

# Towing

## **Tow/Bar Maintenance** (Courtesy of Blue Ox):

Periodically clean the entire surface of the tow bar with a mild soap and water solution. Wipe dry with a clean cloth. Check and replace any loose, worn or damaged bolts, rubber boots or cap plugs. Check for cracked welds and loose bolts on the base plate, towed vehicle (where base plate is bolted) and the hitch on the towing vehicle. In normal straight line towing conditions, both legs will be in tension. During turning, braking or parking one or both of the legs may be in compression. This will make the handles feel stiff or tight. Due to parking on slopes or the angle between the coach and the car, the two locking mechanisms could be in compression or tension or any combination of the two. Having one lock in tension and one in compression may give the operator the feeling that one leg is locked and one is not, when in fact whenever the legs are fully extended and the springs are holding the latch handles up, the legs are locked and ready to tow whether in tension or compression. Lubrication  
Approximately once per year or if it is difficult to move the legs in and out you should remove the small cable ties holding the rubber boots on the legs and slide the boots back. Wipe clean each inside leg and apply a light coat of multipurpose grease to insure smooth operation. Secure each boot back in place with an 8-inch nylon cable tie (available at most automotive and hardware stores). Note: a tow bar cover is recommended (#8, 3/05)

**Towing Tips** - Many of us tow a car behind your Alfa. We suggest you visit Towing World's web site and review one or more of their topics:

- Backing Up a Towed Vehicle
- Baseplate Installation Tips
- Them's The Brakes
- Delivering The Goods
- Towing Physics 101
- Overcoming Wiring Gremlins
- Steering Controls
- Tow Bars Wear Out (#11, 12/05)

**Better Check Your Tow Bar!!!!** My husband Tony was under the RV re-attaching the mud flap installed by the dealer when he noticed bolts missing from the tow bar. Two of the 8 bolts that held the tow bar in place were missing and the other 6 bolts were only finger tight. We were lucky to find this when we did as the next day we were planning to travel the rough Top of the World Highway in Alaska. We bought replacement bolts. If he hadn't replaced the bolts we might have lost our car down one of the steep mountain cliffs. When was the last time you checked those tow bar bolts? After we traveled the rough/dusty Top of the World Highway Tony had to remove the engine air filter for cleaning. While doing so he noticed that 3 of the 4 bolts that hold the exhaust pipe mounting bracket in place were missing and that the 4th bolt was loose. You can see these bolts by looking in the engine battery compartment (Cat engine) just behind the muffler. (Jan Hammer) (#6, 09/04)