

MILLERS OILS

STRATEGIC LUBRICANT CARE:

Where Reliability Drives Profitability

A guide to supporting smarter Industrial lubrication practices

OVER A THIRD OF THE WORLDS LUBRICANTS ARE USED TO KEEP INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY RUNNING

Lubricants influence far more of an industrial operation than most businesses realise. How oils are selected, used and maintained can have a direct and measurable impact on your bottom line. From preventing costly unplanned downtime and protecting machinery, to improving operator safety, staff retention, compliance and sustainability performance. As lubricant care climbs the priority list, it helps to break the challenge into three clear areas that show where small changes deliver big gains.

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WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CARING FOR A LUBRICANT?

Business priorities shift constantly, and lubrication is often one of the first things to fall off the agenda. It doesn't take a global crisis for oil checks, fluid management, or condition monitoring to slip behind production targets, staffing pressures, or urgent maintenance tasks. Yet lubricant performance is one of the few variables that influences almost every outcome on the factory floor: uptime, product quality, safety, warranty protection, component life, and even energy consumption.

Caring for a lubricant means recognising it as an asset, not a consumable. It's about treating oil as a critical part of the process rather than a cost to minimise. That includes selecting the right product for the application, storing it correctly, monitoring its condition, preventing contamination, and replacing it at the right time. When these steps are taken seriously, the lubricant does exactly what it's engineered to do - protect equipment, stabilise performance, and reduce avoidable downtime.

As lubricant specialists, we often see businesses unintentionally limit the value their oil could deliver. When lubrication is deprioritised, machines work harder, energy use increases, failures become more frequent, and maintenance becomes reactive rather than planned. Caring for a lubricant is ultimately caring for the entire operation.



WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Across the UK and Europe, unplanned downtime is projected to cost manufacturers between £124 billion and £157 billion in 2026, that's up sharply from over £80 billion in 2025.

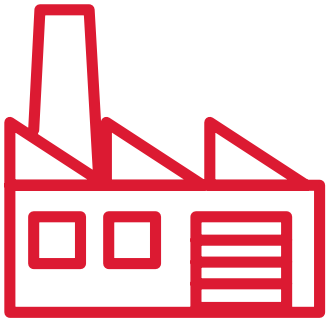
Separate UK-specific research tells the same story from a different angle: 68% of UK manufacturers experienced unplanned downtime in the past year, at a cost to the sector of up to £736 million every week. Not all of that is lubricant-related, but oil condition, contamination and incorrect specification are consistently named among the biggest preventable causes of mechanical failure.

For every hour of unplanned downtime, it costs the average UK manufacturer over £5,000. When lubrication is overlooked, that cost doesn't disappear, it resurfaces somewhere else on the balance sheet, usually as an unplanned repair bill, a missed delivery, or a warranty claim that never gets paid out.

In most plants, the difference between a costly year and a controlled one comes down to a handful of simple improvements, and lubricant care is one of the most impactful. This guide sets out three rights that help you spot the gaps in your current products, processes and supplier support. Whether you're a business owner or an engineer, thinking about lubricants across the whole operation helps you see where small, practical changes prevent the next breakdown.

Unplanned downtime costs predicted to increase by up to

95%



Unexpected downtime costs over £5K every hour

TAKING CONTROL OF LUBRICATION

Choosing a lubricant is rarely straightforward and often goes beyond the viscosity grade and specification the lubricant meets. Consideration needs to be made for your individual operating conditions, operating environment and equipment type. Introducing lubricant surveys and including lubricant care in planned maintenance schedules can significantly influence machine performance.

Degraded contaminated oil that no longer meets OEM specifications can not only effect machine performance but can also impact the final product finish and, in some cases, void an OEM warranty. Turning a covered repair into a five or six figure bill the business must absorb alone.

The effects rarely stop at the machine. A single hydraulic or gearbox failure can halt a production line, delay customer orders and put strain on a supplier relationship long after the repair itself is finished. For the individual closest to the fault, the operator who first noticed the smell, the engineer called out overnight, the maintenance manager explaining the delay to the board — the cost is measured in stress and reputation as much as in pounds.

