

The Canadian Champion

WINTER CAR CARE GUIDE

Prepare Now For Safe Winter Driving

Your car needs winterizing as much as your house does if you expect it to provide hassle-free transportation during cold winter months.

Some simple precautions and preventive care can make sure your vehicle will carry you to work each blustery winter day.

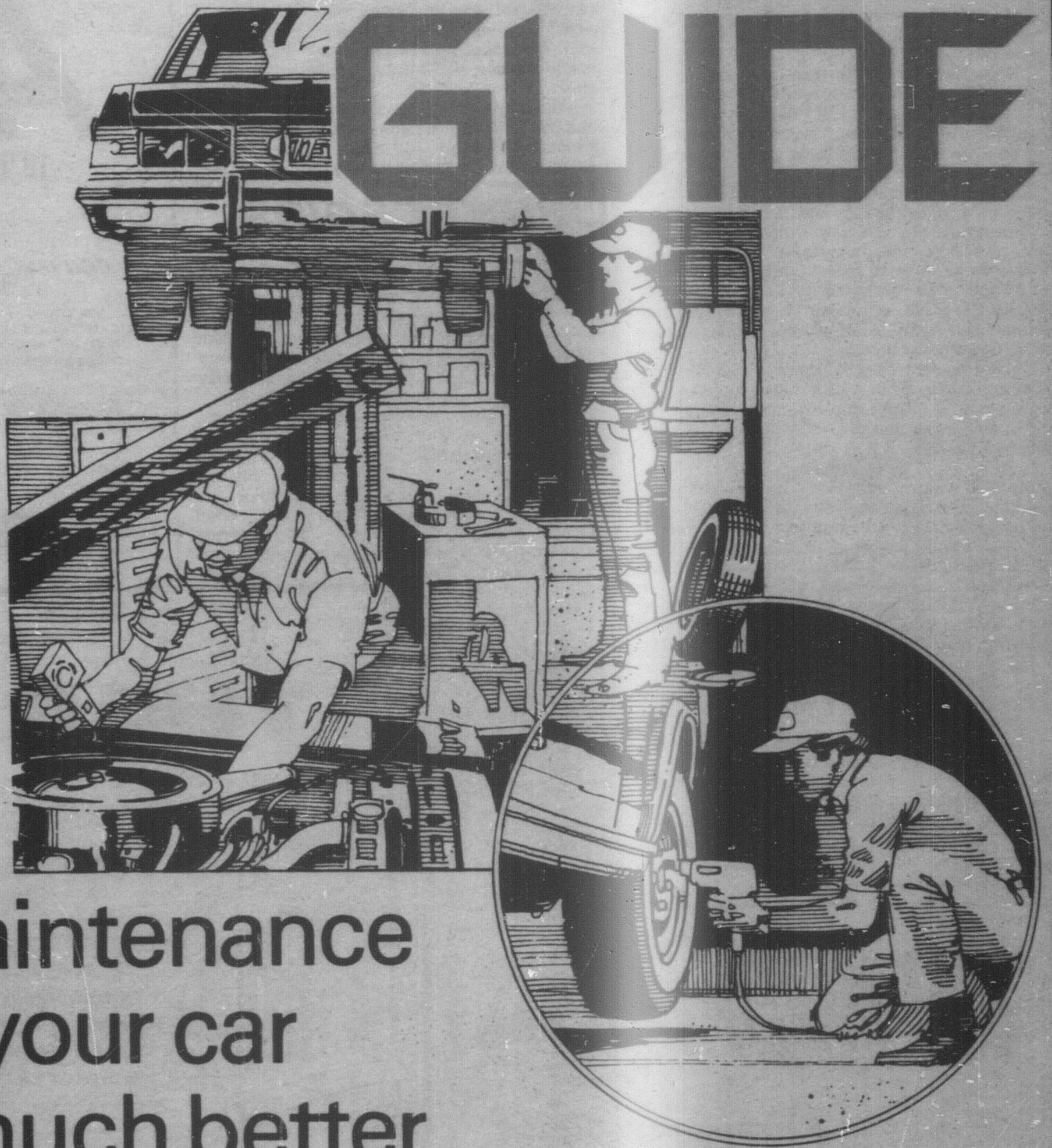
Winter driving is tougher on your vehicle than summer traveling. In addition to the obvious dangers to its finish from corrosives like salt and sand, your car's engine needs protection from the cold in the form of the correct viscosity motor oil.

