

MAR-K

RESTORATION AND CUSTOM PICKUP PARTS

INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR BEDSIDE INNER REPAIR PANELS 58-59 & 60-66 GM FLEETSIDES

This instruction illustrates the removal and replacement of the often rusted and damaged lower inner panel on the 1958-1959 and 1960-1966 GM Fleetside bedsides where the bedsides meet the wood floor. These replacement panels extend from the front bed panel to the wheelhouse opening and from the rear stake pocket to the wheelhouse opening. They will replace the sheet metal from the lower flange with holes to the top of the wheelhouse opening on the bedside. Experienced installers may choose not to use the entire replacement panel if it is not needed, but the instructions show the entire panel being used. We strongly advise you to read the instructions thoroughly and understand that cutting and welding are involved before proceeding. It will be necessary to disassemble the box and remove the wheelhouse from each bedside. The following text and photos show the replacement panels being installed on a 1958-1959 GM long Fleetside passenger bedside.

1. Measure downward from the center spot weld seam of the bedside where the two outer halves of the bedside are joined. On the 1958-1959 version (shown), this measurement will be 1-1/16". On the 1960-1966 version, this measurement will be 2-9/16". These measurements will line up with the top of the original wheelhouse cutout on each bedside. Draw a horizontal line from the top of the wheelhouse cutout to the front of the bedside.



- Using a jigsaw or other suitable cutting device saw along this line towards the front of the bedside. Use a short blade on the saw to avoid hitting the outer bedside skin. Try to stay on the scrap side of the line away from the bedside spot weld seam.



- The jigsaw can not reach all the way to the front of the bedside. You will be left with approximately 1" of metal left to cut plus a small vertical portion. Using a 3" high-speed cutting wheel, finish the horizontal cut all the way to the 90-degree bend in the panel. Then cut vertically in the bend towards the top till the panel is separated from the top portion.



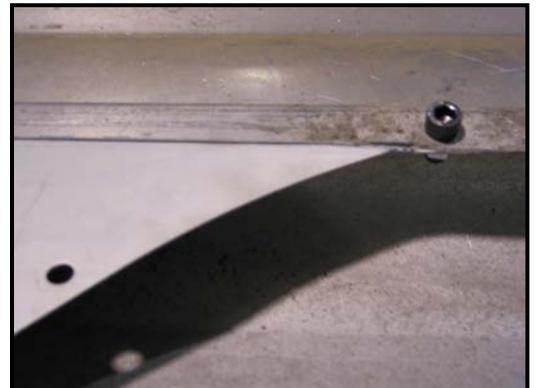
- Center punch the spot weld areas where this panel welds to the front bedside inner brace. There should be approximately (5) welds here. On the 1960-1966 trucks there are two braces per wheel arch attached with spot welds to the inner sheet metal. These will need to be drilled as well.



5. Drill through both panels at the spot welds with increasing drill sizes until the panel breaks free. It should not require much bigger than a 1/4" drill. At this point, the panel can be removed completely. Grind the spot welds smooth on the front brace so that the new panel will fit tight against the brace.



6. Trial fit the replacement panel to the bedside. The offset bend at the top of the new panel should fit under the original sheet metal at the top to create a lap joint. Line up the two holes provided in the replacement panel with the two 3/8" holes in the bedside front brace. Also line up the 3/8" hole in the replacement panel to the wheelhouse cutout area. Using 3/8" bolts, fix the panel in place. If there is interference with the area that was cut with the jigsaw, grind the bedside above the line drawn in step1 and test fit until the bolt holes line up.



7. Measure the height of the bedside and replacement panel as shown. The overall height from the top to the bottom side of the new panel for the 1958-1959 GM is 9". The 1960-1966 GM should be 10-1/2". These numbers are critical as they control how high the bedsides sit off the floor.



8. Move to the rear section and measure as you did the front at 1-1/16" from the top seam and again draw a horizontal line. Cut as far as possible with the jigsaw until contact is made with the rear stake pocket. Again try to stay on the scrap (lower) side of the line. The rear stake pocket is spot welded to this panel. As before, center-punch these welds and drill them out. You may also finish the horizontal cut with the 3" high-speed cutting wheel. Try not to cut into the rear stake pocket. This piece continues behind the rear stake pocket about a quarter of an inch and would be difficult to cut. Cut as far as possible then bend the piece back and forth until it breaks free.



9. After removing the original panel, rust or damage hidden by the panel is exposed. Repair this area before continuing the installation.



10. Attach the rear patch panel with a 3/8" diameter bolt into the wheelhouse hole as before.



11. The rear of the patch panel has a lower flange hole that matches up the rear stake pocket. Use a 5/16" diameter carriage bolt and bolt these two panels together.



There are many methods of attaching panels such as these. We have chosen to plug weld the overlap seam. In order to do this properly, the two pieces of metal must fit tightly against each other. The following is one method of accomplishing this.

