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SPEAKERS AND SOUND CONTROL

With the satellite radio up and running, we decided to make a couple of other cost effective upgrades to our sound system. You can spend thousands and have a system that will provide satisfaction for even the most discerning audiophile's delight. That's not our goal. We wanted to look for an easy, cost effective upgrade that the average person would appreciate. With careful selection, the OEM speakers can be upgraded to aftermarket speakers and not require modification to the door locations or wiring. Crutchfield (www.crutchfield.com) has a section on their website called, "What Fits My Car" that provides year and model specific information to help you in selecting upgraded components for your Turbo Diesel. We selected Infinity Reference 6021si speakers to replace the OEM speakers. Crutchfield includes all the instructions, adapters, parts and pieces to make the swap.

Sound control is another cost effective method to not only enhance the quality of your sound system, but to further quiet unwanted noise and vibration in the cockpit. We have used a product called Dynamat with good results for years. Since Dodge now provides some sound controlling insulation, we elected to apply Dynamat Extreme only to the doors and back wall behind the rear seat. There are a number of sources for the product. Shop around for specials. We found a good buy at Eastwood Company (www.eastwood.com).



We unplugged the factory speakers and used the adapters provided by Crutchfield. The new Infinity Reference 6021 speakers fit nicely using the mounting hardware provided.

The results are worth the time. For a cost of about \$400.00 and a day's effort, our sound system is greatly improved and the interior noise level is noticeably quieter. Sorry, I don't have any before-and-after decibel numbers. For a lengthy article on sound insulation see Issue 38, page 48.

BRITE BOX/FOGZILLA

Having proper illumination for night driving becomes a much bigger deal with increasing age, especially when most of the roads we drive are rural, tree-lined, two-laners. Having lived most of my life in the confines of the big city, I guess I never realized how much all of those city streetlights and signs provide a dim glow over the city's evening roadways. Nights in the country with no moon become very, very dark.

Face it, the Turbo Diesel is not known for its headlights. Baker Auto Accessories have been shedding light on the subject for 10 years, with a product called Brite Box. With the addition of a Brite Box it is possible to run both high and low beams at the same time. If you wondered what that might be like, you can activate the "flash-to-pass" function with the low beams in the on position. Momentarily you will activate both high and low beams.

We have used the Brite Box on trucks in the past with excellent results. So the addition of the product to our '05 was a no brainer. We selected the Brite Box part number SD7+FLC Kit. This kit not only provides the ability to run both high and low beams at the same time, but will permit the fog lights (if your Turbo Diesel has them) to remain on as well. To kick it up one more notch, we decided to get the Fogzilla harness kit too. This kit increases the output of the fog lamps by 70% according to the manufacturer. This is accomplished by changing the OEM fog bulbs (part number 9006), which is typically used as a low beam bulb for a 9005 bulb that is typically used as a high beam bulb. TDR writer Joe Donnelly talked about these accessories and his satisfaction with the products in Issue 48, page 164.



We upgraded the sound control in our '05 Turbo Diesel with the use of Dynamat. Pictured are doors and rear cab wall before Dynamat.

We used the existing plastic door cover as a template to cut our door panels. You can purchase the fancy, smancy Dynamat roller to push Dynamat's contact sticky surface to the door's surface or save your money and use the handle of a big screwdriver. If it is cold, the use of a hair dryer or heat gun can be helpful to form the Dynamat to the door's irregular surfaces. The day we installed the Dynamat Extreme was nice and sunny, so we just laid the material out in the sun and let it warm up. The Crutchfield instructions will tell you everything you need to know to remove and reinstall the door panels. The rear seat unbolted using a 18mm socket, then lifted straight up to unclip the backrest from the rear wall. Once you have the seats out of the way, you can remove the existing rear insulation using a panel tool.

Installation

The instructions supplied with the kit are straightforward, save for a couple of exceptions. The '05 Turbo Diesel secures the headlamp assembly with a T-30 torx nut and there is only one Phillips head screw per side to remove the rubber trim (see photo). We did not find it necessary to use a screwdriver to "pry" the headlamp assembly from the fender. A firm tug with your fingers will do the job. Use care in guiding the headlamp assembly out away from the fender. You can push the plastic portion of the bumper below the headlamp assembly to create more space to remove the assembly.



Following the instructions we removed the headlamps using a T-30 torx bit. The air bag sensor is left hanging and attached when the headlamps are reinstalled. The remaining fastener can be accessed using a long extension. The headlamp assembly "pops" out using a firm tug, exposing the factory lamp plugs.

Locating the Brite Box is a little vague. The instructions say, "Make sure you mount Brite Box far enough back so as to allow headlight to be reinstalled." We have provided photos of both the driver and passenger's side locations we selected. On the driver's side we secured Brite Box using an electrical tie wrap and tied it to the existing OEM electrical harness. On the passenger's side we used the double stick tape provided on the box, adhering it to the plastic bulkhead below the opening to the engine's air box.

You will note that the material used for the headlight sockets is different (one is blue and one is black). The black socket is made of a higher temperature plastic and therefore is more brittle than the blue sockets. We mention this because it is very easy to break the black socket (as we did during photos) if you are not careful. Never pry or use pliers to remove or install this type of socket. Replacements are available and it is just a matter of pushing in the existing wires to a new socket.

As mentioned, the current fog lamp supplied by the OEM in our '05 Turbo Diesel is part number 9006. This bulb provides 1,000 lumens of light according to Sylvania, the bulb's manufacturer. Changing the bulb to a Sylvania 9005 would increase the output to 1,700 lumens according to Sylvania. The 9006 is a 55w bulb and the 9005 is rated at 65w. Baker states that the wattage difference is "small and that they feel there should not be any detrimental heat or current draw problems caused by switching the bulbs."

There are a couple of small differences between the two bulbs, which prevent you from simply swapping light bulbs. First the top-mounting tab is clocked in a slightly different location. Second, the area supporting the O-ring and the bulb is smaller in diameter. Lastly, the sockets have a different configuration. All three are easily remedied with the Fogzilla.

The top-mounting tab is trimmed to permit the bulb's (9005) socket to fit in the OEM housing. This can be accomplished by using a Dremel tool to "grind" about a 1/8" off of the top tab. You can also use a diagonal cutter (see photo) and we even heard of one individual using a pair of nail clippers. If you elect to use the cutters, we recommend taking small bites rather than one bite as a caution against accidentally breaking off more than desired. If you use a small rotary file, you can better control the amount of material removed.



Purchasing the Fogzilla kit and the separate purchase of a pair of 9005 bulbs to replace the existing 9006 bulbs find the final enhancement. It is necessary to modify the 9005 socket so that it fits in the 9006 housing. We used a pair of diagonal cutters to get the job done.

The second issue, the difference in shaft diameter, is corrected by removing the bulb's (9005) supplied O-ring and replacing it with a slightly thicker O-ring, which is supplied in the kit from Baker. The other item supplied in the kit is the wiring harness adapter, which will make it possible to plug the higher output bulb (9005) to the OEM harness on your Turbo Diesel.

The process may sound a little complicated but it is simple. When all is said and done, we went from having the ability to project 2,700 lumens (the stock Turbo Diesel on high beams only) to 8,100 lumens (low beam+high beam+fog with Fogzilla modification). That equates to approximately three times the output of the stock light system.

FINAL NOTES

Mag-Hytec has just released a front cover for Third Generation Rams with 4x4, which use American axles. We didn't have time to get it installed and photographed before the deadline of Issue 53, but we will cover it in Issue 54. It looks to have all the nice features Mag-Hytec is famous for; however, the O-ring is gone.

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