

The column this month comes to us courtesy of **Gene Poast, WBCCI# 334**, who wishes to share a solution to an increasingly common concern:

### **Thermopane Problems:**

Many motorhome owners have discovered problems with the thermopane windows installed in their units. Problems include either or both (a) internal (i.e., between the panes) fogging or (b) seal creep or “snaking”. The fogging problem if left for too long will eventually result in etching of the glass, which then requires replacement. Snaking or expansion of the seal not only looks bad but also limits vision and if left too long will result in discoloration of the glass, which cannot be corrected except by replacement. Generally, the solution is to replace the affected window at a considerable cost. This is the only remedy for most RV dealers and repair facilities.

### An Alternate Solution:

Suncoast Designers, Inc. of Hudson, Florida, a manufacturer of thermopane windows, can repair RV windows. Their process begins with the removal of the entire window assembly followed by disassembly of the frame and removal of the glass. Each piece of glass is then sent through an automated cleaning machine, which delivers the clean dry glass to a “clean-room”. After inspection, the technician applies a new seal and joins the panes together. This assembled glass pane is then sent through a bonding machine in which the assembly is first heated to make the seal pliable and then passed through a set of rollers to press the assembly to the precise thickness and bond the seal. Finally dry air is injected between the panes and the access port is sealed. The glass is then re-installed in the frame and sealed. Finally, the repaired window assembly is placed back in the RV and sealed to prevent water leakage.

The current cost is \$200 per window regardless of size. If the cleaned window is determined by the customer not to be re-useable, there is an additional replacement charge, generally about \$50 to \$75. It may take up to four days to obtain a replacement glass if one is not available.

When you arrive at the facility you are directed to park in one of twelve RV sites with 50 amp electric and water service. A dump station is available at the entrance. There are additional dry camping facilities within the gated factory yard. The Design Manager will then complete an inspection of your rig and make final arrangements to get things started. The staff of repair workers appears highly

trained, experienced, and skilled, while also pleasant to deal with.

**Dave Wendt, WBCCI # 1235**, and I made a trip to scout the facility about a month ago. He previously had his two windows repaired and is pleased with the work. When I took my Airstream motorhome to be repaired, I arrived the night prior and stayed in the parking area with hook-ups. They began work at about 8 am the next day and all four windows were fixed and I was on my way by 3:30 pm. There were nine other units there under repair that day and they said that the previous week the entire lot was occupied. So, if you want the work done, book early.

A number of windows were being assembled for other window installers. In fact if you are mechanically minded and can remove your windows yourself (or have someone else do it), they encourage you to ship your windows to them for repair. Several RV dealers, who advertise thermopane repair, simply do removal and reinstallation. They send the windows to Suncoast for the actual repair.

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Seal Creep on door window