HINTS & KINKS

FOR YOUR AIRSTREAM

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ITEM: LOOSE HARDWARE Let's talk about nuts, bolts, sheet metal screws, machine screws, locknuts, and a variety of hardware that holds our RV together. Constant road vibration and normal use tends to loosen these items that depend on a tight position to do their intended job. An RV mechanic proved to me that a threaded hardware depends on the last three threads to hold its entire length in tight condition. If those last threads loosen, then it invites the entire length to "unravel" and to a useless condition resulting in loss of the item it was holding in place. To prove his point, he picked the rear mounted ladder brackets on two motorhomes, one had a bicycle lashed onto its length. The machine screws that fastened the top and bottom ladder brackets on both RV's were unscrewed half of their length. The bolts on the rear bumpers that held the anti-debris protectors in place had loose locknuts, and the sheet metal screws that held the fridge outside access door were loose. The remedy is to periodically equip yourself with a Phillips and slotted screw driver and try every screw in sight. It may require a wrench or two to check the bolts, but you will be assured that you are tight for the road.

ITEM: PLUMBING Of all the required maintenance tasks in the RV, plumbing is generally considered the most unpopular, and therefore results in the least attended. But force yourself to visually check (with proper tool in hand) each connector hardware. Tighten hose clamps to a "tight hold" and be careful not to overtighten causing a break at that junction. The in-line water filter has two clamp connections; one at the inlet and one at the outlet. Water bearing hoses, whether rubber or plastic, located near heater hoses, tend to require more frequent inspections due to the variants in temperature in close quarters. Plumbing that is not adequately supported will tend to loosen due to road vibration requiring close inspection at shorter intervals. Carefully inspect the plumbing lines bend or curve in their routing so that you can check those locations often. Remember that a wet spot due to a plumbing leak can be unobserved for long periods of time due to hidden locations, eventually resulting in typical flood conditions enroute or parked. Wet carpeting is not fun!