

31: IMPROVING "FLYONEL" DOCKSIDER & NORTHERN SMOKE OUTPUT

Courtesy of Harwood Owings

I've done this to both the Docksider and the new Northern to improve the smoke output. Got this from a Lionel repair station repairman. Bypass the resistor, wire straight through to the smoke unit via the on/off switch. I have done this with excellent results, especially the Docksider. Either cut the wires leading to the resistor or unsolder. You may remove it altogether or leave strapped in. The resistor board is covered with black heat shrink and is strapped to the Docksider motor and to the Northern brass piston chamber.

NOTE from Carl Tuveson: If you bypass the smoke regulator for more smoke you should change the smoke element to a 27 ohm unit. The original is only 18 ohms. If you apply track voltage to the 18 ohm unit directly, bypassing the regulator, it will be toast in a short time. Use a Lionel Smoke Element 27 ohm (Lionel Part 600-8141-055), or equivalent.

In the case of the Northern, replace the wick material with either MTH wick material or the wick material used in Flyer smoke units. Pack the heating element area but don't overdo it. A Normal 1 smoke fluid works best, but you can even use Super-Smoke fluid. To quiet the "chirp" and improve the smoke piston pressure, take a packing peanut and cut it in a rectangular shape a little larger than the opening in the top of the smoke unit and about 1/2 inch deep. Carefully wedge it into the opening, this will cut down the chirp sound drastically and push out more smoke.

PLEASE NOTE: The "chirp" in the Northern smoke units can also be corrected by reversing the smoke unit baffle (a flat metal plate with a hole in the center the flange around the hole points in the wrong direction in the early production models), although this is not easy to do without destroying the baffle.