

Heater Control Cable

One way to stay cool in your Healey during the summer months is to make sure the heater is off. Sounds simple but it's worth examining closely.

The heater control lever is attached to a cable that runs to a control valve on top of the heater box. Moving the lever moves the cable and allows the valve to open. In the closed position the heater control lever locks into a positive detent at the control and also on the operating valve. While replacing the dash in the BJ8 recently I had a chance to observe the action of my heater control lever. It moved great at the heater control panel. As I closed off the heat I found that the cable was folding over on itself and not fully closing the water valve. That meant my heater was never fully off!! That would defeat my goal of having a car that you can place an ice cube on the floor and have it never melt.

First I cleaned and greased the control valve and heater control lever so that both worked flawlessly. My experience has been that once a cable is kinked it's impossible to get straight again and will kink at the same point. Moss lists the part as N/A and I was determined to have the dash finished by the end of the day. Two options available. Use a universal cable from the auto parts store for choke and hood releases, consisting of a heavy single wire run through a spiral sheath. looks somewhat like original but prone to kinking again, or go really slick.

Headed down to Bicycle Sport on Breckinridge Lane near Shelbyville Road. The staff is not too excited when you show up on a busy Saturday afternoon with a strange request like mine. Just tell them it's for a Healey, Store Owner Alex Burgard drives one, and they love Healey's. Within minutes they had more cables, sheaths and ferrules out and produced an exact copy that glides effortlessly. They apologized because they had to cannibalize a cable kit to get the size wire they wanted which drove up the price but the total cost was only \$2.50!!

Check to make sure your heater valve is closing fully, it may be a source of heat that is incorrectly blamed on Healey design.