

**SIB 33 03 21**

2021-07-23

EXTERNAL OIL LEAKS FROM THE REAR AXLE DIFFERENTIAL-DIAGNOSIS AND REPAIR

This Service Information Bulletin (Revision #1) replaces SI B33 03 21 **dated July 2021**.

What's New (Specific text highlighted):

- Update to CORRECTION

MODEL

All

SITUATION

During the vehicle's operational life, normal gear oil seepage or sweating, in addition to accumulated road dust, dirt and grime under the vehicle can give an appearance that there is an active rear differential oil leak.

This is further exaggerated by residual oil that remains on the rear differential cover after maintenance services are performed.

If this visual appearance of accumulated oil on the rear differential is misinterpreted as an active engine oil leak, then unnecessary seal/gasket repairs/replacements will result.

CAUSE

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide your workshop with the information and a procedure that will help you in identifying differential oil leaks (that do require repair) vs. slight oil seepage (that do not require repair).

CORRECTION

Misting or sweating oil from the differential shaft seals and/or housing gaskets is not considered an active oil leak.

As previously announced, the BMW Warranty Department is in the process of introducing and piloting a Warranty Picture Documentation App. When it is fully introduced, this App will be the one of the tools your center will use to document active oil leaks through VIN-specific photos, this repair-related information will be used by BMW during the claim review process.

PROCEDURE

Refer to Attachment 1

PARTS INFORMATION

When a repair is necessary, please refer to the Electronic Parts Catalog (ETK/EPC), using the customer's VIN to locate the applicable replacement part numbers.

WARRANTY INFORMATION

This Service Information bulletin provides technical, diagnostic, and repair-related information.

For related information for external engine oil leak diagnosis and repairs, refer to [SI B01 10 21](#).

Eligible and Covered Work/Repairs

When used to repair a verified defect in materials or workmanship, the repair procedure information provided in this bulletin is covered under the terms of the BMW New Vehicle Limited Warranty for Passenger Cars and Light Trucks or the BMW Certified Pre-Owned Program.

To submit a claim, please following the established and applicable warranty policy and procedures (Labor/Part/Sublet – bulk materials) that apply to the repair being performed. Refer to AIR for the corresponding defect code, flat rate labor operations (including diagnosis) and flat rate unit (FRU) allowances.

Only one Main labor operation code can be claimed per repair visit.

Based on which one applies to your center, please refer to [SI B01 01 20](#) or [B01 07 20](#) for claiming your diagnosis work time, job/repair work time (WT), RO/Claim WT and/or repair explanation procedures, unless otherwise required by State law.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS BULLETIN

Technical inquiries	Submit feedback at the top of this bulletin
Warranty inquiries	Please contact the Warranty department by either using the Live Chat that's available in the Warranty Documentation Portal or through IDS by selecting Coverage, Policy, Coding Questions and Mileage Corrections
Parts inquiries	Submit an IDS ticket to the Parts Department

Supporting Materials

[picture_as_pdf B330321Attachment1.pdf](#)

EXTERNAL OIL LEAKS FROM REAR DIFFERENTIALS AND REPAIRS

Procedure

A. No repair is necessary.

Light external gear oil accumulation: Due to sweating. The output shaft seal is designed to sweat. – this is not an active oil leak, and no repair is necessary.



Example A:
Output shaft sweating

Staining and dirt accumulation around the output shaft.

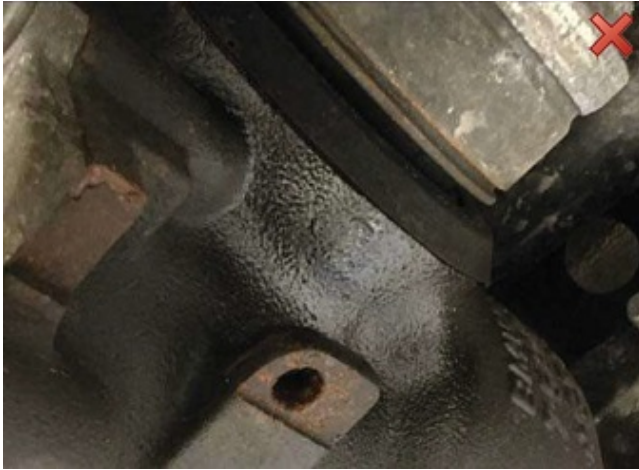
- No Repair is necessary



Example A:
Output shaft sweating

Staining and dirt accumulation around the output shaft.

- No Repair is necessary



Example A:
Output shaft sweating

Staining and dirt accumulation around the output shaft.

No Repair is necessary

B. Repair is necessary.

Medium to large external gear oil accumulation: Together with pooling, dripping and spotting – this is an active differential oil leak, and a repair is necessary.



Example B:
Oil is actively leaking out of the output shaft seal.

- **Replace the output shaft seal**

The next examples of leaks will require the cleaning of the differential followed by applying leak detection spray (PN 83 19 2 473 511). Take the vehicle for a road test and reevaluate the source of the leak and repair as necessary. Photographs will be required of the rear differential before and after the leak detection spray is applied.



Example B:

Oil is actively leaking from the differential. Clean the differential, apply leak detection spray and test drive.

- **Repair the source of the leak.**



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