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HOUSEKEEPING



The MVVC is a Chapter of the Vintage Volkswagen Club of America. MVVC Members are encouraged to join and support the VVWCA. MVVC Membership is separate from that of the national club. Applications for the national club membership are at:

www.vvwca.com



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The MVVC Newsletter Needs YOUR STORIES!

If you have an interesting, technical or entertaining story about your VW...
PLEASE submit your article to the newsletter!

If you have photos of any recent MVVC events, members, or other VW shows, those are welcome as well!

Send your comments to mvvc.news@icloud.com

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

No news is good news!

Looks like the previous issue included zero (detected) mistakes.



TECHNICAL

THE SPEED OF (BRAKE) LIGHT(S)

Maybe I am a little more nervous than some others when it comes to being hit from behind; especially while stopped at a traffic light, because this has happened to me twice, in two different cars, in the last 10 years.

My '74 Thing, which I had owned for 37 years and had driven through well over 30 states and provinces, was totaled just like that.



I was not hurt, but that 80 year old woman in her Mustang convertible hurt my feelings very badly.

Anyway, nobody wants to see their vintage VW hit, let alone wrecked, so anything that could be done to reduce the possibility of this happening is worth consideration.

Confining the discussion to air cooled Volkswagens, the provision for powering the brake lights is unusual, at least by modern standards. The brake lights are powered through hydraulically actuated pressure switches; one for single circuit brake systems pre-1967, or two for dual circuit brake systems from 1967 and later model years.

Both single and dual circuit braking systems require a minimum hydraulic pressure (from the master cylinder as the brakes are applied) to trigger the switch(es).

With today's aftermarket/replacement parts, manufactured all over the world, there is really no telling what that trigger pressure is; whether it is the same as the original switch(es) that came with the car, or even if it is the same between two new switches from the same manufacturer.

Compounding the problem is the popular conversion that many vintage VW owners have made to front disc brakes. Front disc brakes provide a marked improvement in stopping power, but sometimes, after this conversion, and under light braking conditions, the hydraulic pressure required to stop the car is reduced to a level that can fail to trigger the pressure actuated brake light switch(es) at all.

Now consider that in stock form, as the brake pedal is pressed, first the clearance between the brake pushrod and the master cylinder piston is closed; that accounts for the first 5 - 6mm of pedal travel. Then, after an additional 15 - 20mm of pedal travel, sufficient hydraulic pressure has been developed to trigger the stock brake light switch(es).

The car has already begun to slow down before the brake lights illuminate; *far less than ideal*.

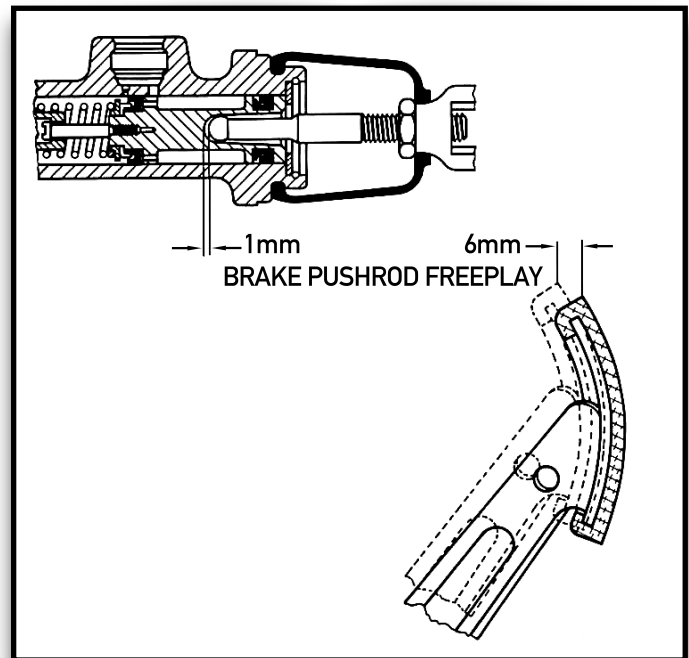
So how do you fix this?

With a *Pedal-Activated Brake Light Switch* from Air Cooled Evolution, that's how.



The Air Cooled Evolution Pedal Activated Brake Light Switch brings modern technology into your Volkswagen Type 1 or 3. The main component of the kit is a robust microswitch which closes the brake light circuit as soon as your brake pedal moves forward. This switch is wired in parallel to the OEM switches, so the original switches are still functional for system redundancy. The switch bolts to a custom-fabricated bracket, which mounts to the vehicle using the rearmost pedal bolt on a Type 1 or Type 3 VW.

After this simple modification, the brake lights illuminate when the brake pedal first begins to move; before the clearance between the brake pushrod and the master cylinder piston has been fully closed, and well before sufficient hydraulic pressure has been reached to trigger the stock brake light switch(es).

