

## Is Your Porsche Feeling A Little Sluggish?

By Yolanda A. Facio

As service/repair shop owners and technicians, we tend to repeat many times the value of maintenance over repair work. It certainly is cheaper to do maintenance work than repair work which can cost several times more than the maintenance work would have. In recent months we've seen several instances of deferred maintenance turn into expensive repair work. However, it was one particular event that prompted me to write this tech article. A long-time customer with two Porsches decided to have a few things checked out on each of the cars. In the first case, his car would stall while he was driving; it turned out to be several worn-out items that would have been rectified with scheduled maintenance. In the second case, he had a "miss" at idle. Again, replacement of several worn-out maintenance items rectified the problem. In both cases, he emailed back explaining that his car felt so much better than before.

A good rule of thumb is the 15K/30K maintenance schedule outlined by Porsche. Having a 15K or 30K service can greatly enhance drivability and avoid repair work related to missed maintenance. The factory outlines a pretty long list of items to be checked and changed. During a typical oil service many things are not checked especially if you are using a non-Porsche repair facility where draining oil and spinning on a filter is the extent of the service.

During the 15k/30k service, filters are changed, the main serpentine or timing belt is changed or checked; all other belts are checked and adjusted if necessary. Spark plugs are changed and plug wires are checked. Brake fluid is checked and flushed if necessary. Coolant is checked and changed if necessary. Transmission fluid is checked and changed if necessary. All other fluids are checked and topped off if necessary. Brakes are checked, suspension components are checked, and fuel lines are checked and replaced if necessary as are hoses.

I've included a picture of a dirty pollen filter and next to it a new clean filter. The circular filter should be the same color as the square filter. Pollen, air and smog filters are not generally changed during an oil service and many times get missed. A dirty pollen filter can block air flow causing your air conditioning system to not blow as hard or work as efficiently, in some cases the dirty pollen filter can overheat and seize the blower motor. A dirty air filter can cause air flow reduction and generally causes reduction in performance. A dirty/old fuel filter can cause fuel pump failure which is a much more expensive repair item. Old, worn out spark plugs will increase the load on the spark plug wires, ignition cap and rotor, as well as the coil. Increased load can lead to premature failure of those components.

Brake fluid is generally flushed every 2 years per the factory recommendation. In Arizona, because it is dry, we can generally get away with 3 years. Fluid in the brake system collects moisture and suspends it, but once the fluid becomes saturated, it can no longer do its job of protecting the brake system components. Old, dirty, saturated brake fluid is the main cause of failure for brake components like master cylinders and calipers.

But these are minor compared to a broken timing belt which is generally due to lapsed maintenance. When a timing belt breaks it generally bends valves and requires removal of the cylinder head which becomes an expensive job. Another major problem is extended overheating. If the cooling system begins to lose fluid or a fan stops working, the car can begin to run hot. After an extended amount of time this can put stress on other cooling system components. If driven in an extremely hot condition, it can cause engine damage. Something as simple as a \$10 hose can be the cause.

If you don't know when to have scheduled service work done, talk with your shop. They can review their records to find out what has and hasn't been done and get you back on track. At Exotic Motorwerks, if asked, we prepare a detailed maintenance schedule for the customer outlining what needs to be done and when so that they can keep on track with maintenance and budget it as well.

In just two weeks we've seen broken timing belts, worn and arching spark plug wires which can lead to engine fire, cracked fuel hoses leaking fuel, cylinder head gaskets blown out, the list goes on and on. Most of these issues can be corrected with a good service check; your Porsche will thank you!!