



Lubricant Storage, Stability, and Estimated Shelf Life

Most materials including lubricating oils and greases deteriorate with time. The art of good storage practice is to always have materials available when required, and to ensure stock turnover so that lubricants are used before any significant performance loss has occurred.

Storage Conditions Affecting All Lubricants

The storage environment greatly affects the estimated shelf life of lubricants and greases. Conditions which may affect oil lubricant shelf life are as follows:

Temperature

Both high heat (greater than 110°F) and extreme cold (less than 0°F) can affect lubricant stability. Heat will increase the rate of oil oxidation. Cold can result in wax and possible sediment formation. In addition, alternating exposure to heat and cold may result in breathing of drums and possible moisture contamination. A temperature range of 0°F to 110°F is acceptable for storage of most lubricating oils and greases. Ideally, the storage temperature range should be from 32°F to 77°F.

Light

Light may impact color and appearance in lubricants. Lubricants should be kept in the original metal or plastic opaque containers they were packaged in.

Water

Water will react with some lubricant additives. It can also promote microbial growth at the oil/water interface. Lubricants should be stored in a dry location, preferably inside.

Particulate Contamination

Lubricant drums and pails should not be stored in areas where there is a high level of airborne particles. This is especially important when a partially used container is stored for later use.

Atmospheric Contamination

Oxygen and carbon dioxide can react with lubricants and affect their viscosity and consistency. Keeping lubricant containers sealed until the product is needed is the best protection.

Estimated Shelf Life of Base Oils and Lubricating Oils

	Maximum Shelf Life-General ¹
Finished Lubricants Products (except grease)	5 years
Chevron Neutral Oils	5 years
	Exceptions to Maximum Shelf Life-General ¹
Capella® P	2 years
Capella® WF	3 years
Cetus® DE	3 years
Cetus® EliteSyn™ NG	2 years
Clarity® Synthetic EA Gear Oils	2 years
Clarity® Synthetic EA Hydraulic Oils	2 years
Delo® Gear LS SAE 80W-90	2 years
Delo® Syn-AMT XDT SAE 75W-90	3 years
Delo® Syn-Gear HD SAE 75W-90	4 years
Delo® Syn-Gear XDA SAE 75W-85	4 years
Delo® Syn-Gear XDM SAE 75W-90	4 years
Delo® Syn-Gear XDM SAE 80W-140	4 years
Delo® Syn-Trans HD SAE 50	4 years
Delo® Syn-Trans XE SAE 75W-90	3 years
Delo® Syn-Trans XV SAE 75W-80	4 years
Gear Oils with Borate ²	
Delo® Gear ESI SAE 80W-90	2 years
Delo® Gear ESI SAE 85W-140	2 years
GST® 2190 EP	2 years
Havoline® 2-Cycle Engine Oil TC-W3	2 years
Havoline® LS Gear Lubricant SAE 80W-90	2 years
Hydraulic Oil 5606A	4 years
Industrial Oils with Fats	
Bright-Cut® NHG	1 year
Cylinder Oil W	1 year
Form Oil	1 year
Journaltex® HD 57	2 years
Metalworking Fluids (oil based)	
Bright-Cut® AH	2 years
Bright-Cut® AM	2 years
Bright-Cut® NM	2 years
Regal® SGT 22	4 years
Soluble Oil B	1 year

Estimated Shelf Life of Coolants

	Maximum Shelf Life-General ¹
Coolants (Extended Life)	8 years
Coolants (Conventional)	1.5 years
Delo® FleetFix® CMX	1 year (non-opaque containers), 3 years (opaque containers)
Delo® FleetFix® CME	1.5 years
Delo® XLI Corrosion Inhibitor- Concentrate	1 year (non-opaque containers), 3 years (opaque containers)
Delo® ELI Corrosion Inhibitor-Concentrate	1 year (non-opaque containers), 3 years (opaque containers)

¹Shelf lives are estimates. They are based on the assumption that the optimum storage conditions listed below in Recommended Storage Conditions and Practices for Lubricating Oils and Greases are used.

²Chevron Delo Gear ESI contains solid, microscopic borate particles that are suspended in oil. Because the solid particles have a higher density than oil, the particles will tend, over time, to settle toward the bottom of a stationary container. After two years, the settling may become noticeable as a white, hazy layer of additive at the bottom of the container. Chevron Delo Gear ESI Lubricants that have been stored in unopened and stationary containers for more than two years are acceptable for service as long as the container is vigorously agitated or shaken before use.

Estimated Shelf Life of Greases

	Maximum Shelf Life-years ³
Greases (mineral or synthetic)	3
Known exceptions:	
Chevron SRI® Grease NLGI 2 ⁴	2
Chevron Open Gear Lubricant Grades: 100NC, 250NC, 800NC	1

³Shelf lives are estimates. They are based on the assumption that the optimum storage conditions listed below in Recommended Storage Conditions and Practices for Lubricating Oils and Greases are used.

⁴Chevron SRI Grease NLGI 2 may be observed to develop surface cracks and oil separation when the grease is approximately six months old or older. Cracking and separation are age-related; however, lubrication performance will not be affected.

Additional Storage Condition Affecting Greases

Changes in grease properties during storage are dependent upon the thickener type and concentration, the base fluids, and the additives used. One additional condition that commonly affects greases is:

Oil Separation

Oil will naturally separate from most greases. Temperatures in excess of 110°F can accelerate oil separation. If grease is removed from a drum or pail, the grease surface should be smoothed to prevent oil separation into the cavity.

Recommended Storage Conditions and Practices for Lubricating Oils And Greases

1. Store lubricating oils and greases in a cool dry indoor area where airborne particles are at a minimum. Indoor storage also prevents label and container deterioration from exposure to weather. The ideal storage temperature range is from 32°F to 77°F.
2. If drums must be stored outside, use plastic covers or tip oil drums to direct water and contamination away from the bungs. Always store greases upright to prevent oil separation. Transformer and Refrigeration oils are highly sensitive to water and must not be stored outside.
3. When necessary, bring grease to satisfactory dispensing temperature just prior to use.
4. Rotate inventory. Check the container fill date and use the oldest container first.
5. Keep containers tightly covered or closed to avoid contamination.
6. Wipe off the tops and edges of containers before opening to avoid contamination.
7. Use clean tools and equipment when pumping or handling lubricants and greases.

Products Exceeding the Estimated Shelf Life

If you have an unopened container with a product that is beyond the estimated shelf life, it still may be suitable for service. The product should be tested and evaluated against the original product specifications. Thoroughly mix the container to ensure a uniform, representative sample is taken for testing. If the product's test results fall within the original specifications, it should be suitable for service. Following testing, if the product is not consumed within a year, the product should be earmarked for reclamation.

As a final note, the user should validate the product's performance claims against the equipment manufacturer's current specifications. Equipment designs and specifications can change over time making an old product obsolete for new equipment. Call Chevron, 1-800-LUBE-TEK, if there are questions concerning specification obsolescence.

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