

EZ F-150 STEREO & INTERIOR UPGRADES

SPORT TRUCK

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HOT SHOWFEST ACTION

LIFT SPECIAL

GO BIG OR GO HOME



SHOW COVERAGE FROM:

**SLAM SESSION
GREENVILLE
CAL TRUCK JAM**

**SMOG-LEGAL 383
SMALL-BLOCK
BUDGET 6-INCH CHEVY LIFT**

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EDITORIAL, EVENTS, BUYER'S GUIDES & PRODUCT INFORMATION

PRIMEDIA




CST's BIG-INCH LIFT

ADDING OODLES OF GROUND CLEARANCE TO AN AVALANCHE

BY CALIN HEAD  PHOTOGRAPHY: JOHN O'NEILL

Since Chevrolet introduced the Avalanche, owners have been doing all they can to try and change the appearance. Whether it's slammed on 20s or lifted on 40s, the Avalanche is a good base to show your personality. Well, CST Performance Suspension now has an option that just might be for you—if you want to touch the sky.

Follow along as we check out CST's new 12-inch lift kit. The big-inch lift is constructed from DOM steel and is fully TIG-welded before it's powdercoated in gloss black. Every CST kit includes exactly what you'll need to install the kit, the fasteners are Grade 8 or stronger, and all the bushings are made of high-performance urethane with zerk fittings for easy maintenance and long, squeak-free life. You can expect great durability and a factory-like ride through such components as the unique one-piece sub frame design with the strut bar supports, the supported upper control arm drop mounts, and the steering drop down with Heim-jointed linkage stabilizer. The CST system will drop the factory suspension a true 6 inches, ensuring that steering angles will remain within factory specifications. It then cranks up the torsion bars by another 2 inches. The hand-fabricated spindles give the final 4 inches to provide clearance for a tire as big as 35 inches.

Just like all the other CST lift kits, this one has been engineered to be strong enough for just about anything you can throw at it—within the limits of your stock frame that is—and it's covered by a limited lifetime warranty. This truck will also receive a body lift later on, which it will need to clear the massive wheel and tire combo. The truck will receive a set of 20x9.5-inch KMC Zippers that feature a cool but aggressive look. These will couple to monster Michelin XZL 11.00x20s that measure out to a 42 inches. All of these fine components were installed at SoCal Supertrucks in San Bernardino, California. It has a great staff of knowledgeable guys who are also enthusiasts; you should see some of their personal vehicles. Now let's see how it all went down, or, rather, up. 



HERE ARE ALL THE CST LIFT COMPONENTS THAT WILL RAISE THE TRUCK A TOTAL OF 12 INCHES. THE KIT IS CONSTRUCTED OF DOM (DRAWN OVER MANDREL) TUBING AND 1/4-INCH PLATE STEEL. ALL JOINTS ARE TIG-WELDED, AND THE ENTIRE KIT IS POWDERCOATED GLOSS BLACK. WHAT MAKES THIS KIT DIFFERENT THEN THE REST IS THAT THE FRONT DROP DOWN BRACKETS HAVE BEEN MADE INTO A SINGLE SUB FRAME.



OK, HERE IS THE TRUCK AS IT WAS PUT ON THE LIFT FOR TEAR DOWN. AS YOU CAN SEE, THIS ONE IS IN PROGRESS. THE GUYS AT SOCAL SUPERTRUCKS HAVE DONE THIS KIT BEFORE AND KNEW THAT ALL THE FRONT STUFF HAD TO BE REMOVED.



THE SHOCKS, SWAY BAR, CENTER LINK, AND TIE-ROD ENDS WERE UNSOLTED, AND THE ABS LINES WERE UNPLUGGED. THE TIE-ROD ENDS WILL BE THREADED INTO THE NEW CENTER LINK.



3
THE TORSION KEYS WERE REMOVED AND THE TORSION BARS SLID BACK OUT OF THE CONTROL ARMS. NOW THERE IS NO LOAD ON THE SUSPENSION, SO THE REST OF THE STUFF WILL COME OFF EASILY.



