

The Japanese time bomb

It started about 1998. I was working as car mechanic in small shop. Two people operation, but plenty of work.

While working full time, I was taking night classes of Industrial Electronic at FCCJ. Jacksonville, Florida downtown campus.

One day, the owner asked me to check the electronic dashboard displays in 1985 Buick Regal. All gauges were displaying false information. I took the display unit out of dashboard and begin testing the unit. After applying power to unit, to my surprise, I found voltage at places where should not be any. The board was covered with a glue to hold down large components due to car vibration. Because the glue was on the back too, I assumed that the glue was there to seal copper trace from any moisture.

What I found out was that the glue become conductive as the color change.

Light color of glue did not conduct, but the darker the color was, the more voltage and current flow.

I took small pieces of that glue and present to mine instructor at FCCJ. We both tested the glue and come to conclusion that the dark color glue it is conductive. Testing light color of that glue show no conductivity at all. The glue become affected by air and with time become conductive. The board was made in Japan.

Steal brush, carburetor cleaner and two hours latter the electronic display works fine. Did the Japanese manufacture did know about that glue being conductive with time?. I did suspect that they know about. Give 5 years warranty and in sixth year the board was useless. Have to buy new one.

If that glue was only in those electronic dashboard displays then the only cost would be to replace the display, but if that glue was

*use in other electronic components then we have a “time bomb”.
At this time, the China and Korea lead in production of electronic
components widely use in US and other countries.*

*If that glue being still in use, then we my have a big problem.
I just hope that no Asian electronic components are in nuclear
missile system or those big rockets could start flying on their own
due to computer “mistake”.*

*In any electronic device, where vibration can affect the
components, the glue is in use, but the question is of who is
making the glue.*

*Recently, many electronic components made in Japan are failing.
Are the Japan still using that glue?.*