

NADA Offer Tips on How to Spot a Flood-Damaged Vehicle

Severe weather across the nation has led to flooding in several parts of the country. In their wake, floods have left a large population of flood-damaged vehicles.

While there is no sure method to test for vehicle flood damage, NADA offers 10 inspection tips that may be used to detect significant water damage. At a minimum, a prospective buyer should:

- Check the vehicle's title history, it may state whether it has sustained flood damage.
- Examine the interior and the engine compartment for evidence of water and grit from suspected submersion.
- Check for recently shampooed carpet.
- Check under the floorboard carpet for water residue or stain marks from evaporated water not related to air-conditioning pan leaks.
- Look for rusting on the inside of the car and under interior carpeting and visually inspect all interior upholstery and door panels for any evidence of fading.
- Check under the dashboard for dried mud and residue, and note any evidence of mold or a musty odor in the upholstery, carpet or trunk.
- Check for rust on screws in the console or other areas where the water would normally not reach unless submerged.
- Check for mud or grit in alternator crevices, behind wiring harnesses and around the small recesses of starter motors, power steering pumps and relays.
- Complete a detailed inspection of the electrical wiring system, looking for rusted components, water residue or suspicious corrosion.
- Inspect the undercarriage of other components for evidence of rust and flaking metal that would not normally be associated with late model vehicles.

While these inspection suggestions will not detect flood damage in every case, they do provide some information to protect the consumer from purchasing a vehicle damaged by water or flood.