Maintaining oil condition should be a core part of any maintenance strategy, not an afterthought bolted onto it. Regular oil sampling gives you the knowledge to prevent oil-related breakdowns before they happen, rather than explaining them after the event.



WHO'S RESPONSIBLE?

Keeping a business running smoothly is a shared responsibility, whether you're balancing the books, working the production line or sitting in the COO's chair. Management's role is to enable and train staff to be as knowledgeable as possible about the machinery they work with from mechanical understanding to health and safety practice.

The operator's role is to alert management to any change in operation: motors and pumps sound strained and work harder, a sub-standard finished product, an unusual lubricant smell, a change in oil colour, or machinery that starts to stick or run hot. Any one of these can be the earliest sign of poor-quality lubricant or a maintenance gap and the earlier it's flagged, the cheaper it is to put right.

This isn't only a financial question. HSE figures show that 124 workers were killed in work-related accidents across Great Britain in 2024/25, with 11 of those deaths in manufacturing, and a further 680,000 workers sustaining a non-fatal injury at work contributing to an estimated £22.9 billion annual cost of workplace injury and ill health. Poorly maintained machinery, sticking components, degraded seals or contaminated hydraulic systems are rarely the sole cause of an incident, but it is consistently a contributing factor. Getting lubricant care right protects the business's numbers and its people in the same move.



THE THREE RIGHTS: A LUBRICANT CARE STRATEGY

The following three rights help you build a lubricant care strategy that stands up to scrutiny from the factory floor to the boardroom.

1 Right Insight

Training is an important part of any manufacturing role, particularly as regulations change, processes evolve and machinery is upgraded. Lubricant training is no different. Understanding the right lubricant for each application and confirming it meets the specification needed, whether that's OEM-approvals, longer life for fewer oil changes, energy-efficient or performance-based, can have a significant impact on reliability and cost.

Routine oil sampling is one of the best early-warning systems available to a maintenance team. A single sample can flag wear metals, contamination and additive depletion long before they surface as a breakdown. But sampling only delivers value if the results are acted on. Regular sampling can enable you to build a picture of degradation over time enabling you to identify maintenance needs quickly and effectively, saving time and limiting costs.

Fluid Management Services save time where in-house expertise is stretched thin, providing the training and insight employees need to manage their processes and build a clear picture of what's happening inside the equipment. Industry research consistently shows that shifting from calendar based servicing to condition based monitoring can reduce unplanned downtime by 30–50% and extend component life in the process. At a national scale, that's the difference between contributing to the UK's growing downtime bill and quietly avoiding it.

For the business, the right insight means fewer surprises on the maintenance budget. For the individual, it means confidence, knowing a decision is backed by data, not guesswork the next time a machine isn't performing at its best.

