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*Family owned and operated for more than 50 years*

Welcome to the spring issue of the *Gaulin Gazette*. We've got two main topics that we're covering with this issue: First is the oil change. Now, some of you might be thinking, what is there to say about oil changes? Well, things have really changed in this area and you should know what is and isn't true about oil and oil change practices as it relates to today's cars. Secondly, we're going to discuss if there are benefits to having a relationship with one service provider, or if it makes sense to use multiple service providers. As always, I hope you find the information here useful. And remember, if you have questions or topics that you'd like to see addressed with this newsletter, please let me or any one of the staff know. Thank you for reading, and enjoy!

Best Regards,  
*Greg Gaulin*

**Greg's Corner: How Often Do You NEED to Change the Oil?**



Many cars today are equipped with an Oil Life Monitor System. In other words, the car itself let's you know when it's time for an oil change. However, there's still a lot of marketing out there (and not just from oil change places but from a variety of service providers including dealerships) telling motorists to stick with 3,000-mile oil changes. Check out this post that I read recently on an Internet blog:

*I was under the impression that the Oil Life Monitor was the determining factor as to when the oil needed to be changed. However, I received a notice from the dealer telling me I was due for a 3,700-mile oil change. I was confused so I called the dealer, and they told me that they weren't real sure how well this system worked, but I could go by it if I wanted to.*

Perhaps the best way to address the question of whether or not to rely on the monitor is to first ask, how does the monitor system work? Now don't worry, I'll keep it short and simple. I don't want to put anyone to sleep with a bunch of techno-babble.

The first thing that needs to be understood about most OLM (Oil Life Monitor) systems is that they do not sample the oil itself like a chemist would in a lab. Rather, a computer algorithm designed by an engineer *infers* when the oil should be changed based on engine operating conditions that are monitored by the vehicle's on board computer. There, that was pretty straightforward wasn't it? But just in case you are interested in a more detailed and technical explanation of how an OLM works, you can find a good article here:

[www.machinerylubrication.com/Read/77/gm's-oil-life-system-improves-timing-of-oil-change](http://www.machinerylubrication.com/Read/77/gm's-oil-life-system-improves-timing-of-oil-change)

*(Continued on page 2 - See Oil Change)*



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## Oil Change

*(Continued from page 1)*

So, we come to the main question: Is the OLM accurate? Does it correctly predict when the oil needs to be changed? In my professional judgement the best answer is – *possibly*. Consider this, taken right from a GM Owner’s Manual:

*It is possible that if you are driving under the best of conditions the oil life system might not indicate that an oil change is necessary for over a year. However, the engine oil and filter must be changed at least once a year.*

If the OLM was completely reliable, why would GM put this in the Owner’s Manual? Let’s be candid – manufacturers are in the business of selling cars; and extending maintenance intervals to lower maintenance costs thereby lowering your overall cost of ownership is one way for them to promote their product. On the other hand, they don’t want to delay maintenance too long as that would result in premature failure and tarnish their image. So, what is the right balance?

A lot depends on how you drive and what your long range ownership plan is for the vehicle. If, for example, you do a lot of highway driving and lease or trade every three years or so, it’s probably best to just follow the OLM system. However, if you drive short distances or do a lot of city type driving or you plan to keep your vehicle after the payments end, then a more rigid maintenance regimen is in order.

I’m a car guy. As such I study automotive technology nearly everyday. It’s in my best interest to do my homework so that I can offer you sound advice, and here’s what I’ve learned...

Maintenance on cars today is not the same as it was even a few years ago. Lubricants have improved significantly and engine tolerances are much tighter. No longer is it wise to use any-old-oil. Rather it’s important to use the oil specified by the manufacturer. With that said, it is possible (and even reasonable) to assert that extending oil changes beyond the traditional 3-month/3,000-mile interval is good for your car, not to mention good for your wallet!

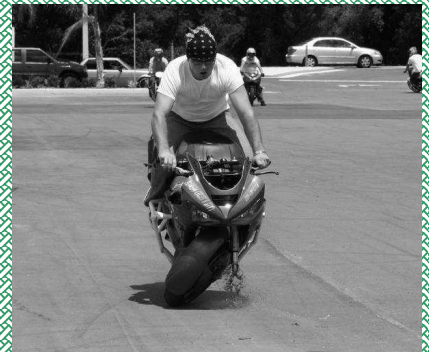


Now, there’s one more crucial piece to this puzzle – the oil filter. Engine wear accelerates as oil ages, and not just because of oil degradation, but also because of filters that no longer perform to acceptable levels.