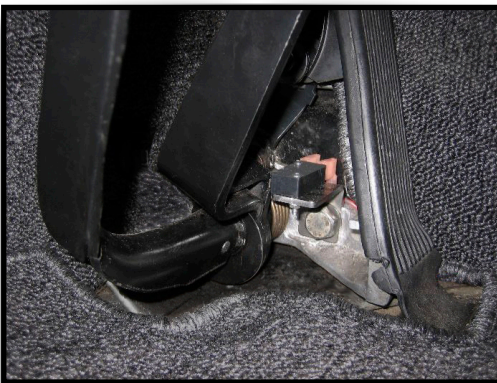


How does this benefit you? Let's say you are zipping along at 65 MPH.

There's a teenager behind you; he's driving his mother's SUV, and he's playing with his phone.

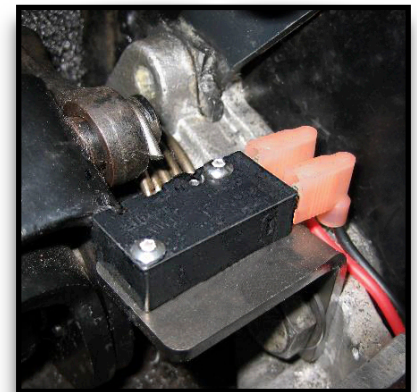
At 65 MPH, you are moving at over 95 feet per second. If you do need to brake, and your brake lights were to illuminate only 1/4 second sooner, there is an extra ~24 feet for the kid behind you to wake up and stop (that's more than a full sized car length).

Even one inch can be the difference between a hit and a miss, so the obvious safety margin that has been provided is well worth the minimal cost and effort to install the Pedal-Activated Brake Light Switch from Air Cooled Evolution.



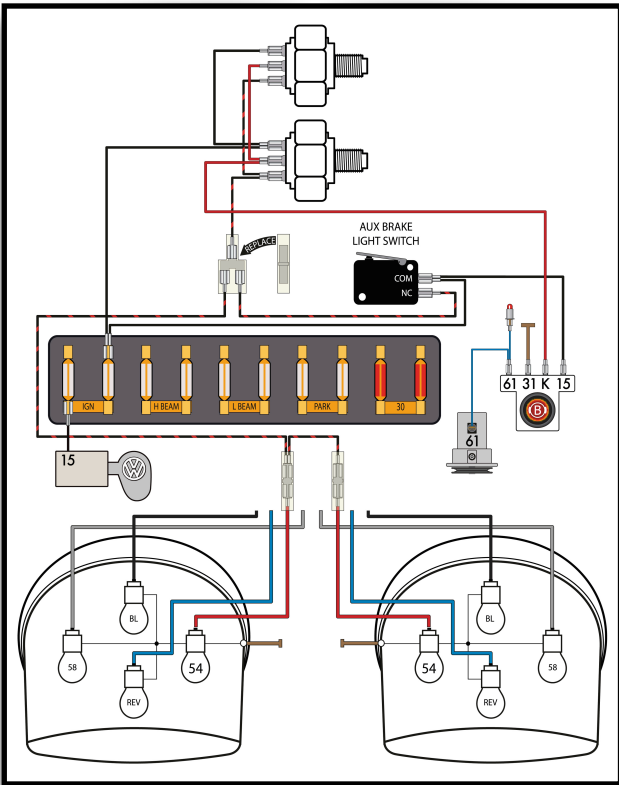
The switch itself is a high quality, moisture resistant, normally closed microswitch.

Air Cooled Evolution is the sole importer of this switch from Taiwan. The remainder of the kit's components are sourced in the USA. The switch is mounted on a laser cut steel bracket with two M3 screws and nylock nuts.



The bracket, in turn, is mounted at the rear-most M10 bolt which also secures the pedal cluster to the tunnel.

All of the wire, terminals, connectors, etc. necessary for installation are provided with the kit. Also included is a complete set of illustrated instructions which cover the installation of this kit in all Type 1 models from 1958 through 1979, as well as all Type 3s.



This diagram illustrates the wiring of the Pedal-Activated Brake Light Switch on my 1973 Thing, but the wiring on most other models is very similar.

The included illustrated instructions include wiring diagrams for all applications.

Most basically, it is a secondary brake light switch wired in parallel to the existing brake light circuit; to power the brake light bulbs... Just a little bit quicker.

Keith would like to develop a similar kit for the Type II and would appreciate it if a Type II owner would let him take measurements and photos to make a kit to fit Type IIs. Contact Keith at the link below.

Yes, some people are thinking:
 “What a great idea!
 I could probably just make this thing myself”

But...
 Why re-invent the wheel?
 Keith at Air Cooled Evolution has already sourced the high quality components to do this job correctly, and at a very reasonable price.

Plus...

Local companies that support the VW community deserve our support in return!

Air Cooled Evolution is a local (Royal Oak) company that manufactures a variety of items with the goal of improving the reliability of the air cooled Volkswagen.