Protected by Millers Oils

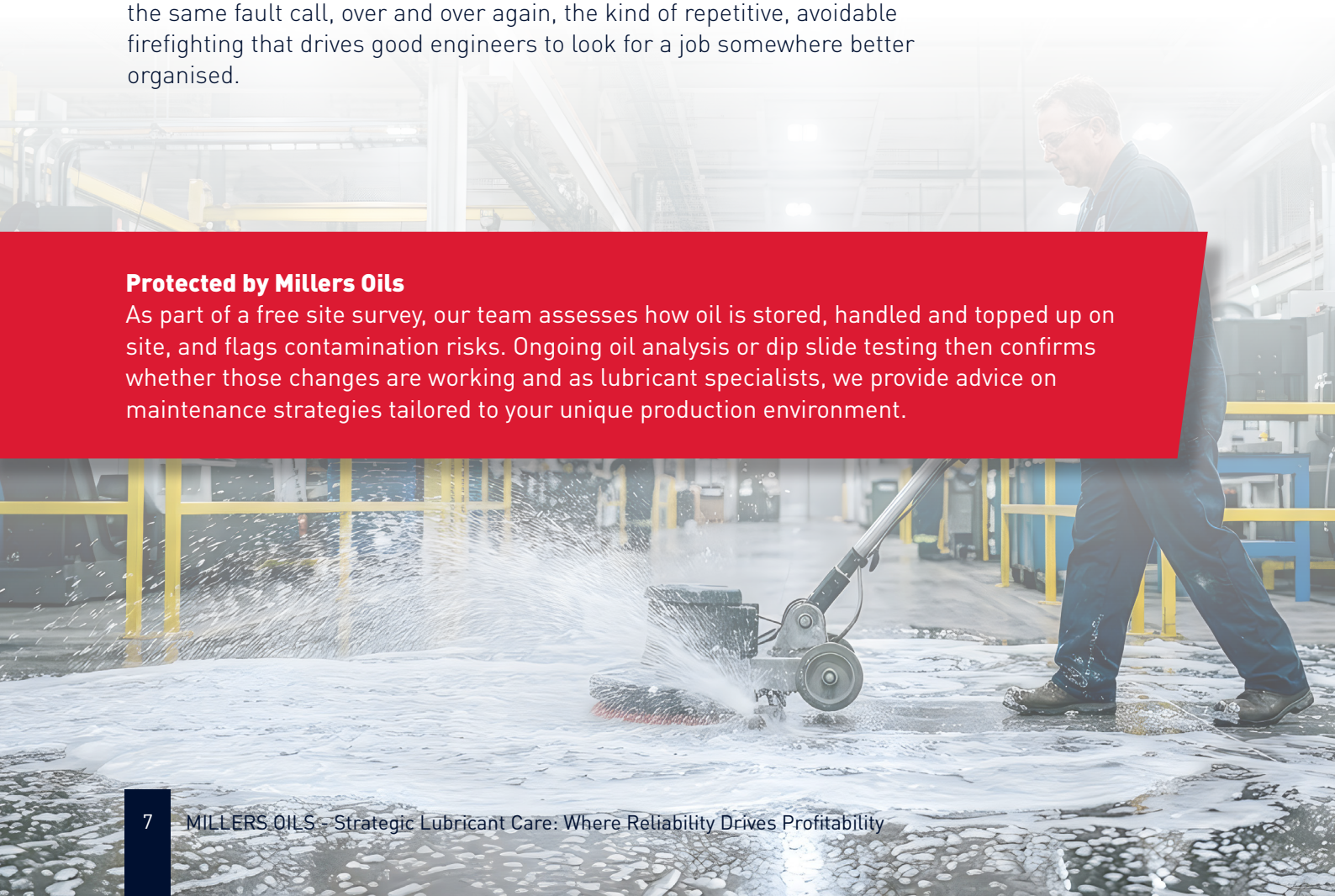
Our Vision Oil Analysis service lets you take a sample from any engine, gear or hydraulic system and our laboratory will test viscosity, contamination, wear metals and additive levels. Our specialists interpret every result and send a clear recommendation, not just a data sheet. Our Fluid Management Service takes the hassle away entirely, maintaining your oil for you while providing regular testing and insight.

2 Right Environment

Contamination such as dirt, water, air and wear debris, is consistently identified as the single biggest driver of lubricant failure, with industry estimates attributing approximately two-thirds of hydraulic breakdowns to it. When dirt, water or other pollutants get into the lubricant, they can degrade the oil speeding up wear and tear. Even small amounts of dirt or moisture can alter viscosity, accelerate oxidation and create abrasive conditions particularly inside hydraulic systems. The good news is that most contamination is environmental, not mechanical, and is therefore preventable. Clean, dry storage, sealed containers and disciplined topping-up procedures go a long way toward extending oil life and keeping unplanned maintenance off the schedule.

Contamination will occur over time but slowing it down changes the economics of the whole operation: less spent on oil and part replacement, and more time spent making a profit.

For the business, uncontrolled contamination shows up as repeat component failures, shortened oil-change intervals and creeping spend that's hard to trace to a single cause. For the individual, it shows up as the same fault call, over and over again, the kind of repetitive, avoidable firefighting that drives good engineers to look for a job somewhere better organised.



