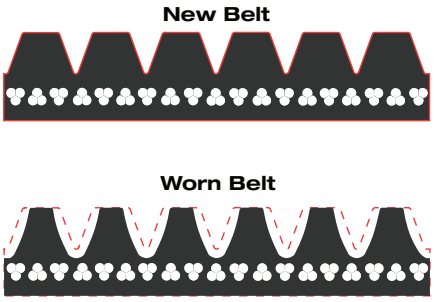
IDENTIFYING WORN EPDM BELTS

Neoprene Compound Serpentine Belts

Over the past two decades, Dayco® has maintained that serpentine belts should be replaced when an inspection revealed 4 cracks per inch, chunking, rib glazing, backside wear or splitting. Using these criteria, identifying worn serpentine belts was a straightforward process. The belts in this time frame were made from Neoprene compound and were expected to last approximately 80,000 to 128,000 kilometres.

Today's belts are now made with an EPDM extended-life rubber compound. These EPDM constructed belts wear completely different than Neoprene, and can last up to 150,000 kilometres.

How To Identify Worn EPDM Serpentine Belts



EPDM belt wear can be difficult to detect because the belts tend to wear like a tire, i.e., there is a material loss from the ribs. A new EPDM belt will have a traditional "V" profile in the ribs. With worn EPDM belts however, the "V" profile has the appearance of a "U" instead, because of the material lost from the rib. Once the rib profile is changed, there is less material (and therefore less surface area) coming into contact with the pulleys. This material loss can cause slippage that will affect the performance of the accessories and possibly result in an annoying noisy belt.

We have created an "a-WEAR-ness Gauge" to gauge wear and estimate belt replacement.

All serpentine belts need to be closely inspected to identify any and all wear. These belts are asked to perform in some of the most hostile environments because of high heat, contaminates and debris. Regular inspection of all drive belts and accessories should be mandatory once the vehicle passes 120,000 kilometres. Vehicles today have more accessories being driven by a single belt then in years past.

Remember, if wear is ignored and the belt breaks, the vehicle comes to a dead stop!

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