

**Wheels:** An e-mail from Gary says, “My F-150 is a 1999 with a 4.6 L engine and 117,000 miles on it. I have had it since it had 66,000 miles but I have never changed the spark plugs in it, nor have I changed the oxygen sensors (there are 2) and I can't see where the manual talks about changing the timing belt/chain. I think my truck has a chain rather than a belt (just never looked) so that is why the manual does not say anything about changing it. Am I right? Should I spend the money to change the plugs? They are those platinum tip kind and cost a lot times 8. So, is it worth changing them and the oxygen sensors? I don't want to spend the money if it is not going to give me any returns in mpg and etc. What do you think?”

**Halderman:** Your truck engine does use a timing chain rather than a belt and as a result, does not need to be replaced on a regular basis. Oxygen sensors normally last the life of the vehicle unless damaged by another fault, such as a defective fuel injector, excessive oil burning, or other similar fault. The spark plugs are a serviceable item and should be replaced according to the recommendations stated in the owner's manual. Most newer vehicles recommend spark plug replacement every 100,000 miles or sooner. Will new spark plugs improve the fuel economy? I don't think it can hurt and you may see a slight increase even though the engine seems to run okay now.