Protected by Millers Oils
As part of a free site survey, our team assesses how oil is stored, handled and topped up on site, and flags contamination risks. Ongoing oil analysis or dip slide testing then confirms whether those changes are working and as lubricant specialists, we provide advice on maintenance strategies tailored to your unique production environment.

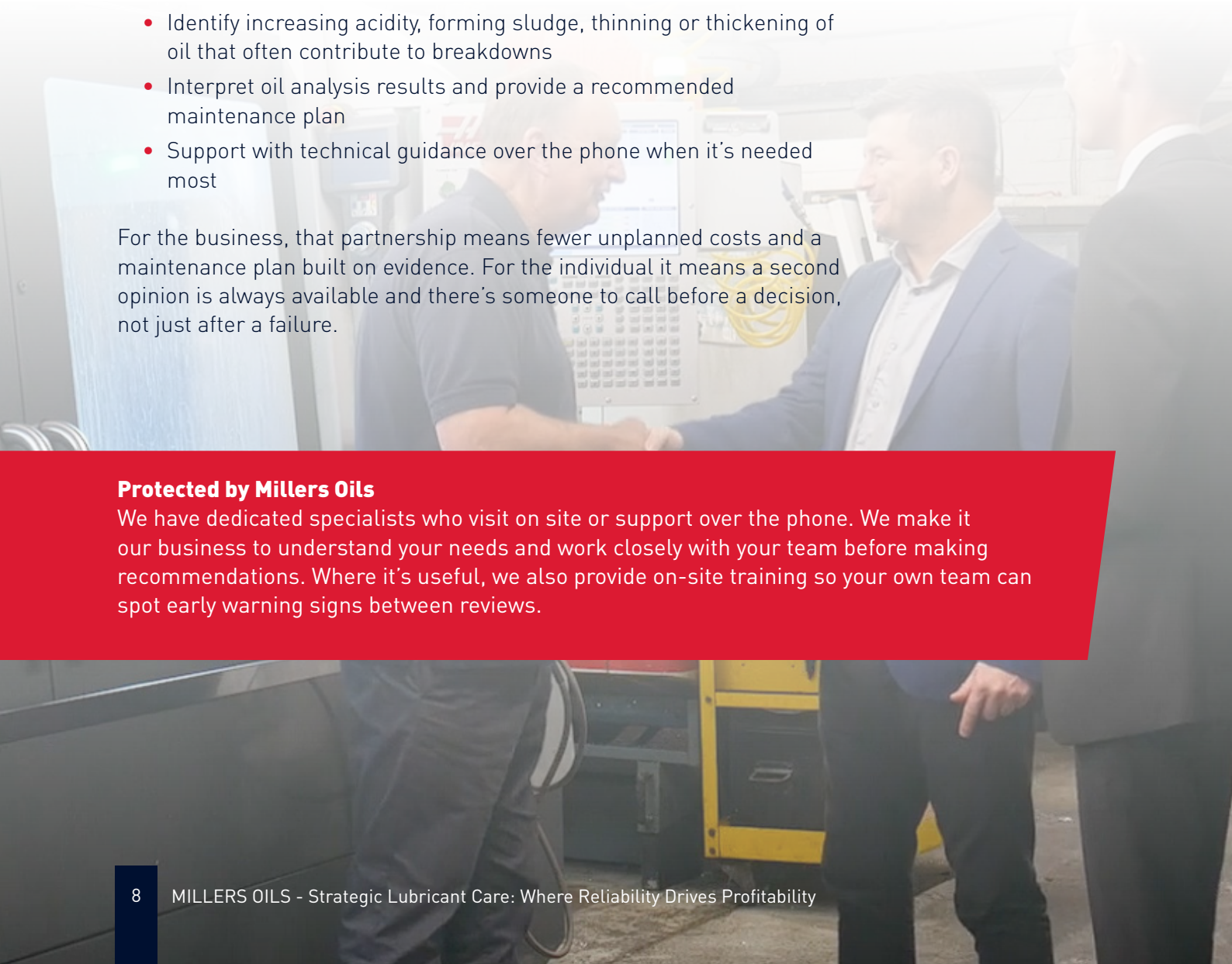
3 Right Support

Most manufacturers understand the basics — the lubricants their machines require, and the OEM specifications they should follow. But when it comes to best practice, oil maintenance and diagnosing issues before they become failures, general knowledge isn't enough. You need a lubricant specialist.

