

# TECHTOPICS Hand tools work best for properly lifting tabs

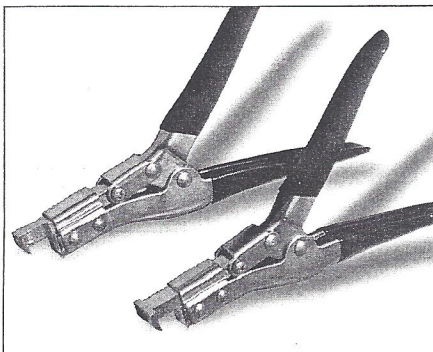


Larry LePrevost

To bring you up to date on new tools and PTR repair techniques, Modine is pleased to welcome back Larry LePrevost, a frequent contributor to these pages. Larry, executive vice president for the Johnson Manufacturing Company, is well-known as a speaker at industry seminars nationwide. Questions on any of the subject matter that follows can be directed to Larry at the Johnson Manufacturing Company in Princeton, Iowa (319) 289-5123. The observations of guest contributors in **ShopTalk** do not necessarily reflect Modine's own viewpoint.

Back in December, 1991 (which, according to my picture, was before I even started wearing glasses), I wrote a ShopTalk article entitled, "Effective work begins with how you handle tabs". So, what could have possibly prompted me to write yet another article about such an elementary subject? Well, I'll tell you, and I promise to keep it brief.

Two recently developed decrimping tools (a regular and a wide) are becoming quite popular, and rightfully so. Both are designed to lift, open, and/or decrimp tabs on plastic tank radiators. Since we all know it takes an arsenal of tools to do some repair jobs, here is a good opportunity to add to



yours. Seriously, shouldn't you consider any tool that can either make or save money for you? Well, what if it just makes your job easier or faster? Decrimpers do all of this, and more!

I have always thought the best and easiest way to manipulate tabs is with hand tools. The reason for this should be clear. In order to maintain the greatest strength when recrimping tabs, it is important to open them properly to start with. This can be accomplished very well using either a Johnson TabTool or one of the new decrimpers illustrated below.

Here are just a few other things to keep in mind:

1. It is usually easier and faster to lift tabs without putting the PTR in a fixture. This gives you greater access to the tabs, so they can be properly bent. The exceptions are Modine's AdTech™ radiators that use latching strips, and the other brand that utilizes dimpled or ribbon-style headers. Both of these non-tabbed-style radiators must be placed in a fixture so the gasket can be compressed before attempting to open them.
2. Do not open tabs wider than needed to remove the tanks. Never stand the tabs upright as this just weakens them unnecessarily.
3. Recrimping the tabs should be a two-step process. First, restore the vertical alignment of the tabs which can be done quickly by tapping them into place, providing the header is properly supported from the underside, and the gasket is under compression.
4. After making sure the gasket is properly seated and uniformly compressed, the final crimping consists of closing the top part of the tab down firmly on the lip of the tank. Care should be taken not to over crimp, causing damage to the header trough.
5. Crimping strips are also a form of tab. When opening them, lift every other one, then go back to lift the rest. Doing it this way shouldn't take any longer, and they seem to hold

their shape better. It is always better however, to use new crimping strips if possible. Crimping strips are usually very stiff, therefore, they should be pre-bent slightly using a vise and/or Channellock® pliers before installing them. This will help you keep the vertical leg from walking out, away from the edge of the tank during the crimping process.

Finally, most of you already know how easy and profitable plastic tank replacement can be, if you have the right equipment and tools. So I say, hooray for anything that can help do the job even better!

## TabTools

- 414-01 Regular
- 414-01W Wide (GM-style tabs)

## Decrimpers

- 413-21 Regular
- 413-21W Wide (GM-style tabs)