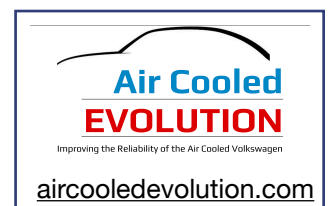
The owner, Keith Gilbert, is a mechanical engineer, but more importantly, he’s one of the good guys in the vintage VW universe.

Keith has designed his Pedal-Activated Brake Light Switch to be an easy and simple installation. It requires zero permanent modifications to the vehicle or its wiring. A “stock VW purist” could install and subsequently remove this switch, leaving no trace that it was ever installed, while adding a margin of safety and security.

If installing this kit in any way seems formidable or intimidating, Munk’s Motors stocks and routinely installs these kits.

So give some thought to the Pedal-Activated Brake Light Switch and keep your air cooled Volkswagen out of harm’s way.

Safe travels everybody, 



MEMBERS' COMMENTS

RANDY GRAY II

I purchased this '62 ragtop just over four years ago from the Atlanta, Georgia area and had it shipped to Michigan. This bug had the wrong front bonnet on it and would be one of many projects that needed to be completed.

I started searching for the correct bonnet, where the round VW logo sits is flat along with the Wolfsburg crest down near the grab handle. I located a bonnet from Way Out Salvage in Kingston Arkansas.

Derrick, Barb, and Danny are super great folks, they arranged the packing and shipping and I highly recommend them.

The hood was black, white and was covered in surface rust. I reached out to Quality Powder coat and Sandblasting in Highland Michigan and decided to have the entire bonnet media blasted to remove all the paint and rust.

After the media blast was completed the bonnet still had some minor imperfections and the rest of this project would be completed by Wyatt Buzzell at Triple M collision and repair in Gladwin, Michigan.

This project is now complete and the end result is simply amazing!



DAN PIERCE

It has been a very solid 2023 car show season so far. Eimer, the Thing and I have racked up a lot of miles and had some very good quality top-down time. This year, my family got a new puppy named Winnie. She is a Cockapoo and is pretty cute and definitely is a lover of top-down driving. Also, we have Zoe, a 12 year old Cockapoo as well, who is having some health issues. Anyways I decided that since no one else really likes to go to car-shows with me that Winnie could be my co-pilot and general +1 at shows. She loves the car show crowds and the attention. And she loves driving. So I have a new blond in my life, and my wife actually likes it when I get her out from under her feet so she can get stuff done at home. Winnie, in a home setting, is like a bull in a China shop.



I have really been enjoying the Concourse 1 Cars

and Coffee shows. They are very well attended, and there are some pretty cool cars and motorcycles that show up. The crowds seem to appreciate Eimer the Thing as well.

I also have attended a few local regular shows in Bay City, Saginaw, and Birch Run. Every time I see a VW, I promote the club and hand out some free stickers and such.

As for mechanical repairs, they have been surprisingly few since the winter montage of repairs. I ended up replacing the recap tires and 14" rims, which, while looking good and performing ok around town, were pretty borderline miserable on the highway. I happened to have 2 - 17" rims left over from Ally that I never really used. Cip1 had a sale on the other 2, so I snapped em up. I found that a Kia Sorento tire fit perfectly with no rubbing, so I went with some new Goodyear tires. The difference on the highway is pretty noticeable. I can go 70 mph much easier and have seen 78 a few times when I was not paying attention. I would say the highway driving characteristics are better than any old swing axle bug I've ever had. It drives more like a super beetle with maybe a slightly harder suspension. I think the length of the car and the CV style rear suspension make all the difference.

I adjusted the valves and found they were a tad tight, which is not surprising. I replaced a suspect coil that I feel was overheating at times. It now starts right up without touching the gas when cold or even warm. If hot (highway usage), you still have to hold the gas to the floor when starting, and it has an extended crank issue when hot, which is annoying. Also, the carb still has a small hiccup on tip in, and so starting from a stop, I need to massage the gas to get a smooth start.

So there is still room for improvement, but overall, the Thing drives very well, and long-distance highway driving is not something to be concerned about. The seat is not very comfortable over, say, 1.5 hours. Which is weird because I've found most low backs to be quite comfy if maybe lacking in the lumbar dept. So, I am still thinking about some adjustments or changes to the carb situation. Also, some seat changes may eventually happen. Overall, I'm pretty happy with the 2023 version of Eimer and am really looking forward to the rest of the season. I also utilized Eimer to help move the clubs car show stuff from Novi to Frankenmuth. It's taken basically 4 trips (2 with the huge Escalade and 2 with Eimer). This kinda worked out as I would go to the show in Pontiac and would then only be 30 min away from the old storage unit. With the rear seats folded down, Eimer turns into a really cool, almost pickup truck. The back of the seat is metal and folds flat with an ingenious mechanism. I have also used Eimer to tow a trailer from time to time, and the Thing is proving to be a nice little utility vehicle.

I think in 1.5 years, my wife has been in Eimer a gazillion more times than she was in Ally in 15 years. Also, my grandson loves Grandpa's car. So overall this Thing thing is working out!

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