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## Dealers, automakers work to phase in thinner engine oil

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Service departments at U.S. Toyota and Honda dealerships are wielding a slick weapon in the battle for better fuel economy and lower emissions: thinner engine oil.

Both automakers are adopting 0W-16 oil for use in some North American cars, and are working with their dealerships on the transition. Nissan is testing the synthetic lubricant for use in some U.S. and Canadian vehicles.

Compared with 0W-20, the oil it is replacing, 0W-16 flows more easily at higher temperatures. That reduces friction, allowing engine parts to work more efficiently.

Hydraulic systems also work better, proponents say, and emissions are reduced. Some automakers are eyeing even thinner 0W-8 oil, in use in some overseas markets.

The crankcases of Dynamic Force direct-injection, four-cylinder engines in the 2018 Toyota Camry are filled with 0W-16. Honda is using the oil in its 2017 Accord Hybrid.

### Toyota partnerships

Toyota and Honda are working with dealers to promote 0W-16 in engines designed for the thinner lubricant.

Hiroyuki Tsuboi, deputy chief engineer for midsize product planning at Toyota Motor Corp., told *Fixed Ops Journal* that the automaker plans to ensure that service departments have the oil on hand. The 2018 Camry arrived in showrooms last month.

Sweet 16 0W-16 oil flows more easily at high engine temperatures than the 0W-20 it replaces. Used in Japan for about 20 years, 0W-16 is starting to show up in U.S. vehicles such as the 2018 Toyota Camry. It offers these advantages

- Reduces friction in pistons, bearings and valves
- Increases engine efficiency and fuel economy
- Contributes to reduced fuel consumption, thus fewer emissions
- Enables hydraulically operated systems, such as variable valve timing, to work better

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Jonathan Boswell, the team leader for training specialists at Southeast Toyota Distributors' technical center in Jacksonville, Fla., says that use of 0W-16 is "one of the biggest learning pieces" for service technicians who will work on the 2018 Camry.

The training center conveys information from Toyota engineers to techs at 176 dealerships in Florida, North Carolina, Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina. Instruction in 0W-16 oil use is provided online, Boswell says.

Longo Toyota, in the Los Angeles suburb of El Monte, Calif., has ordered its first pallet of Toyota's branded 0W-16 at \$4.08 a quart — the same price as 0W-20, says Jose Uribe, fixed operations director.

A pallet has 168 six-quart cases; that's enough for more than 200 oil changes, Uribe says.

When Longo customers start to bring in their 2018 four-cylinder Camrys for oil changes, the dealership will charge them the same amount — now \$72.88 — as they do the owners of 2017 Camrys that use 0W-20, Uribe adds.

He says he expects no difficulty persuading Camry owners to use the superslick oil. "The biggest issue we had was in convincing customers to use synthetic oil and go 10,000 miles between oil changes, and we've already crossed that hurdle," Uribe says.

David Lee, a product training specialist in the Denver region of Toyota Motor Sales U.S.A. Inc., says he expects the cost of 0W-16 to come down once it becomes available in bulk and more vehicles adopt its use.

ToyotaCare, the automaker's maintenance program for new vehicles sold in the United States, covers oil changes for the first two years or 25,000 miles.

At Don McGill Toyota in suburban Houston, switching to 0W-16 is "a little bit of a challenge," says Service Manager Chad Mahaffey.

The dealership will store the oil in portable 25-gallon metal tanks, along with keeping it on hand in quart bottles. Eventually, the service department will provide permanent storage for 0W-16, with plumbing and metered dispensers, Mahaffey says.

### Honda, Nissan gear up

Honda started using 0W-16 in Japan and Europe in 2008. It recommends that its U.S. dealers use 0W-16 instead of 0W-20 in the 2017 Accord Hybrid.

Using 0W-16 improves fuel efficiency without sacrificing engine performance, says Bob Proctor, principal engineer at Honda R&D Americas Inc. and a veteran in the development of engine oil and specifications.

James Herzog, the service manager at College Hills Honda in Wooster, Ohio, says the switch to 0W-16 in the Accord Hybrid was well covered in Honda's online training classes. "Even the sales classes talk about it," Herzog adds. The dealership's website offers Honda-branded 0W-16 for \$8.61 a quart.

As Nissan North America prepares to use 0W-16 in some vehicles, the company's vice president of aftersales, Wally Burchfield, notes that "most manufacturers are pushing the envelope of what you can do with internal combustion engines."

Not all automakers embrace 0W-16.

General Motors says the current version of its branded engine oil, dexos1, meets the needs of advanced turbocharged engines and exceeds industry standards, according to Ashwin Medhekar, an engine oil specialist with ACDelco, a GM parts brand.

Robert Boss, a manager in Ford Motor Co.'s dealer and customer service division, says Ford "has no plans to launch an engine that uses 0W-16 engine oil at this time."

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