So, here’s what I propose... If your vehicle is equipped with an Oil Life Monitor and the monitor indicates that an oil change is needed, get it done. However, barring an alert from the OLM, consider coming in every 3-months/3,000-miles for an oil filter replacement, and then have the oil changed every other visit, or every 6-months/6,000-miles. This strategy is easy to remember, saves you money, and helps the environment by conserving resources. Another benefit with this strategy is that your vehicle will receive a complimentary maintenance inspection at each visit.

## That moment just before the pain begins...



**OUCH!!!**

## Gary's Corner: Relationships



Who cares about a good working relationship? As long as I can save a couple of bucks, I'm happy. This mantra resounds through the ranks of motorists today. The truth is, there is value in relationships; and we're talking real dollars and cents value, not just some kind of sentimental value. Consider this story:

Rick and Susie Smith have a starter replaced at Best Ever Car Care in April. A little over a year later Rick and Susie start having starting problems again, so they take the car back to Best Ever. After performing a few tests, the tech discovers that the starter is bad. The service advisor pulls the service history and confirms that the starter was replaced last year. However, it's out of warranty by two months!



Here's where the relationship factor comes in: All of the staff at Best Ever know Rick and Susie very well. You see, the Smith's have been bringing their cars to Best Ever for years. In fact, Best Ever is the only place the Smiths go for auto service. So, the service advisor calls the parts supplier (whom they've had a relationship with for over 25-years) and explains the problem.

The parts supplier sends over a new starter free of charge; and Best Ever installs it free of charge. Happily, Rick and Susie are back on the road again. You see how it works?

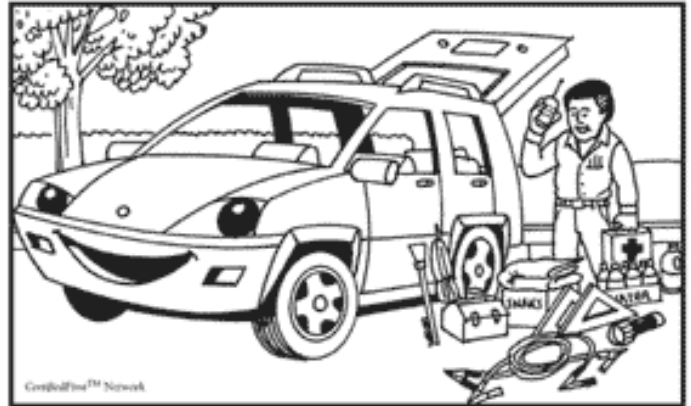
I know, some of you may be thinking that this is just a fictional story. It's true, the story is fictional, but the scenario is far from made up. We encounter situations like this all the time, and we take care of our customers just like Best Ever Car Care did in this story.

Unfortunately, we also run into situations where someone comes to us after having been turned away from another service provider, with whom they didn't have a relationship, that refused to go that extra-mile.

No one likes it when things don't go as expected, but when they do, there's nothing like having a relationship with someone who knows you, values your business, and will always do the right thing.

## Summer Travel Readiness

While we hope that all of your travels this summer are without incident or accident, it's always wise to be prepared. Here's a list of items that you should consider carrying in the glove box and trunk, or in the back of your SUV or Pickup:



- ◆ **Vehicle registration and insurance information** – You're required by law to have these documents in the vehicle.
- ◆ **Accident Kit** – Disposable camera, pen or pencil, auto club card or number for towing services, number for your insurance company, and a blank accident report form. A good form is available at: [www.certifiedfirst.com/accident/accident.pdf](http://www.certifiedfirst.com/accident/accident.pdf).
- ◆ **Basic First Aid Kit** – Tape, bandages, antiseptic ointment, and pain relievers.
- ◆ **Foul Weather Gear** – Rain poncho, towel, and blanket.
- ◆ **Other Supplies** – Jumper cables, flashlight with extra batteries, pocket knife, basic tool kit (screwdrivers, wrenches, sockets...), and reflective markers or flares.
- ◆ **Gaulin's Business Card or Newsletter** – In the unfortunate event of an over-the-road breakdown, don't hesitate to call us. Through our various networks and contacts we'll find a trustworthy shop near your location and we'll work with them as best we can to get you back on the road.



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### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- How Often Do You Need to Change Oil?
  - Summer Travel Readiness
- AND MORE!**

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