

KOHLER® GENUINE OILS

Frequently Asked Questions

WHY DID KOHLER DEVELOP ITS OWN PROPRIETARY ENGINE OILS FOR GENERATORS?

We're continuously researching and developing products with high-quality standards in mind. KOHLER genuine parts have achieved high performance expectations in our different segments—industrial, mobile, marine and home, and we wanted to extend our offering to include premium synthetic engine oil. Formulated specifically for generator applications, these oils are available for use with several types of fuels.

WHAT TYPE OF OIL SHOULD I USE IN MY GENERATOR?

We've engineered oils to the specific requirements of generators based on the fuel type they use. KOHLER genuine oils were developed to last longer and work better than other oils, keeping your generator running at peak performance.

Gaseous Engine Oils

- KOHLER 5W-30 synthetic engine oil—designed for generators powered by gasoline and gaseous-fueled engines
- KOHLER 10W-40 synthetic engine oil—designed for generators powered by gaseous-fueled engines with flat tappet lifters
- KOHLER 15W-40 synthetic engine oil—designed for generators powered by gaseous-fueled engines with roller tappet lifters

Diesel Engine Oils

- KOHLER 5W-40 synthetic engine oil—designed for generators powered by diesel-fueled engines
- KOHLER 15W-40 conventional engine oil—designed for diesel engines with a history of conventional oil use

Please check your owner's manual for specific recommendations for your generator.

DOES THE TYPE OF OIL I USE IN MY GENERATOR MATTER?

Yes, the oil you select will significantly impact the reliability, durability and performance of your generator. Generators are subjected to unique conditions that are different from engines that power other applications. Temperature, load, idle time, corrosive environment and fuel type are a few of the variables to consider. Generally, the most important task of oil is to protect metal components from wear and corrosion. To do this, the engine manufacturer recommends the proper oil viscosity (thickness) to keep engine parts protected. The other consideration is temperature. Lower temperatures can cause oil to thicken, which makes equipment hard to start and decreases efficiency. High temperatures can cause the oil to thin, which leads to loss of the protective oil film. KOHLER synthetic oils are formulated with a synthetic base oil that will maintain critical viscosity and have fewer tendencies to “burn off” than many other oils. In addition, KOHLER genuine oils have special additives that give your generator increased protection against wear, enabling it to last longer. Please check your owner's manual to determine the oil recommended for your specific generator.

HOW LONG CAN MY GENERATOR RUN BEFORE I NEED TO CHECK THE OIL LEVEL?

We recommend checking the oil level every 8–24 hours of operation, depending on the size and model of the generator. Please check your owner's manual for the required inspection schedule.

HOW MUCH OIL WILL MY GENERATOR CONSUME?

Oil consumption will vary based on application and environment. Generally, the hotter the engine runs, the more oil that will be consumed. Using premium synthetic oil formulated for generator applications will protect key engine parts and substantially reduce oil consumption.



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SHOULD I CHANGE THE OIL FILTER WHEN I CHANGE THE OIL?

Yes, change the oil filter whenever you change the oil. An air filter inspection is also recommended during the oil change interval. Be sure to use KOHLER® genuine filters when replacing the oil and air filters to ensure your engine is protected.

SHOULD I ADD OIL TO MY GENERATOR BEFORE FIRST START?

Be sure to check the engine oil level prior to starting your generator system and, if needed, top it off with the appropriate KOHLER genuine oil. See your owner's manual for how to check the engine oil level.

WHEN SHOULD THE FIRST OIL CHANGE BE COMPLETED?

Please check your owner's manual for the recommended first oil change. In some cases when a break-in oil is used, the first change interval may be different than subsequent changes. When it's time to replace the break-in oil, we recommend replacing with the applicable synthetic KOHLER genuine oil.

CAN I MIX KOHLER SYNTHETIC OILS WITH CONVENTIONAL OIL?

Yes, KOHLER synthetic engine oils are fully compatible with conventional oils. When moving to full synthetic oil, drain the oil, replace the filter and refill using the appropriate KOHLER genuine oil.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SYNTHETIC AND CONVENTIONAL OIL?

Conventional (petroleum) oils are refined from crude oil that, when pumped from the ground, contains many types of hydrocarbons and impurities such as water, sulfur, nitrogen, oxygen, paraffin waxes and more. These impurities negatively impact the performance and life of the oil. Full synthetic oils are different; they are manufactured to achieve a higher level of performance. Synthetic oil contains uniform molecules without the inherent flaws and impurities that exist in conventional lubricants. Synthetic oils can be engineered for specific uses—enabling better, longer-lasting oils that can significantly increase equipment performance and longevity.

ARE THERE DIFFERENCES IN SYNTHETIC OILS?

Yes, there can be a great deal of difference in synthetic oils. Oil manufacturers can use a variety of base oils and additives when designing oil, and the performance of the oil is highly dependent on the quality and quantity of those components. KOHLER genuine oils were exclusively designed for use in your KOHLER generator and contain the finest ingredients, enabling your generator to last longer and perform better—especially when you need it most.

WHAT IF I HAVE A GENERATOR ENGINE THAT HAS BEEN USING CONVENTIONAL OIL—HOW SHOULD I SWITCH TO SYNTHETIC? ARE THERE ANY NEGATIVE SIDE EFFECTS?

When switching from conventional oil to synthetic oil, fully drain the existing oil and remove the oil filter. Replace the filter and add KOHLER genuine oil. You will immediately start seeing the performance improvement KOHLER genuine oil is providing. Older units or those with heavy deposits (sludge) in the oil pan should continue to use conventional oils like KOHLER genuine 15W-40 diesel oil.

WHAT IS THE BEST OIL TO USE IN EXTREMELY COLD TEMPERATURES?

Oils that have a prefix of 5W are formulated for use in colder temperatures. For example a 5W-40 oil will perform much better in cold temperatures than a 15W-40 oil. For cold temperatures we recommend a full synthetic, all-season engine oil such as KOHLER genuine oil. Please check your owner's manual for the oil recommended for your generator engine.

WHAT IS THE BEST OIL TO USE IN EXTREMELY HOT TEMPERATURES?

KOHLER genuine oils are formulated to maintain viscosity (stay within grade) even at very hot temperatures. In very extreme desert conditions, please contact your local KOHLER distributor or dealer for specific recommendations.

HOW CAN I PURCHASE THE CORRECT OIL FOR MY GENERATOR?

KOHLER genuine oils may be purchased from all KOHLER generator distributors and dealers. For more information about KOHLER products and KOHLER genuine parts, please visit KOHLERPOWER.com.