4
THE KIT COMES WITH A DROP DOWN ASSEMBLY FOR THE TORSION BAR CROSSMEMBER, SO THE FACTORY PIECE WAS REMOVED.



5
THE BRAKE CALIPERS, SPINDLE, AND THE LOWER CONTROL ARM WERE NEXT.



6
THE CROSSMEMBER THAT RUNS UNDER THE OIL PAN IS ALSO REMOVED, AS IT WILL BE REPLACED WITH A NEW UNIT SUPPLIED IN THE KIT.



7
BECAUSE THE NEW DROP DOWN BRACKETS ARE MADE BEEFY TO HOLD THE LOAD, SOME AREAS OF THE FRAME HAVE TO BE CLEARANCED.



8
THE CENTER LINK IS THE FIRST COMPONENT TO BE INSTALLED. THE STOCK TIE-ROD ENDS WILL BE INSTALLED LATER, SO THEY'RE NOT IN THE WAY WHEN THE MAIN DROP DOWN BRACKET IS LIFTED INTO PLACE.



9^a
9^b
BEFORE THE MAIN BRACKET IS PUT ON, A FEW PIECES ARE INSTALLED, SUCH AS THE BUMPS TOPS AND THE HEIM JOINT SUPPORTS. THESE TIE THE CENTER LINK TO THE SUBFRAME FOR MORE STABLE STEERING.



10
THE MAIN BRACKET IS BOLTED INTO THE FACTORY LOWER CONTROL ARM MOUNTS. THIS IS WHAT SPREADS THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THE CONTROL ARMS. ONCE THE LONGER SPINDLE IS INSTALLED, THE NEW GEOMETRY RETAINS THE FACTORY PARAMETERS AND PROVIDES THE LIFT.



11
THE SWAY BAR IS FLIPPED OVER AND INSTALLED WITH THE PROVIDED SPACERS.



12^a
12^b
THE BUSHINGS, ZERK FITTINGS, AND BALL JOINTS ARE INSTALLED INTO THE CONTROL ARMS.



13 THE UPPER CONTROL ARM IS BOLTED UP WITH THE OEM ALIGNMENT CAM BOLTS.



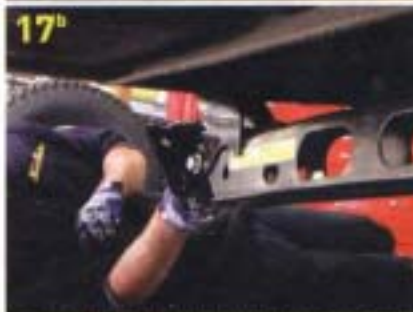
14 AFTER THE HUB IS INSTALLED INTO THE SPINDLE, IT'S SLID ONTO THE BALL JOINTS.



15 THE ROTORS AND CALIPERS GO BACK ON AND THE ABS LINE IS PLUGGED BACK IN. THE BRAKE LINES WEREN'T CUT, SO THERE IS NO NEED TO BLEED THE BRAKES. THE BRAKE LINE IS LONG ENOUGH, BUT IT HAS TO BE REROUTED BEHIND THE UPRIGHT.



16 NOW THE TIE-ROD END IS THREADED IN AND THE NEW END LINKS HOOK UP THE SWAY BAR.



17 THE TORSION BAR CROSSMEMBER RECEIVES THIS DEEPLY BRACKET TO LOWER IT STRAIGHT IN LINE WITH THE LOWER CONTROL ARM. IT BOLTS INTO THE STOCK HOLES IN THE FRAME.



18 AS YOU CAN SEE, THE NEW KEYS ARE CLOCKED AT DIFFERENT POINTS. THIS WILL ALLOW THE TORSION BARS TO BE CRANKED UP TO A STIFFER SPRING RATE.



