

August

Wheels

Oil burning is a condition that will worsen over time

An early warning sign of engine wear is excessive oil consumption, which is usually accompanied by blue-black exhaust smoke.

A common reason for this condition is worn valve guide seals. The valves in a typical engine may open and close as often as 100,000 times per hour at highway speeds.

The stem of the valve, sliding up and down in its guide, is fitted with a special seal designed to permit only a limited amount of oil to pass. (Some oil is necessary for lubrication.)

When these seals wear or harden, oil burning begins.

Many of the conditions which cause an engine to burn oil prematurely are due to vehicle neglect. Piston rings, for example, can wear out prematurely if you do not change the oil and filter regularly. Worn rings lead to excessive oil consumption.

There's only one satisfactory cure for worn piston rings: Major engine work, which normally is accompanied by replacement of bearings, timing belt or chain, valve guides and other worn internal components.

At that time, valves are ground and replaced. This procedure, combined with a complete tune-up, usually will return the engine to nearly new performance.

Today's vehicles are driven for more than 225,000 km and last up to 12 years, compared with being driven only 150,000 km

and lasting less than 10 years in the 1970s.

So it is worth it to properly maintain your vehicle and engine.

Check your engine oil regularly. If oil is over-full or smells like gasoline, it may be diluted with gasoline, thereby having lost some of its lubricating qualities.

If you have to pump the accelerator to keep the engine from stalling, you may be pumping raw gasoline into the crank case.

This situation can be avoided by keeping the engine properly tuned.

Misfiring spark plugs can aggravate a situation such as this because they permit raw, unburned gasoline to wash into the crank

case. Not only does this create hard starting, it also accelerates wear due to diluted engine oil.

Another factor in oil burning is a malfunctioning positive crank case ventilation valve, which is intended to route oil vapours through the combustion chamber rather than permitting them to escape into the atmosphere.

If the PCV system is not in proper working order, it can be the cause of oil burning.

Remember, excessive oil burning is a condition that gradually worsens and can affect other aspects of the engine.

Like so many other car troubles, early detection and correction are essential and can save you a great deal of money in the long run.

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Exhaust system should be checked every time car is on hoist for repairs

You hit a bump and your muffler starts dragging on the road, sparks flying everywhere.

Preventative maintenance can save you money

As you roar down the highway, hoping you don't encounter any police cars, you can't believe that you didn't act sooner.

What could have cost you only a few dollars to have a new bracket installed, is now going to cost you a lot more.

The loss of a muffler and/or the pipes that go with it, is usually due to a broken support bracket or hanger that secures the exhaust system to the frame of your car.

These flexible brackets are vulnerable to damage caused by the elements, flying stones or other road debris and engine vibrations.

The rattling and banging of an exhaust pipe against the underneath of your car or the road is the first sign that a bracket has broken.

That is a clear warning that you need to act quickly and replace the necessary part.

Your muffler may still be perfectly good.

It is most likely the bracket, which costs only a few dollars, needs replacing.

Many mufflers that you see on the side of the road are perfectly good, but they fell off because a bracket or two needed replacing.

The exhaust system should be inspected whenever the car is on a hoist for regular preventative maintenance.

In between times, you can check it yourself by reaching down and shaking the tail pipe (when it is cool).

If it is loose or hits the car's undercarriage or body, then you know you might have a problem.

When in doubt, have your mechanic/technician check it for you.

Carbon Monoxide can be lethal

And be careful.

Another warning noise, the familiar rattle or roar of a blown muffler or the faint pfft... pfft... pfft in its early stage, can be deadly if not tended to immediately.

These sounds may be caused by a small hole in the exhaust system.

Colourless and odourless exhaust fumes, composed of carbon monoxide gases, can seep into your car and they can be lethal.

The sooner you replace the defective exhaust parts, the better and healthier you'll be.

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