



Extended Storage of Belt Drives

RMA Bulletin IP-3-4 (1997) states that acceptable storage life is 8 years. This assumes the environmental conditions are met. If a synchronous belt drive will meet those described conditions, Gates would fully expect the belt to provide full industrial service as designed, even if stored for 8 years on the drive under tension.

For many years it has been recommended by both belt and equipment manufacturers that V-belt drives undergoing extended periods of storage be handled differently. If the storage time before the drive is used is greater than 6 months or so, it is a good policy to remove the tension from the belt(s) in order to prevent significant belt set to take place. Dependent on many factors such as drive design, storage environment, maintenance practices, etc., it is possible to do serious damage to the belts when starting such a drive, if the belt has taken a set and/or lost statically some of its belt tension.

Storage policy is typically not applicable to synchronous belts since they are a positive drive system and the belts use high modulus, low growth cords so tension loss is not seen in the belts.

For either V-belt or synchronous drives, periods of extended storage should take into account rusting of the hardware (pulleys). If the pulleys are coated with anything they will need to be cleaned prior to starting up the drive, particularly the belt/pulley working surfaces.