



CAR CARE CORNER

All Auto Shops Are Not Created Equal

(NAPSA)—As the weather gets colder, vehicle owners should turn their attention to automotive maintenance. But busy lifestyles and today's increasingly complex, computer-enhanced vehicles mean many consumers will be shopping for professional auto services rather than doing the work themselves.

The following tips, from the non-profit National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE)—the group that tests and certifies automotive technicians—will help you choose wisely among the many automotive repair facilities:

- Start shopping for a repair facility before you need one;
- Ask your friends and associates for their recommendations; consult local consumer groups;
- Arrange for alternate transportation in advance so you will not feel forced to choose a shop based solely on location;
- Look for a neat, well-organized facility, with vehicles in the parking lot equal in value to your own and modern equipment in the service bays;
- Look for a courteous staff, with a service consultant or technicians willing to answer your questions;
- Look for policies regarding estimated repair costs, diagnostic fees, guarantees, acceptable methods of payment, etc.;
- Ask if the repair facility specializes or if it usually handles your type of repair work;
- Look for signs of professionalism in the customer service area



Look for this sign to find repair facilities that employ automotive technicians with nationally recognized credentials.

such as civic, community or customer service awards;

- Look for evidence of qualified technicians: trade school diplomas, certificates of advanced course work and certification by ASE indicate the presence of professional, trained technicians;

- Look for the ASE sign. Facilities with a high percentage of ASE-certified professionals may also be members of the Blue Seal of Excellence Recognition program; and

- Reward good service with repeat business and customer loyalty.

Visit www.ase.com for more information about ASE-certified professionals.