19 WITH A SPECIAL TOOL, THE KEYS ARE CRANKED UP SO THE KEEPER PLATES CAN BE SLID IN THE HOLE. ONE IN THE BOLTS IS RUN UP LOADING THE TORSION BAR.



20 NOW THE BRACES THAT CONNECT THE FRONT DROP DOWN BRACKET TO THE TORSION BAR CROSSMEMBER ARE INSTALLED. TYING THE WHOLE SYSTEM TOGETHER GIVES IT MORE RIGIDITY.



21 THE SHOCKS WERE NEXT. AFTER THE HOOP WAS BOLTED IN, THE DUAL FOX SHOCKS SLIPPED RIGHT INTO PLACE.

technical
CST'S BIG-INCH LIFT



22
THIS IS WHAT 12 INCHES OF LIFT LOOKS LIKE; THE CST LIFT RETAINS ALL THE FACTORY GEOMETRY. CST OFFERS MANY OPTIONS WHEN IT COMES TO THE SHOCKS. THE FOX SHOCKS FEATURE: A SEAMLESS ALLOY STEEL BODY; A HIGH-FLOW, LARGE BORE DAMPING PISTON; NITROGEN GAS PRESSURE; TEFLON-LINED STEEL SPHERICAL BEARINGS; BILLET ALUMINUM END-CAPS AND EYELETS; HARD CHROME SHAFTS; AND THEY ARE USER SERVICEABLE AND REBUILDABLE.



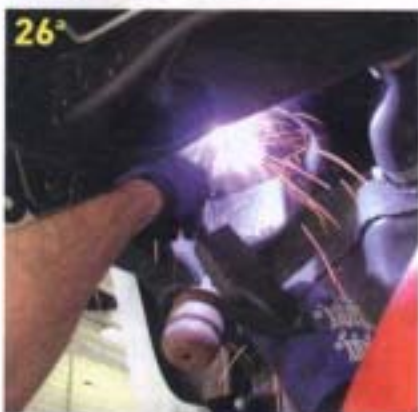
23
OUT BACK, THE CST KIT REPLACES ALL THE TRAILING ARMS CONNECTED TO THE REAR END. THE SHOCKS AND END LINKS HAD TO BE REMOVED TO MAKE THE FACTORY SPRING OUT.



24
WITH THE REAR END PROPERLY SUPPORTED, THE TRAILING ARMS WERE REMOVED.



25
THE LONGER ARMS TAKE THEIR PLACE.



26
INSTEAD OF RUNNING A MASSIVE SPRING, CST DESIGNED A SPACER TO ADD THE LIFT, SO A NUT PLATE HAS TO BE WELDED IN TO MAKE IT SECURE.



NOW THE 4-INCH LIFT COIL IS INSTALLED.



THE NEW ADJUSTABLE FORWARD BAR BOLTS IN ITS NEW LOCATION THANKS TO ANOTHER DROP DOWN BRACKET.



A SET OF FOX SHOCKS WAS ALSO USED IN THE REAR; THESE ARE A NON-RESERVOIR TYPE.



THE SWAY BAR IS HOOKED UP WITH EXTENDED LINKS.



THE WHEELS AND TIRES USED ON THIS TRUCK ARE ALSO 20X30-INCH KMC ZIPPER. THEY FEATURE A CHROME FINISH AND ARE LOAD RATED TO HANDLE THE ADDED WEIGHT OF THE MASSIVE 11.00X23-INCH MICHELIN XZLS, WHICH MEASURE 42 INCHES O.D.



HERE IS THE TRUCK WITH ALL ITS ADDED LIFT. THE CST SUSPENSION WORKS FLAWLESSLY AND HAS A NICE ON-ROAD MANNERISM, BUT IT STILL HAS OFF-ROAD PROWESS. SOCAL SUPERTRUCKS RECOMMENDS THAT WHENEVER YOU LIFT YOUR TRUCK, RETURN TO THE SHOP AFTER A WEEK OR SO TO HAVE THE BOLTS RETORQUED BECAUSE THE SUB FRAMES WILL SET.

SOURCES

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