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Gear Up Your Steering for Springtime Drives

(MS) — For many of us, the arrival of spring heightens our desires to get out and eliminate the remnants of winter "cabin fever." Whether it's a weekend getaway to the country or a trip to visit the kids at college, the roads will be filled with drivers looking to shake the winter blues. Buckling seat belts, keeping a safe distance between the car in front and using directionals all are precautions commonly associated with safe driving. However, when it comes to making sure that the car's systems are in safe working order, many of us fall short.

Most people probably have never looked deeply into the innards of our car to examine the steering system. Unlike warning indicators for antilock brakes and low fuel, modern automotive systems can't alert the driver to an absence of fluid in the power steering system.

The following is a guide to help you examine your power steering system, which should be performed on a monthly basis.

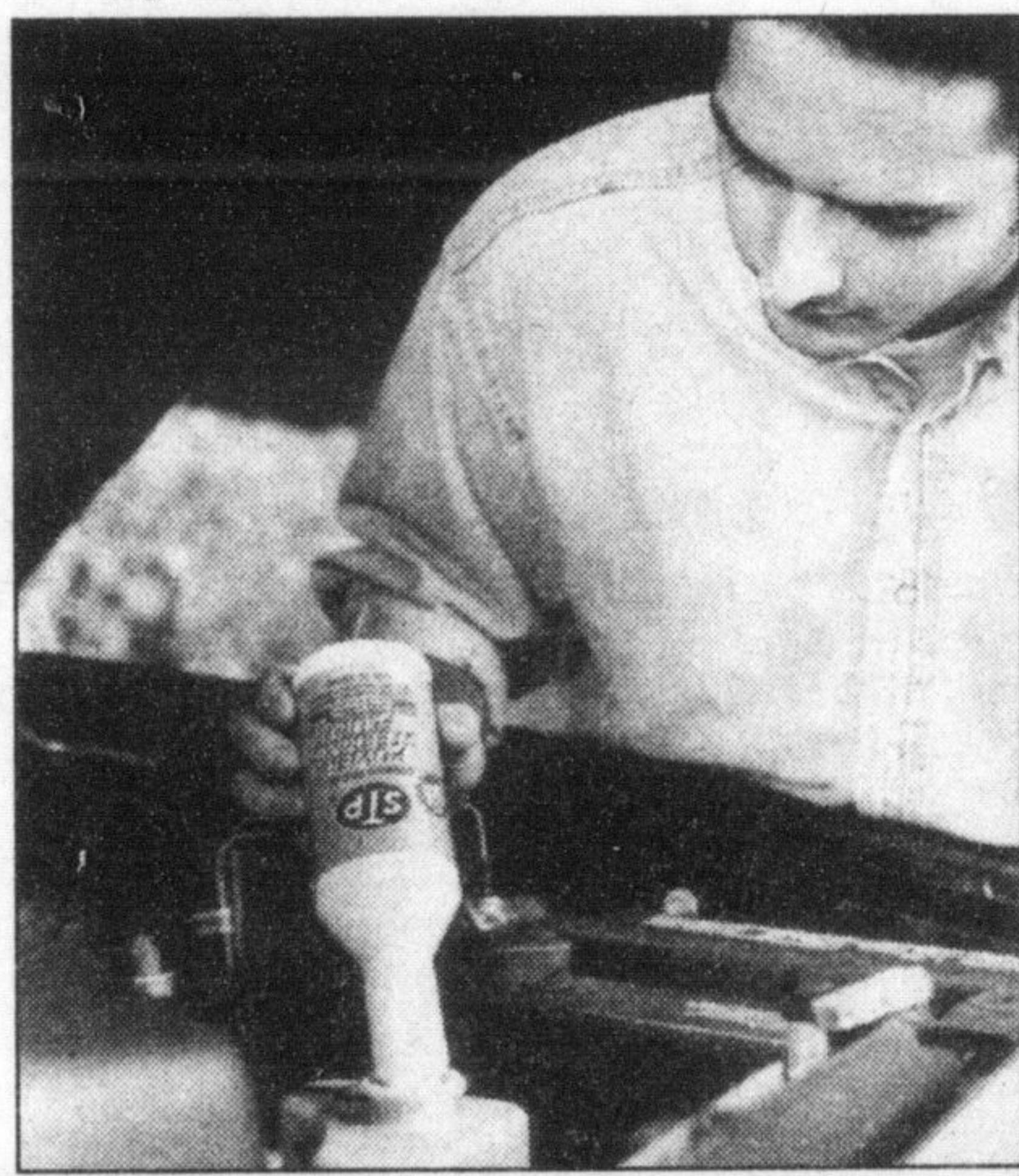
Power steering fluid is the lifeblood of a vehicle's steering. An improper level can make steering difficult, can cause squealing and vibration, and possibly shorten the life of expensive components. Using your owner's manual, locate the power steering reservoir, a belt-driven assembly usually located on the driver's

side of the engine, and remove any surface dirt or grime that could contaminate the fluid. Examine the hose connections for leaks — if leaks are found, have the vehicle looked at by a professional. Don't take chances with your steering!