Use Lower Viscosity Oil

Most vehicle manufacturers recommend either a 5W-30 or a 10W-30 weight motor oil for 4-cylinder and 6-cylinder engines used in cold climates.

To determine which oil you should use, estimate the lowest winter temperature in your area. Then check your vehicle owner's manual for its lubricant recommendations and choose the viscosity recommended for that temperature.

If you don't change your oil to a lower viscosity (5W-30, 5W-40, 10W-30 or 10W-40) oil before the weather turns to zero, your engine may be damaged.



Proper maintenance will keep your car running much better

It wasn't too many years ago that the automobile needed an oil change and lubrication every 1,600 kilometres (1,000 miles). Owners then were quite religious about following the routine because the scheduled interval occurred so often it was easy to remember.

Today's cars have lube and oil change intervals of 9,600 kilometres (6,000 miles) and 12,000 kilometres (7,500 miles), and the improvement has resulted in many owners forgetting proper care. Too many vehicles are being neglected, compounded because so many are using self-service gasoline stations.

The cars today have unsurpassed reliability, another factor causing the motorist to overlook proper maintenance, but no mechanical product can go forever without care, something is going to have a premature failure, but that can be avoided by following the recommended maintenance schedule and by taking a few

minutes a month to give the car a "drive-way inspection."

Start with the engine compartment. Open the hood and check the following:

Oil—If you have to add some, use the same grade used when the oil was changed.

Belts—Be sure they have enough tension and that they are not frayed or cracked. Have them replaced before they cause a problem on the road.

Hoses—Squeeze them and if they are too soft it's time to have them replaced. Otherwise, they might give out when driving, with a loss of radiator coolant.

Air Cleaner—Remove it and make sure the baffles are not clogged. Replace if dirty to permit proper air flow to the carburetor.

Radiator Coolant—Don't remove the cap when the engine is hot. The coolant shouldn't be rusty and should be checked for temperature tolerance during cold

weather.

Battery Water—Some batteries appear to be sealed but are not, so don't be misled. Look for small slots in the cover which can be popped up with a screwdriver for filling. Clean off any corrosion at the posts.

Other Fluids—Check the levels for the automatic transmission, power steering, brake master cylinder and the windshield washer.

Then go around the car and inspect these items:

Tires and Wheels—Check inflation pressure, including the spare. Look for excessive wear, cuts, stones in the tread and uneven wear, which could signal the need for an alignment. Look on the inside of the wheels to see if brake fluid is leaking. Check the shock absorbers for leaks at the same time.

Lights—Turn on the headlights and have someone switch on the high beam while you watch. Do the same with the turn

signals, front and rear, and with the taillights. All of the bulbs, including the headlights are easy to replace.

Wipers—Squirt some fluid on the windshield and run the wipers. If they streak, miss portions of the window, or if they chatter, it's time to replace the blades. Chattering also could indicate that the tension on the arms should be adjusted.

Fluid Leaks—The H.A.C. has an interesting way to "read" the driveway if there are leaks from the car. The location of the spots will help determine the source. Noting the colour also will help. Black or dark brown will be engine oil or rear axle fluid. Automatic transmission fluid usually will have a red tint. Greenish water is antifreeze, which signals a leak in the cooling system.

Exhaust System—As you walk behind the car, shake the tail-pipe but not if it's hot—to determine that the clamps are firm.