











Drivers who treat their cars well can expect to get as much in return from their vehicles. Harsh weather coupled with less-than-ideal roadways typically take their toll on a vehicle, and it's up to drivers to help their cars withstand the elements and make it to spring in drivable condition. There are several ways drivers can prepare their vehicles for the months ahead.

- * Address your antifreeze. Antifreeze protects vehicles when the weather outside is frightful. Not every antifreeze is created equal, and inadequate antifreeze can cause water pump failure and even a cracked engine block. Drivers often fail to monitor their antifreeze levels throughout the winter, which can hurt their cars and might even be harmful to the environment. Traditional ethylene glyco antifreezes have a sweet smell and taste that attracts animals and, if ingested, can harm wildlife or household pets. Propylene glycol antifreeze does not boast a sweet smell or taste, and though safe if ingested, reduces the likelihood that animals will be drawn to it.
- * Check the vehicle's charging system. Car batteries are forced to work harder in cold weather, making it easier for a battery to die when the mercury drops. To avoid being stranded in the cold, ask your mechanic to check the vehicle's charging system to ensure the battery is ready for the cold months ahead.
- * Don't tread lightly. Tire treads are especially important during the colder months, when icy or snow-packed roads make driving a dangerous undertaking. Tires with adequate traction are better equipped to handle roads that might be covered in ice, dirt or grime from sand and salt trucks. Check tire pressure regularly, and always inflate tires to the manufacturer-recommended PSI. PSI ratings can often be found on the driver's side door.







