike Fusco's '70 Blazer and his buddy Mark McDonald's '69 GMC. Image by Grant Peterson.



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Rust Intervention

KBS Coatings' Three-Step Rehab

By Rob Fortier

O've said it before, and I'll say it again—rust sucks! I can't tell you how many times I've shied away from parts or even complete projects because of it. I hate dealing with rotted metal, no qualms about it. However, I'm not alone, as many others share my sentiments. Fortunately, some of those people have taken the time and effort to not only do something about curing the cancerous woes, but to actually develop products and methods to help others experiencing the same struggles.

Now, thanks to KBS Coatings, people like me can breathe a breath of fresh, rust-free air. With their comprehensive three-step Oxygen-Block System, you can give

new life to old, deteriorating metal, from chassis to floorboards and pretty much everything in between. Easily stop rust in its tracks and renew fatigued metal surfaces

with a variety of finishes. For frames, the BlackTop Chassis Coater provides an OE-like satin black look, while the company's popular RustSeal is available in black, silver,



KBS Coatings' comprehensive Oxygen-Block System consists of AquaClean and RustBlast to clean and prep, and RustSeal and BlackTop to seal and protect. Both finishes are available in pint, quart, and gallon sizes to accommodate jobs big and small.



Rust loves to hang out everywhere, especially where it's least likely to be discovered for quite some time—on your chassis. Fortunately, the metal's thick and not too prone to cancer (well, not usually); unfortunately, you gotta pull your cab and accompanying sheetmetal to treat it.



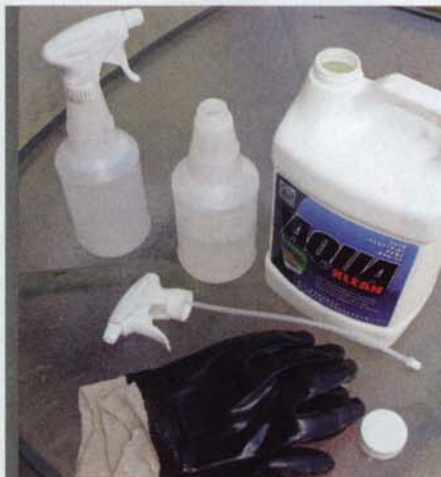
While RustSeal can and will adhere directly over rust, for the best seal possible it's recommended to prep the surface to get rid of any and all particle contaminants (dirt, grease, and surface corrosion). An electric or pneumatic grinder with a wire wheel or simply a wire brush should suffice.



But don't stop there—treat the surface as if you were prepping for an actual paint job (because you kind of really are!). That means hitting all the nooks and crannies with whatever means necessary.



If you can wipe your hand along the surface and not collect any rusty residue, you're ready to start the KBS process; otherwise, keep cleaning.



Even though AquaKlean is a water-based cleaning agent, gloves should be worn at all times during use. For really corroded surfaces, dilute with water (1:1); increase water percentages for less problematic areas.



If a hose is not accessible (or feasible to use, like in a garage), have at least an equal amount of water handy to rinse the AquaKlean—and since the cleaner is clear as well, marking accordingly is not a bad idea.

red oxide, off-white, and even green, all of which can be top-coated on exterior surfaces with your choice of sealer to provide proper UV protection.

Basically, what you want to do is not only stop rust dead in its tracks, but also keep it from returning. In order to accomplish that, you need to remove the key elements that are feeding its current existence: water and oxygen. While simply

covering surfaces with a high-grade sealing agent can and often will deter further corrosion, to completely cure the problem, you need to thoroughly prepare affected surfaces prior to sealing. With KBS' AquaKlean and RustBlast—both water-based agents—followed by RustSeal, you can kiss rust goodbye forever.

Even if you've never prepped raw metal surfaces before, AquaKlean and RustBlast

couldn't be simpler to use. For heavily rusted/corroded areas, you'll need a good wire brush or a wire wheel attachment for your electric grinder, and, of course, the proper safety equipment, such as gloves and protective eyewear. Treat the preparation process as you would bodyworking a quarter-panel or a fender: the better the underlying work; the better the end results.

Along with its inherent rust-inhibiting

RUST INTERVENTION



Apply AquaKlean liberally and often to keep the surface being treated wet; do not allow the cleaner to dry. A brush or ScotchBrite pad can help loosen debris. Old baking pans were used to catch the excess liquid below.



