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Oil Contamination and Premature Turbo Failure

Application

All turbocharged vehicles

Problem

Oil contamination is one of the most common causes of premature turbocharger failure. Turbocharger bearings and turbine shafts rotate at high RPMs and gain lubrication from a thin film of oil. It is critical that this oil is clean. If the oil is contaminated, it can quickly wear the internals of the turbo. Turbos often use small supply lines that transport oil to the turbo and contamination in these lines can restrict oil supply to the turbo.

Cause

The most common cause of oil contamination is lack of vehicle maintenance. Engine carbon buildup can also contribute to contaminated engine oil.

Solution

Routine maintenance in accordance with the O.E. manufacturer's schedule is the best way to prevent oil contamination. It is also important to use the O.E. manufacturer's recommended oil specification. Using oil with the incorrect viscosity can cause a lack of lubrication. Flush all oil supply lines leading to the turbo and be sure to identify the original failure of the turbo.

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