The chemistry behind a failing hydraulic system, for example, isn't obvious from a quick look at the machine. It takes an understanding of oil condition, contamination and additive behaviour to trace the real cause of a breakdown. A lubricant specialist can:

- Advise on the right lubricants and compatibility for different machines while working toward environmental, sustainability or energy goals
- The right application methods whether initial fills or top ups
- Identify increasing acidity, forming sludge, thinning or thickening of oil that often contribute to breakdowns
- Interpret oil analysis results and provide a recommended maintenance plan
- Support with technical guidance over the phone when it's needed most

For the business, that partnership means fewer unplanned costs and a maintenance plan built on evidence. For the individual it means a second opinion is always available and there's someone to call before a decision, not just after a failure.



Protected by Millers Oils
We have dedicated specialists who visit on site or support over the phone. We make it our business to understand your needs and work closely with your team before making recommendations. Where it's useful, we also provide on-site training so your own team can spot early warning signs between reviews.

NEXT STEPS: PROTECTED BY MILLERS OILS

If breakdowns are creeping up, or maintenance is costing more time and money than it used to, oil condition is the first place to look. It influences far more of the manufacturing process than most teams assume. Given the cost of the equipment it protects, the oil itself should be a priority, not an afterthought.

Protected by Millers Oils is more than a promise: it's our approach, blending technical excellence with tailored support to keep your operation running at its best. It's the assurance that your productivity, your people and your reputation are supported by a trusted technical partner.

- Trust & reliability: confidence in proven, high-quality products
- Cross-sector expertise: support that extends far beyond the drum
- End-to-end support: access to deep technical expertise
- A consultative, solutions-driven partnership: a partner invested in your long-term success

Protecting vehicles and machinery is what we do best — delivering reliability, performance and complete peace of mind across every sector we serve.



BEYOND THE PRODUCT. ACROSS EVERY SECTOR



Total Care

Premium lubricants backed by maintenance support, technical expertise and detailed oil analysis to keep your vehicles and machinery running efficiently.



Multi-Industry Expertise

Our work across diverse sectors gives us a deep understanding of fluid performance, enabling precise, innovative solutions tailored to your needs.



Direct Technical Support

Our specialists are available to discuss applications, processes and challenges, offering clear, personalised recommendations.



Fluid Management Specialists

From supply and storage to monitoring and optimisation, we manage the full lifecycle of your lubricants to reduce downtime and extend equipment life.



Vision Oil Analysis

Comprehensive testing with clear, actionable reports that help protect your equipment and reduce costs.



Brand Ambassadors

Our distributors bring local expertise and act as true brand ambassadors, proudly representing Millers Oils, with our performance demonstrated through our motorsport sponsorships.

If you've recognised a gap or two while reading this, you're not alone. Get in touch with our technical team to:

- Improve lubrication consistency across sites and shifts
- Reduce contamination risks in storage and handling
- Extend component life and defer capital replacement
- Lower unplanned downtime
- Make maintenance decisions based on real sample data, not guesswork

Sources: Fluid Power Journal; Hydraulics & Pneumatics; Machinery Lubrication; HSE, Health and Safety at Work: Summary Statistics for Great Britain, 2024/25; Fluke/Censuswide UK Manufacturing Downtime Research, October 2025; IDS-INDATA UK/EU Manufacturing Downtime Research, 2025–2026.

MILLERS OILS

At Millers Oils, we don't just supply premium-grade fluids engineered to safeguard and optimise equipment performance—we're driven by integrity to recommend solutions that genuinely serve your best interests. Our expert technical teams are well-versed in OEM performance standards and take the time to understand your machinery, operational demands, and strategic objectives. This ensures we deliver product recommendations precisely tailored to your equipment and business goals.

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