While the AquaKlean was soaking on the chassis, I decided to test out the products on a sheetmetal panel. While the rust wasn't as severe, the surface was much dirtier, so it took some effort to prepare it.



The same 1:1 diluted AquaKlean mixture was used on the sheetmetal to clean the surface as thoroughly as possible.



After allowing a minimum of 10 minutes of soak time (up to 24 hours for severe conditions), completely rinse the cleaner off with warm water—the warmer the better. Once the AquaKlean has been rinsed off, allow the surface to fully dry.



The nice thing about working in an outdoor environment is being able to use a hose to rinse treated areas.

Next, apply RustBlast full-strength to the freshly cleaned areas. Just like before, do not allow the surface to dry, and allow at least 10 minutes to soak (up to two hours for severely rusted parts). Rinse with water and let the metal dry completely. Typically, a white residue (zinc phosphate) will result—that's expected.



RUST INTERVENTION



Since RustSeal is intended to receive a topcoat on an exterior surface, KBS just came out with a selection of colors: off-white, green, silver, and red oxide, which I tested on the sheetmetal with a brush.



A minimum of two thin coats should always be applied, whether using a brush, roller, or spray gun (brush marks level out). RustSeal can be reduced with #1 Thinner, but normally it's not necessary.



Typical curing time is two to four hours with a six-hour re-coat window (that includes top-coating). If more than six hours passes, go over the surface with 400-grit paper before applying additional coats.



If you don't have a pour spout available, make sure to clean the top of the can as best as possible. And, unless you're like me and don't care about multi-colored hands, keep your gloves on while handling—the ONLY agent that removes RustSeal...



...is KBS' #1 Thinner—that, and time! Use it for both reducing RustSeal and/or BlackTop and cleanup (before the material has dried).



As mentioned, the zinc phosphate film that forms once the RustBlast has dried is not only expected, it promotes adhesion of the RustSeal finish. In other words, don't strip it off.

RUST INTERVENTION

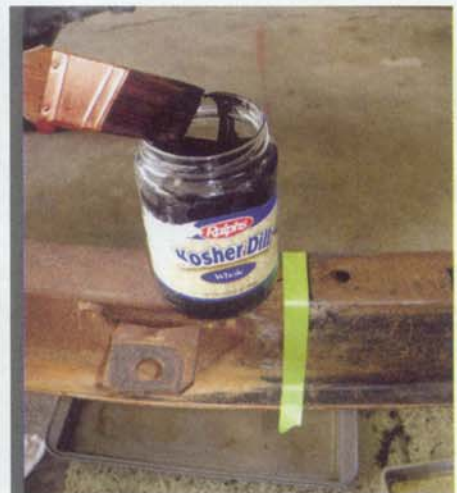
properties, RustSeal (as well as BlackTop Chassis Coater) is user friendly and quite easy to apply. Small areas can be tackled with a brush or mini spray applicator; larger areas may require an actual spray gun, such as a gravity-fed HVLP unit that KBS offers. While RustSeal is considered the final step of the three-phase process, it is

not intended for exterior-surface use; however, BlackTop is! The satin-black finish has permanent UV stability, so you won't experience any immediate fading or white chalking from element exposure like you would with any non-sealing coating.

With plenty of corroded items lingering in my backyard, I decided to devote the



Never shake RustSeal; always stir, and stir thoroughly so material is "chunk-free." Also, never paint directly from the container.



Always use a devoted, sealed container when applying RustSeal, especially if by chance you end up having to use thinner. Never pour it back into the original can, either.



With three even coats of RustSeal applied, the framerail was looking better than new. The test area was done using a brush. However, once a few future modifications are finished, the entire chassis will be done using an HVLP spray gun.

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Finally, the RustSeal was covered with BlackTop, KBS' satin-finish topcoat, which can be used on exterior surfaces as well due to its permanent UV stability. With the underlying base, only one coat was required to achieve good coverage.



What more is there to say? The only thing left is to try out KBS Coatings for yourself.

better part of an open weekend to give KBS Coatings' Oxygen-Block System a try. After taking some time to familiarize myself with the application process, followed by a trip to the local hardware store for a few ancillary items, I was well on my way to completing my own three-step rust rehab...and I'll never fall off the wagon again!

CT

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