

5-Minute Car Wash Gets Faster

How quick is a quick car wash? That's a question asked by many who used to rinse mud and salt off their cars for a 15-cent investment at coin-operated auto wash establishments.

The five-minute auto wash has become about as scarce as the five-cent cigar, according to a Michigan Department of Agriculture weights and measures supervisor Clyde Cotton. He says that after checking consumer complaints, it appears that most coin-operated car washes have timers that deliver less than the five minutes that many customers have relied upon.

"IF YOU WANT five minutes of car washing, you'd better check the signs closely to see if that's what is offered," Cotton recommends. "Otherwise, chances are that you'll get something less."

One meter recently checked delivered only slightly more than three minutes of water pressure for the quarter put in the coin slot.

Is this illegal?

Not if the time is not posted and delivered otherwise, Cotton says. People have just grown to assume that they're getting five minutes, partly due to previous advertising by the car wash businesses.

COTTON SAYS that shaving the time allowance by even one minute from the previous five-minute allowance can double the cost of a car wash to the consumer, since it then may require 50 cents to get the dirt off.

But, he adds, there is no law broken unless a customer is short changed on actual advertised time.

The Michigan Department of Agriculture is responsible for checking the accuracy of weighing and measuring devices used in commerce in Michigan. The law is administered by the weights and measures section of the department's Food Inspection Division.

Making Car Bodies Like Tying Steel

Anyone who has tried to wrap a bulky, odd-shaped package, holding the wrapping paper with one hand, twirling and tying the ribbon or string with the other, has some idea of the coordination necessary to hold and fasten together the steel body of an automobile.

Body construction is one of the first steps in automobile assembly, as performed thousands of times daily in plants throughout the country. The body structure must be strong and durable, and all parts must fit together precisely.

Ford Motor Co. assembles its car bodies in most plants with the help of massive holding fixtures, something like the extra pair of hands needed to wrap a gift package.

The fixture, or "back," is loaded with the floor assembly, body sides, consisting of door frames and rear quarter panels (fenders), roof and cross members that tie the whole structure together. Most of these basic components are shaped from Ford-made steel.

Operators clamp the pieces together to form the framework of a car body, then propel it into the giant fixture where locking arms swing into position to hold the body both square and rigid. Skillful welders bond the pieces together into a single unit with hundreds of sturdy spot welds.

Ford pioneered an assembly innovation called the pivoting pillar welding fixture, further refining the traditional "back."

With this device, once the clamped body structure is in the buck, massive steel arms pivot upward and inward toward the body, strong "wristers" swing in and powerful fingers grip the steel body parts.

When the body is firmly and positively held, automatic welding guns race along the wheel housings and rocker panels, or lower body side rails, performing about 100 precise welds in less than one minute.

Teen Gifts

Teens approve gifts selected at the jewelry store especially for them. The teen miss, for instance, might like to see these gifts come out of Santa's sack: pins, bangle bracelets, pendants, novelty watches, bar-of-gold charms and earrings.

A teen man might prefer cufflinks and tie tac or bar pins, a watch or the newest in man-styled watchbands, an I.D. bracelet, a birthstone or initial ring.

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