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BMW 3-Series and Z4 (99-05) Includes 2006 325ci/330ci Coupe and Convertible models Haynes Online Manual.

4 Catalytic converter - general information and precautions

The catalytic converter is a reliable and simple device, which needs no maintenance in itself, but there are some facts of which an owner should be aware, if the converter is to function properly for its full service life.

- A. DO NOT use leaded gasoline in a car equipped with a catalytic converter - the lead will coat the precious metals, reducing their converting efficiency, and will eventually destroy the converter.
- B. Always keep the ignition and fuel systems well-maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's schedule.
- C. If the engine develops a misfire, do not drive the car at all (or at least as little as possible) until the fault is cured.
- D. DO NOT push- or tow-start the car - this will soak the catalytic converter in unburned fuel, causing it to overheat when the engine does start.
- E. DO NOT switch off the ignition at high engine speeds.
- F. DO NOT use fuel or engine oil additives - these may contain substances harmful to the catalytic converter.
- G. DO NOT continue to use the car if the engine burns oil to the extent of leaving a visible trail of blue smoke.
- H. Remember that the catalytic converter operates at very high temperatures. DO NOT, therefore, park the car in dry undergrowth, or over long grass or piles of dead leaves after a long run.
- I. Remember that the catalytic converter is FRAGILE - do not strike it with tools during servicing work.
- J. In some cases, a sulphurous smell (like that of rotten eggs) may be noticed from the exhaust. This is common to many catalytic converter-equipped cars, and once the car has covered a few thousand miles the problem should disappear.
- K. The catalytic converter, used on a well-maintained and well-driven car, should last for between 50,000 and 100,000 miles - if the converter is no longer effective, it must be replaced.

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