Next, twist the filler cap and remove it. Find the attached dipstick and wipe it with a clean rag. Reinsert the dipstick, pull it out and check the level (it may be a good idea to repeat for an accurate reading). If the car recently was driven, the fluid level should register at the "full hot" level (if the car is cold, make sure it's at "full cold"). If not, fill the reservoir with a quality power steering fluid like STP® Universal Power Steering Fluid, formulated for all foreign and domestic cars, light trucks and sport utilities, and even meets tough Honda high-temperature standards. Check the level, fasten the reservoir filler cap, and you're done!

"Most people get really nervous when it comes to automobile maintenance," says Peter Jardine, STP group product manager. "The fact is, checking your power steering fluid is not only an important safety precaution, but can be performed relatively easily when you know how. When adding fluid to the system, it's important to use a quality fluid, like STP Universal Power Steering Fluid, that provides you with great

high- and low-temperature performance for effective steering response."



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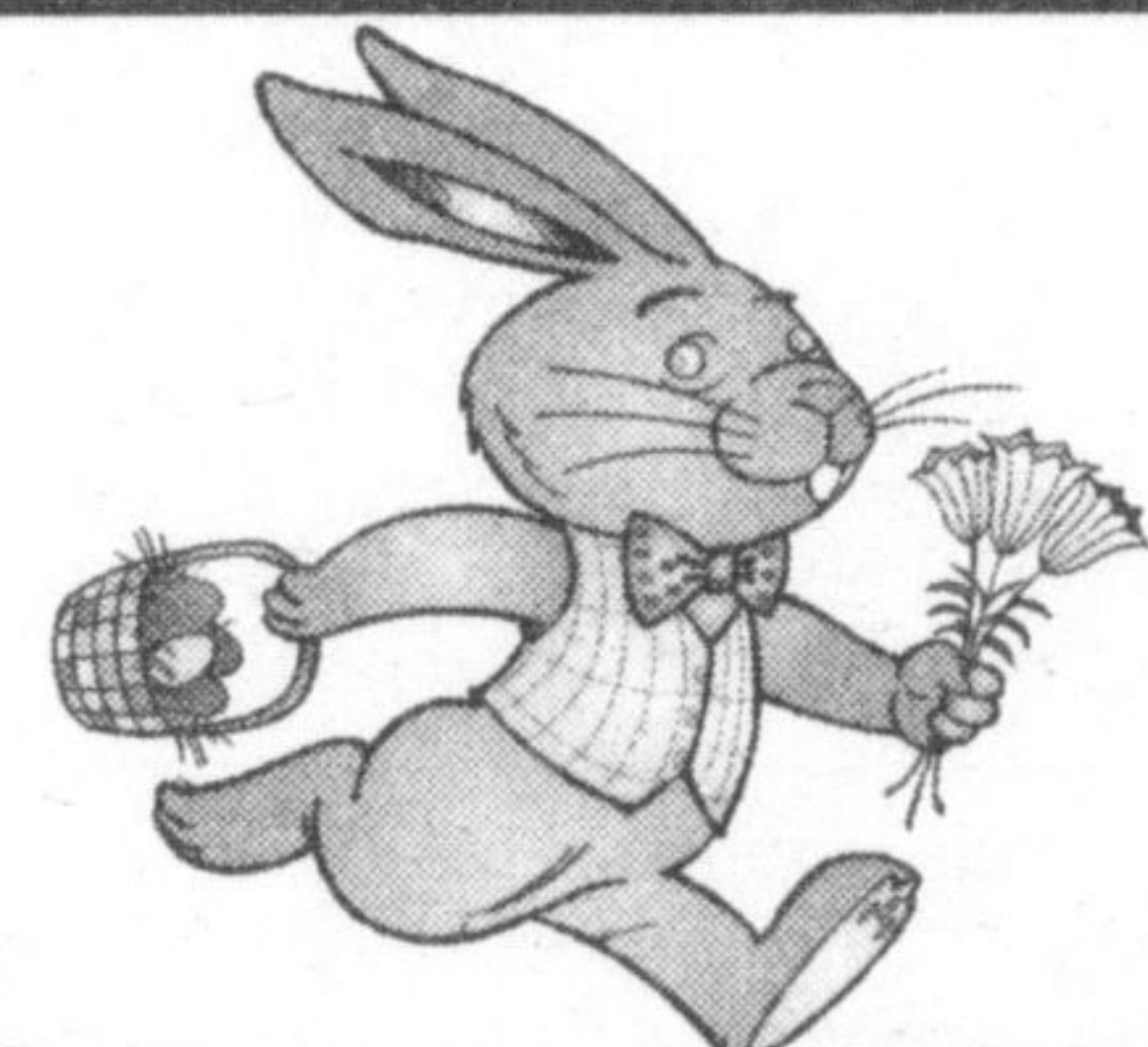
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for the

FRIDAY ISSUE (MARCH 29)

will be bumped up to

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27
AT 11 A.M.**

All other deadlines will go back to
normal on Monday, April 1, 2002

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