12. Working from the wheelhouse cutout, clamp the seam of the bedside and the patch panel together.



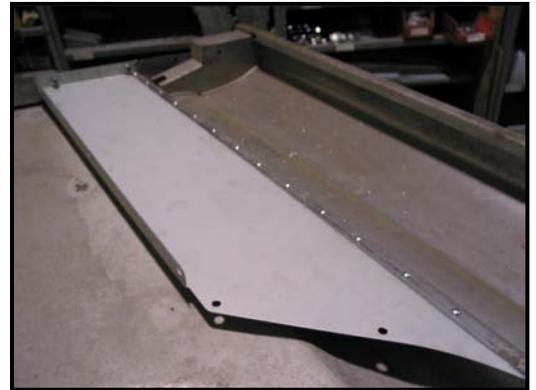
13. Approximately 3" away from the 3/8" diameter bolt, center-punch the seam.



14. Drill this mark with a #24 or 5/32" drill bit through both panels. Drill through the same hole again with a slightly larger drill but this time only through the top layer. Thread a #10 x 1/2" sheet metal screw into both panels. The larger hole on top will allow the screw to spin while the smaller 5/32" hole in the patch panel will grab the screw. Use caution to be sure that no chips are pushed into the seam between the patch panel and the bedside.



15. Repeat this process every 3" until the entire front and rear patch panel seams are attached.



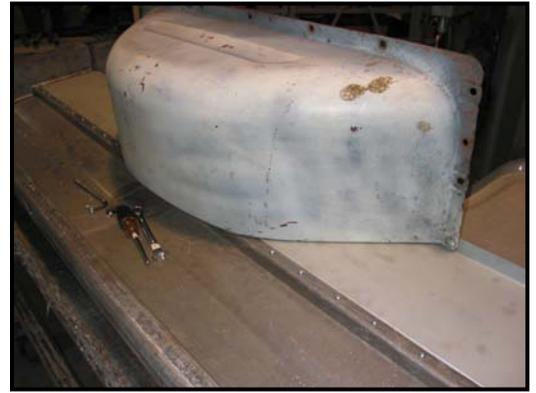
16. Also drill a 5/32" hole in the front and rear patch panels where the original parts were spot welded to the front bedside brace and the rear stake pocket as shown.



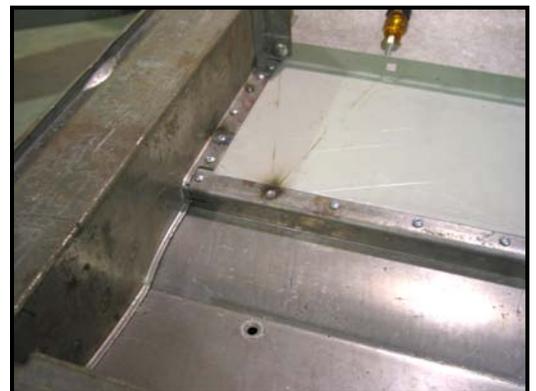
17. Place a sheet metal screw into these locations. This process makes sure that the metal pieces are tight against each other before the plug welding begins and ensures good penetration of the weld.



18. Before doing any welding, now is the time to check the alignment of the panels. When we removed these lower panels, we also removed six out of nine wheelhouse mounting holes. Now is a good time to re-fit the wheelhouse to check the hole alignment. The lower lip of the wheelhouse rests on top of the lower bedside flange. Bolt these together using 5/16-18 x 3/4" bolts, nuts, and washers. Bolt holes in the bed sides and patch panels are mostly 3/8" diameter for some adjustment. You will have to remove the 3/8" bolts previously installed in step 6 & 10 at the wheelhouse opening.



19. With the wheelhouse installed, remove one sheet metal screw at a time and plug weld the hole. You may start at the front or rear panel, vertical or horizontal seams. Make sure you are getting good penetrating plug welds.



20. Be patient with this part of the process. Skip around from the rear to the front removing one screw at a time and plug welding that hole. You do not want to build up too much heat and warp anything.



21. The 1960-1966 trucks have two braces inside the wheel arch that need to be re-attached to the patch panels. These braces control the distance between the inner wall and the outer bedside skin. Make sure the bedside outer skin is straight before welding. The wheelhouses will need to be removed for this step. Clamp the braces to the patch panel. Center-punch two locations for each brace. As in step # 14, drill through both pieces of metal with a 5/32" drill. Then drill through the same hole but only through the patch panel with a slightly larger drill. Plug weld these braces to the patch panels.

22. It is left up to the installer's discretion as to what to do with the seam where the original sheet metal meets the patch panels. This seam can be filled with lead, body putty, or arc welded completely. With just the plug welds, the bedside is strong enough to be installed back on the truck.

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