

Synthetic Motor Oils May Be Better In The Long Run

(NAPSA)—For most drivers, owning a car is one of the most significant financial decisions they will ever make. Unfortunately, many either don't take the time or may not know how to properly care for their investment.

For Kevin Chinn, an engine oil technical adviser for ExxonMobil Lubricants & Petroleum Specialties, it comes as no surprise that many car owners feel uncertain about the proper ways to take care of their vehicles.

"Most people are very busy and they just want to get into their cars and go," said Chinn. "They often do not have the time to spend hours thinking about their car's maintenance needs. Even if they have the time, people may feel intimidated by the numerous automotive care products available on the market. They feel confused about the pros and potential cons of those products."

While significant advancements in engine technology and car design have, over the past 10 to 15 years, yielded a number of changes in car maintenance practices, Chinn believes that there is one area in which consumers, with help from their automotive service technician, can easily eliminate the confusion—selecting motor oil.

Conventional, mineral-based motor oils remain the most common lubricant type in the automotive market today, due in large part to the fact that they are less expensive to purchase than high-performance, premium synthetic oils—which are designed to deliver enhanced engine protec-



tion over the long haul.

Those cheaper figures, however, do come at a cost to drivers and their vehicles.

Conventional oils are made with mineral-base stocks, which are refined from crude oil that has been pumped from the ground. While petroleum refining is an advanced science, contaminants such as sulfur, reactive hydrocarbons and other undesirable materials can never be completely removed, and therefore end up in the base stocks that are used as the foundation for conventional motor oil.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, providing the highest level of performance are fully synthetic motor oils such as the Mobil 1 family of lubricants—the world's leading synthetic motor oils.

With more consistency in the size and shape of the molecules, synthetic oils are better able to withstand extreme conditions. Conventional oils, on the other hand, which contain less-stable molecules, can break down more quickly when subjected to extreme

heat, resulting in harmful deposits and sludge.

While the benefits of synthetic oils are explicitly apparent to professionals such as Chinn, the average car driver is still largely unaware of the value they provide to cars and oftentimes deterred by their higher price tag. However, compared to conventional oils, synthetics are engineered to go further between oil drain intervals, as they are capable of resisting breakdown for much longer.

"It's easy to see that the long-term benefits of using synthetic oils, both from a performance and financial perspective, can be well worth the investment," Chinn said.

Over the past decade, there have been significant changes in driver preferences and manufacturer trends: the growth of SUVs, the rise in high-performance turbo-charged engines, and the desire of most drivers to keep their cars for longer periods of time.

According to Chinn, these shifts in automotive design and driver preferences have made the enhanced protection properties that fully synthetic oils offer compared with conventional lubricants more valuable than ever.

"When you really stop and think about what is happening in the automotive marketplace from both a driver's perspective and manufacturer trends, it's easy to see why informed drivers increasingly want to take advantage of the benefits that synthetic oils offer," Chinn said. "Synthetic oils are almost always a better choice."