

Opinion Editorial #1

April is National Car Care Month *Basic Maintenance Helps Avoid Costly Repairs Down the Road*

Date

Dear Editor,

National Car Care Month in April is the time of year to give your car some extra attention. Basic maintenance can go a long way toward improving the safety and dependability of your vehicle, plus it helps avoid costly repairs down the line. The Car Care Council recommends 10 basic maintenance procedures to keep your car operating at its best:

- **Check the oil, filters and fluids** should be checked regularly. Oil should be changed per the owner's manual recommended intervals. Your car's filters need regular inspection and replacement.
- **Inspect hoses** at each oil change and have them replaced when leaking, brittle, cracked, rusted, swollen or restricted.
- **Check the brake system** every year and have the brake linings, rotors and drums inspected at each oil change.
- **Check that the battery connection** is clean, tight and corrosion-free. If it is three years old or more, the battery should be tested and replaced if necessary.
- **Inspect the exhaust system** for leaks, damage and broken supports or hangers if there is an unusual noise. Exhaust leaks can be dangerous and must be corrected without delay.
- **Schedule a tune-up** that will help the engine deliver the best balance of power and fuel economy and produce the lowest level of emissions.
- **Check the car's heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC)** system as proper heating and cooling performance is critical for interior comfort and for safety reasons, such as defrosting.
- **Inspect the steering and suspension system** annually, including shock absorbers and struts, and chassis parts, such as ball joints, tie rod ends and other related components.
- **Check the pressure of all tires**, including the spare, at least once a month. Check the tread for uneven or irregular wear and cuts and bruises along the sidewalls. Have your car's alignment checked at least annually to reduce tire wear and improve fuel economy and handling.
- **Test exterior and interior lights** and have bulbs that are not working checked immediately. Replace windshield wiper blades every six months or when cracked, cut, torn, streaking or chattering for optimum wiping performance and safety.

To help you drive smart and save money, visit www.carcare.org and check out the free digital Car Care Guide.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Your Title

Your Company/Association

Your Phone Number

