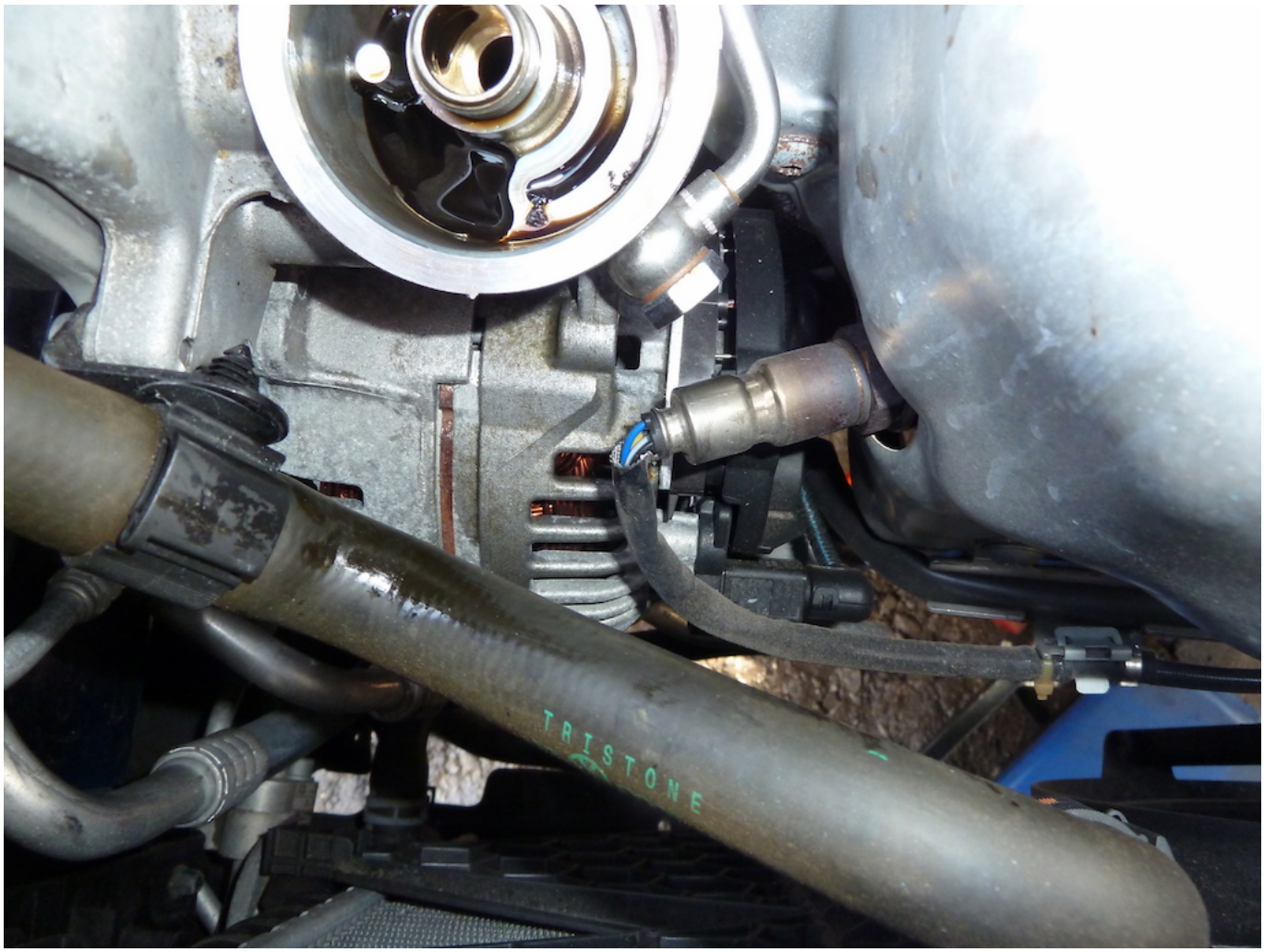
Grumpy Old Mechanic – VW design flaw that results in engine oil flowing into the alternator

Published: January 2, 2018

Author: Kim Henson

Online version:
https://www.wheels-alive.co.uk/grumpy-old-mechanic-vw-design-flaw-that-results-in-engine-oil-flowing-into-the-alternator/



Oil filter mounted just above the alternator equals bad news...

Grumpy Old Mechanic

Oil-filled Alternators – Why?

Lately in my garage establishment we have had to change the engine oil and filter on a number of recent VW/Audi Group models that have the oil filter positioned high up within the engine compartment. In terms of accessibility, this is great, with no need for fumbling around in the depths of the underbonnet compartment to reach and release the filter.

However… One wonders who dreamt up the idea of locating the oil filter immediately above the alternator, with no shield between the two? (Our photo depicts a 2013 VW Polo 1.2, as an example). As the oil filter is released from the engine, inevitably engine oil escapes and due to gravity then runs down… and all over/into the alternator. This does the unit no good whatsoever, and indeed the presence of lubricant in quantity could write it off.

In my garage we are prepared for this design anomaly, to the extent that we place rag on top of the alternator, to catch the oil before it can do any damage.

All the same, it is difficult to understand why the chaps at VW could not have foreseen such an obvious potential problem.

Here endeth today’s rant.