

Power steering hoses should be inspected regularly. Deterioration in the power steering hoses could lead to other component damage or even serious power steering failure.

Power steering hoses are subjected to a harsh environment simply by nature of where they are located in the vehicle. Operating temperatures can range from -40°F up to over +400°F. Internally, hoses transfer fluid under pressures of up to 1,500 PSI. While transferring fluid, hoses absorb the pressure surges and pulsations and expand and contract to help control noise in the power steering system. Hoses must also resist external wear factors – ozone, grease, oil, road debris, wear from rubbing, and stress being applied from engine torque.



CLEAR OR RED

MURKY BROWN

BLACK

Check the fluid:

Clear or red fluid is free of contamination.

Murky brown fluid may contain metal particles or hose debris.

Black or burnt fluid is a sign of severe steering problems.

Check the hose feel.

Brittle hoses are an early sign a hose has lost its ability to absorb pressure surges. However, a soft, spongy feeling indicates serious internal deterioration and leakage.



Check tubing for corrosion, abrasions, or cracks.

These are common signs of degradation from the environment in and around the engine. This is especially true in areas where salt is used because the corrosion on the tubing can slowly develop failures over time.

Inspect the fitting threads.

Stripped and/or dirty threads are a sign of improper installation or worn O-rings. In some cases, the threads may have been cross-threaded and damaged to a point where not only is the hose needing replacement, but also the rack, pump, or gear it attaches to as well.



Check the hose to coupling connection for leaks or drips.

This is an indication that the hose may be separating from the coupling. This separation will only worsen as the pressure continues to push fluid through the fitting leading to a larger system failure.



Inspect heat shielding for wear from rubbing against metal.

These perforations make the rubber hose underneath more susceptible to heat. Also, be sure to check the mounting brackets attached to the hose as these may have caused the hose to shift in and around the engine.



If any of the previous conditions are found, the hoses need to be replaced. Remember, all hoses in the system are subjected to the same conditions, so if one hose shows signs of wear, all hoses should be replaced. Also, when changing any hoses, consider the addition of a premium power steering filter.

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