

THE EXTRA MILE

Engine Building and Power Techniques

BY SCOTT SEHR



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THE INJECTION QUESTION

Fuel injection is a hot topic in the hot rod circles these days. This raises the question of whether electronic fuel injection or carburetion is the way to go on a particular application. We'll try to shine a little light on the pros and cons of both of the systems.

Unlike electronic fuel injection, carburetion has been around for over a hundred years. Carburetors are a mechanical fuel system, which operates using an engine vacuum that the cylinders create during the intake stroke of the engine. Because of its simplicity, carburetors are very reliable, user friendly and make a good choice for a performance engine. In recent years, great improvements have come to carburetor technology. However, because of its limitations in can be tricky picking the right carburetor for the application and it needs to be tuned for the way the engine is going to be used. Here at Sehr Performance, we use our years of experience and expertise to guide our customers to the correct carburetion for the application so they get the performance that they are looking for.

Electronic fuel injection on the other hand is a rather new arrival on the scene. In the last 30 years, great improvements have also come to fuel injection. This type of system operates by using a computer engine management system, which monitors several parameters of engine operation including airflow, fuel flow, intake and engine temp, engine rpm etc. The first ECMs didn't have the power and speed needed to take the measurements and make the changes fast enough to greatly improve performance. That has changed. Today's ECMs are self learning and gather data to make changes several times a second so the engine's induction is in tune from an idle to full throttle.

As in all things in life, there are trade-offs. A computerized fuel injection system for a street rod today can easily cost from \$2500.00-\$5000.00 whereas a good intake and carburetor will range from \$600.00-\$1200.00. With a carbureted system, a person can usually limp home if something goes south, with a computerized system, not so much. As for reliability, if both systems are new, neither should give any problem for years to come. It's usually when people try to use 30-year-old injection or carburetors on a new engine build that the disappointment mounts. These systems are just plain worn out. Why we accept the fact the engines wear out and not engine systems, is a mystery that we haven't solved yet. But we are trying.

Whatever you decide you want to do for induction on your next engine build, stop in and see us at Sehr Performance and we will get you heading in the right direction and stick with you to the end. We will get the most performance for you dollar, guaranteed.

