

# Fall Car Care...

## Don't be left stranded Avoid breakdowns this winter

Bad weather can leave motorists stranded if they don't prepare their vehicles for harsh operating environments, the Hamilton Automobile Club reports.

Breakdowns occur when the anti-freeze runs low or is weak, oil changes are delayed, and belts and hoses age beyond their intended life span. Worn tires are another common problem.

HAC's Emergency Road Service professionals usually can predict when the busiest times for breakdowns will be.

For example, more motorists call for help during extreme cold and/or wet conditions. Bad weather, especially if accompanied by extreme temperatures, is a sure sign that road service calls will increase.

### Maintenance tips

Based on a review of road service calls, HAC makes the following suggestions for avoiding problems:

- Inspect your vehicle's fluids, tires, belts and hoses once a week.
- Have mechanical problems taken care of as soon as they are noticed.
- Don't let aged cars or vehicles with older batteries sit unused for several days.
- Keep an extra unmarked car key in your purse or wallet and keep a spare key at home where it can be easily retrieved.
- Make double-checking for your car key an automatic part of exiting your vehicle.

As part of a normal maintenance routine, check the fluid level in the master cylinder once a month and add the fluid specified in the vehicle owner's manual.

Some common brake system components and maintenance requirements follow:

- Master Cylinder — Brake fluid reservoir should be checked periodically to ensure proper fluid level.
- Brake Lines — Steel brake tubing running from the master cylinder to all four wheels should be inspected for leaks caused by damage and rust.
- Brake Hoses — Rubber brake hoses running from the brake lines to the brake calipers and wheel cylinders should be inspected for wear and cracking.
- Lining and Pads — Brake components that create friction and dissipate heat should be checked for uneven or excessive wear. Glazing or saturation from brake fluid or grease are other potential problems.
- Parking Brakes — Emergency or parking brake should be inspected and, if necessary, adjusted.
- Bearings and Seals — Wheel bearings should be inspected and lubricated as part of an annual brake check. Seals should be inspected for a proper fit.

## How to protect your car from theft

Just as shoplifting is an unseen cost in the price of merchandise, car theft contributes to the rising cost of owning an automobile. More than \$2 billion a year are added to the costs of owning a car through higher insurance premiums.

The following information provides helpful hints on how to protect yourself and your car from thieves.

If you are shopping for a used car, do not buy one "off the street" or from a "new" used car lot. Go to a reputable dealer. If you innocently purchase a stolen vehicle and it is identified and traced to you, you are lawfully bound to return it to the rightful owner. You will most likely lose your purchase dollars and your transportation.

Next, let's discuss keys. Some owners are very careless with their car keys. Do not hide extra keys under the hood, front seat, floor mat, fender, etc. If you fear locking yourself out and your keys in, carry an extra set of keys with you.

Another bad habit is that of leaving the keys in the ignition and/or letting the engine run while you complete a quick errand. Always

remove your keys to protect yourself from loss and liability should your stolen vehicle be involved in an accident. If your car breaks down, remove your keys while going for help. A thief may be able to start our car even if you cannot.

You have probably seen advertisements about the gadgets available to deter car thieves. That is exactly what they do — deter. A determined car thief will not be stopped. If he wants your car, he'll find a way to get in. However, anything that discourages a thief may cause him to reconsider. Perhaps if it takes so much time and trouble, you'll convince him it's not worth the effort. The longer it takes to steal your car, the less likely a thief is to steal it.

Another action you can take to

protect your car is to have a secret means of identification should your car be stolen. One of the easiest is to drop your business card in the slot between the door and the window. Another is to mark your initials in hidden places on the motor, accessories, transmission, interior etc.

Everything you do to reduce car theft will help you control the cost of owning an automobile. More than a million cars a year are stripped and/or stolen. You're paying for the loss and damage to those cars through your insurance premiums.

Should you become the victim of a car thief, here is a list of information you will be asked to provide about your vehicle:

Make, year, model, and colour; vehicle identification number, peculiarities or secret markings, license number and state, insurance company, name of finance company holding title, place of purchase, year of purchase.

It would be wise for every car owner to have these answers recorded and kept in a safe place in case of auto thefts.



## Plan for winter — prepare a survival kit

You know it's going to make its grand entrance soon enough, blowing onto the local stage and playing until past the official end of its run in March. In Canada, there's no business like snow business — though everything about it isn't quite appealing.

There's a lot to do to get your car and home ready for winter. To make the process as smooth as ice, consider these suggestions.

• Before you find yourself skidding and stalling, get your car tuned up for the season. Give your engine, brakes and fluids the once over, and mount proper snow tires. Keep your windshield washer fluid topped up, and carry a spare container, as battling slush can drain your tank in no time.

• The trunk is also the place for your winter "survival kit," the equipment and supplies that are essential for day-to-day weather, or if you're stuck or strand-

ed. The basics include an ice scraper and brush, a shovel, booster cables, and items for traction (sand, salt, kitty litter, or traction pads).

• A flashlight and flares are invaluable if you're in trouble at night or need to alert help. Depending on where you drive and how far you might be from a service station or other help, you might want to carry extra fuses, radiator hoses and fan belts; a towline or chain; and an axe or hatchet.

• Blankets, sleeping bags, extra clothing and non-perishable food don't take up a lot of room, and can be lifesavers if you're stranded for any length of time. Keeping a first aid kit in the car is a must in any weather.

If you're a fan of winter, you're probably excited about its arrival. Others can only hope that for once the snow starts late and closes early.

# ALMAND'S AUTO

305 ARMSTRONG AVE.

877-9981

for Your  
Car's Sake



## FALL SPECIAL

Receive A FREE

LUBE, OIL, FILTER (valued at approx. \$28.00)

with Fall Tune-Up

including Fuel Injection Service

Most Domestic Cars & Light Trucks

Offer Good Until Nov. 30/94 with this ad



## MCEACHERN STEERING SPECIALTIES INC.

- Steering - Suspension •
  - Front & Rear Alignment •
  - After Collision Alignment • 4 X 4 Alignment •
  - Front Wheel Drive Service & Alignment •
  - On-Vehicle Balancing •
  - Ford Truck Twin I-Beam Bending •
  - Springs • Shocks • Balljoints • Etc. •
- Call Bill McEachern - 877-9411

33 Armstrong Ave., Georgetown

## KIYO'S Japanese Car Service

THE JAPANESE CAR SPECIALISTS

• GUARANTEED SERVICE  
• FREE PICK-UP & DELIVERY  
IN GEORGETOWN

Service:  
• TOYOTA • HONDA  
• MAZDA • SUBARU  
• HYUNDAI • SUZUKI  
• NISSAN

MORE THAN  
20 YEARS EXPERIENCE

Call 873-0550

21 Mill Street, Georgetown