

Be Car Care Aware™

Don't Forget To Check Your Antifreeze

(NAPSA)—One of the easiest, yet important, ways to prepare your vehicle for winter driving is to inspect the level and freshness of your vehicle's antifreeze.

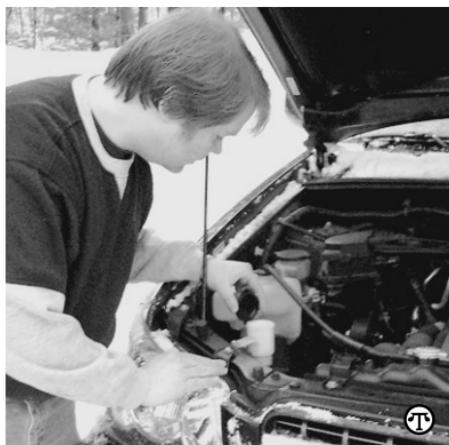
"Cooling system failure is the leading cause of engine-related breakdowns, which can cost thousands of dollars and leave you and your family stranded at the worst possible time," said Rich White, executive director of the Car Care Council.

The Car Care Council recommends that motorists check their antifreeze every 12 months or 12,000 miles to help protect the engine from freezing and overheating, as well as from rust and corrosion damage.

"Inspecting and maintaining your vehicle's cooling system takes just a few minutes of your time and costs very little, whether you do it yourself or have it performed by a service technician," White said.

To check the level of antifreeze/coolant, you will need a few basic service tools and an antifreeze ball tester, which is available at your local auto parts store. Always make sure the engine and coolant system are cool before you begin. Opening a hot radiator or coolant reservoir/overflow tank can cause severe burns. If the antifreeze/coolant is low, add a 50/50 mix of approved antifreeze and distilled water. If you changed your antifreeze recently, but your level is low, use the antifreeze ball tester to make sure the antifreeze-to-water ratio is correct.

The most common formulation of antifreeze is green in color and uses ethylene glycol as a base with anti-corrosion additives mixed in. Ethylene glycol lowers



HIGH ON YOUR maintenance list should be checking the antifreeze, which lowers the freezing point and raises the boiling point of the radiator fluid.

the freezing point and raises the boiling point of the radiator fluid. In other words, it keeps the water from freezing on very cold days and from boiling over on hot days. Over time, these additives wear out, lessening their ability to protect vital engine and cooling system metals against rust and corrosion. Your vehicle's owner's manual will provide antifreeze usage specifications.

This is also a good time to inspect and replace any bad cooling system hoses. Check for leaking, brittle, spongy, cracked or rotted hoses, as well as to make sure that the radiator hose clamps are tight to prevent leaks at the connections.

The Car Care Council is the source of information for the "Be Car Care Aware" consumer education campaign promoting the benefits of regular vehicle care, maintenance and repair to consumers. To obtain a free service interval schedule, visit www.carcare.org.