

2021 Prius startup AC mildew odor

FIX-007 / REV A / 2026.09.01

The recovered conversation points to cleaning the evaporator through the condensate drain rather than spraying product into the dash vents. It identifies Lubegard Kool-It Evaporator & Heater Foam Cleaner #96030 as the product discussed, places the drain connection on the passenger-side HVAC area behind or below the glove box, and gives an inside-footwell access path. The procedure remains a practical starting point, not proof that the odor has a single cause or that the treatment will solve every vehicle.

STATUS	Recovered/Partial
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CLASSIFICATION	FIX
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MATERIAL	TROUBLESHOOTING
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DISPOSITION	PUBLIC / RECOVERED/PARTIAL
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CATEGORY	Repairs / Technology
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RECORD TYPE	troubleshooting
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TECHNICAL NOTES

Recovered 2021 Prius evaporator-cleaning procedure for a startup wet-sock or mildew odor.

GOAL

Clean the 2021 Prius evaporator through the condensate-drain connection while keeping the cleaner away from vents, wiring, motors, and control electronics.

EQUIPMENT

- 2021 Toyota Prius (4th generation)
- Lubegard Kool-It #96030 with supplied clear applicator hose
- Towels or a catch pan
- Flashlight
- Current vehicle service information

MATERIALS

- Evaporator foam cleaner used according to its product directions
- Clean towels
- Replacement body grommet only if the factory grommet is accidentally removed

METHOD / STEPS

1. Park the Prius outside, shut it completely OFF, and protect the passenger footwell with towels.
2. Move the passenger seat back and work under the glove-box area on the front/left side of the passenger footwell, toward the center console.
3. Remove only the lower trim or carpet access needed to expose the HVAC condensate drain hose.
4. Disconnect the short drain hose at the HVAC-box end; do not pull the body grommet out of the floor.
5. Insert the supplied flexible clear applicator hose into the exposed HVAC drain fitting, directing it toward the evaporator housing without forcing it.
6. Dispense the cleaner with the Prius and blower OFF, then reconnect the factory drain hose before the liquid begins draining heavily.
7. Let the cleaner work for about 15 minutes while keeping a towel underneath the connection.
8. Confirm the hose is seated, start the Prius, and run the blower on LOW for about 5 minutes to finish airing the system.
9. Run the air conditioner afterward and verify that condensation drains outside rather than leaking into the passenger footwell.

RESULT / WHERE THIS STANDS

Recovered procedure with a concrete next test; odor source and final result still need to be confirmed on the actual Prius.

TROUBLESHOOTING

- Before treatment, run the air conditioner cold for roughly 10-15 minutes and identify the small hose that produces clear condensation underneath the passenger side.
- If there is no normal condensation drip in humid conditions, investigate a partially blocked drain before assuming the odor is only mildew.
- An exterior drain-line approach is another access option when the hose can be safely identified underneath the passenger side.
- If interior access is used, disconnect the hose at the HVAC box rather than at the body grommet; a displaced grommet may require replacement.
- After cleaning, check both for a steady exterior drip and for any new moisture inside the footwell.

SAFETY / LIMITATIONS

- Do not spray evaporator cleaner through the dash vents; the conversation specifically warns to keep foam away from wiring, circuit boards, and motors.
- Keep the Prius and blower OFF while the foam is being introduced and while it works.
- Do not push rigid wire or tools into the evaporator fitting; use only the flexible supplied applicator hose and do not force it.
- Use normal vehicle-lifting, chemical-handling, and trim-removal precautions, and obtain qualified service if the drain or HVAC case cannot be identified confidently.

SPECIFICATION

VEHICLE	2021 Toyota Prius / 4th generation
PRODUCT DISCUSSED	Lubegard Kool-It #96030
ACCESS	Passenger footwell, behind/below glove box
APPLICATION	HVAC evaporator drain connection
DWELL	About 15 minutes
FINISH	Blower LOW / about 5 minutes
STATUS	Recovered procedure / field result not recorded

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

2026.09.06 / ARCHIVE-02

Recovered and summarized from the supplied A/C odor in Prius conversation; raw transcript remains unpublished.

2026.09.01 / Rev A

Initial manifest record created from the topic index.

RELEASED MATERIAL / SOURCE LINKS

fix-007-public-summary.txt

PUBLIC SUMMARY / RECOVERED CONVERSATION

<https://u225x.com/downloads/manifest-records/fix-007-public-summary.txt>

CONNECTED RECORDS

FIX-003

<https://u225x.com/record/FIX-003>

FIX-004

<https://u225x.com/record/FIX-004>

RETURN TO THE LIVING RECORD

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This PDF preserves the public notes at this revision. Visit the record for updates and attached images.

<https://u225x.com/record/FIX-007>