

# **1994 Chevy Suburban exceeds one million miles on its original engine, without any engine overhauls**

*Cars and trucks can be expensive to buy and maintain. Here's how to help yours last longer.*

When Ben Welch drove his new Chevy Suburban off the dealership lot in 1994, he was curious to see how many miles it would go by following a good maintenance routine. Per General Motors, only about one percent of Suburbans go over 250,000 miles. So, it was remarkable when Welch watched his odometer flip to one million miles earlier this year, without ever having a complete engine overhaul or the engine pulled from the vehicle for service!

As astonishing as that is, the Suburban still runs smoothly and doesn't use any more oil today than it did when he first purchased it. Here's the story of how Welch achieved this milestone plus tips from his mechanic on how you can save money on car repairs and vehicle replacements.

## **Even overheating didn't damage this engine**

Welch attributes his Suburban's longevity to two factors: He only uses American-made Conklin lubrication products in his Suburban; and his awesome mechanic, Randy Bloom, an ASE certified mechanic who holds a bachelor's degree in secondary education in automotive service technology.

When the Suburban was at about 400,000 miles, the serpentine belt broke during a long summer road trip causing the engine to overheat. After driving it for nearly two hours in this condition Welch thought he had ruined the engine. Astoundingly, it survived the overheating incident without any ring ridge wear or cylinder wall scoring from the heat.

Bloom says, "Generally, an engine that has any amount of miles at all, with any kind of wear, at the very top of the cylinder walls there's typically a ring ridge. That's where the rings on the pistons stop when it reaches the top and goes back down. With Ben's Suburban, even after the serpentine belt broke, you could take your finger and go along the top of the cylinder walls and there was no ring ridge. That was at 670,000 miles!"

On achieving this one-million-mile feat, Welch was inducted into Conklin's High Mileage Club, and was presented a framed certificate recognizing this accomplishment.

"Conklin makes hard-working products for hard-working people. We take great pride in helping Americans save money and helping their vehicles last longer. We know of a number of vehicles that have gone hundreds of thousands of miles using our products," comments Conklin Company CEO Charles W. Herbster. "We're pleased that Ben asked Randy to use a number of our products with his Suburban, including Conklin Convoy, a para-synthetic motor oil that extends the life of the engine, and also helps vehicles get better gas mileage."

## **Mechanic shares his top tips for extending your vehicle's engine life**

Bloom says regular maintenance is essential for keeping your car or truck running smoothly. His tips include:

1. **Change the oil at the manufacturer's recommended mileage intervals.** "This is extremely critical for today's newer engines with variable valve timing components and turbos."
2. **Change your antifreeze every three years.** "This will keep things lubricated properly. Ben uses Conklin Safe Radiator Conditioner in his cooling system"
3. **Fix any leaks promptly in the cooling system so the engine will not overheat.** "Heat causes friction and friction causes wear."
4. **Keeping your engine properly tuned will prolong its life.** "Most engines today will have 100,000-mile spark plugs. If a problem comes up with loss of performance, it's critical that it is taken care of properly. Ben requests Conklin's Gold Guard Plus gear lubricant for differentials, and ATF Xtra MS transmission fluid."
5. **Fuel quality can affect your engine's longevity.** "I believe you get what you pay for. Use Conklin Fuel Mate Plus fuel conditioner each time you fill up, and 4Power Fuel System Cleaner every 4,000 miles or four months."
6. **Consistently use a service shop you trust.** "Knowing a customer, their car and driving habits can be very helpful in maintaining it for a long period of time."

Cars and trucks are a big investment. Good maintenance practices can prolong their lifespan and save you money on costly repairs, and make ownership more enjoyable.