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## Hazard Switch R&R

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Article and pictures by Garth Rodericks

Do your hazards flash uncontrollably? Does it seem your Pantera has some uncontrollable impulse to flash others when you least expect it? #4033 sure did. It was pretty innocuous at first – occasionally friends at work would come by my office to tell me that my car was out in the parking lot flashing everyone. Being the only Pantera in the parking lot has its advantages – there's no mass-distribution email to tell everyone what an idiot you are for leaving your lights on, or worse yet, your flashers on. They just come straight to your office.

Anyway, it all started with the occasional impulse to flash on a hot day. Innocent enough, after all, streaking was quite the rage at about the same time our cars were being sold through Lincoln-Mercury dealers here in the States.

I would run out to the parking lot, push the Hazard button back in, and the flashing would stop. A short time later, this started to become a regular event, sometimes twice a day. Although at that point the Hazard button would need to be pushed a number of times before it would stay put. And I'm sure you know the rest of the story. This one bit of bad behavior became a constant and uncontrollable occurrence. I began to stuff little pieces of paper into the switch to keep it in, but they would eventually work their way out. Then I tried the end of a toothpick, but a friend noticed it and brushed it away in an effort to be helpful, and I couldn't get it to stay again. Then I "fixed" it with a 3/8" length of bailing wire. I bent it like an "L" so it would have a handle and I hammered the long end flat so it would be easier to insert between the switch and its housing. It was quite an effective solution. If you were at the Concorso Italiano in Monterey in 2004, you may have noticed it. I thought about offering this clever "Hazard Switch Upgrade Kit" for sale to others in the Pantera world, but determined that due to the limited production nature of our beloved cars, there just wasn't a sufficient market to warrant tooling up to mass-produce this technological wonder. So, I drove around for a year with this beauty all to myself.



Wire holding the hazard switch in.

While searching the DeTomaso Mail List archives, I came across a post from May of 2003, "**HAZARD LIGHTS FLASHING AND NO ONE'S HOME,**" and decided to

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2004 PCNC Pre-Fun Rally Tech Session hosted by Roger and Pam Sharp that I repaired my switch. The cost – nothing!

Following are the steps to repair your switch:

### Step 1 – Diagram the Switch Wiring

Lay on your back, half in and half out of your car, with your head down in the driver's side foot-well so you can see the back of the switch. Before removing anything make a diagram of the wires going to the back of the Hazard Switch, and label the color and location of each wire. This will be critical at reassembly as every electrical system in the car passes through this switch. Don't ask me why it's wired that way, it's Italian. Just make your diagram!



View of backside of switch removed from car.

### Step 2 – Remove the Switch

This is perhaps the most challenging task of the entire repair, save for splitting the switch housing apart. While still on your back half-in and half-out of your car with your head down in the driver's side foot-well (and suffering a backache), carefully slide the wires from their posts on the back of the switch. Then, unscrew the retainer nut on the switch housing from the back side of the dash. Do not lose this nut or the wave washer that keeps it secure.

Pull the switch out through the face of the dashboard.



Switch assembly.

### Step 3 – Separate the Switch Housing

I hinted earlier that this could be the most daunting task of this project, although if you have large hands the switch removal and reinstallation may be more difficult.

The switch housing is snapped together at the factory. Clearly, it was never intended to be serviced once assembled.



I previously mentioned that there was no cost to R&R the Hazard Switch, but this is not entirely true. There was a cost, albeit a non-monetary cost. I suffered no less than 3 puncture wounds to my left hand while attempting to pry the switch housing apart with a small sharp screwdriver. But, it was a small price to pay for a switch now ready for the next 30 years of driving pleasure.

#### Step 4 – Bend the pin

The switch has a small pin that rides in a track on the inside of the switch (see pic). After 30 years, this pin has “relaxed” and is no longer riding firmly in its track.



Apply “gentle” pressure to this pin, pressing it in (not too far) toward the center of the switch body and hold it there for a moment. When you release pressure on the pin, it will now angle slightly inward toward the center of the switch, and will properly ride in the track on the button when reassembled.

#### Step 5 – Reassembly

Reassemble the switch by putting the components together and snapping the body back together. Line up the pin with the track as you reinsert the button into the housing. Then, reinstall the switch in your dash following the removal procedure, but

in reverse order. Be sure to reconnect all wires to their correct terminals according to your diagram. Test the switch.

The funny thing about this project is that I have never actually needed to use the Hazard flashers, or the switch for that matter. And, I hope never to need it in the future, but if I do I'm confident it will be up to the task.

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