



CAR CARE CORNER

Get Your Car Ready For Cold-Weather Driving

By Mark Salem

(NAPSA)—Frigid temperatures and poor road conditions won't leave you out in the cold or take a toll on your vehicle if you take the right steps to make sure your car is winter-weather ready.

Here are a few simple suggestions that should help steer you in the right direction.

Crank up the heat. Don't wait until snow is on the ground



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or frost is on your windshield to test out your heater and defroster. Exercise all the heater and defrost settings before winter weather strikes to make sure that they are working properly and address any problems immediately. Your comfort and that of your passengers depends on it.

Check your oil. During winter, you need an oil that can handle low temperatures and quickly flow to critical engine parts on those cold mornings. A fully synthetic oil such as Mobil 1 is ideal for the winter months; it's designed to flow well even in lower temperatures and is an excellent oil overall. (For more information about Mobil 1, go to www.mobiloil.com.)

Test your tires. Your tire pressure will go down as the weather cools, so make sure your tires are inflated properly. Too lit-



DON'T GET LEFT OUT IN THE COLD—
When the temperature drops, you need an oil that can handle low temperatures.

tle pressure will increase wear and increase your fuel consumption; too much pressure can reduce traction, especially in icy conditions. The proper air pressure listings are often found on the side of the driver's door or in your owner's manual. Make sure you also inspect your treads and replace any tires that look worn.

Stock the trunk. It's always smart to be prepared, so make sure you keep a few useful items in your trunk. I'd recommend including a small shovel to help dig out of snow, an ice scraper to clear windows, headlights and taillights of snow and ice and a bag of sand to add weight and improve traction while driving in winter weather. It's also a good idea to keep a set of jumper cables in your car to help get you back on the road if your battery dies. Finally, throw an extra blanket,

hat, gloves and some high-energy snacks in the trunk, just in case. A gallon of drinking water isn't a bad idea either.

Allow extra time at start-up. Let your vehicle warm up before hitting the highway. Allowing the engine to idle for a few seconds before driving off will ensure proper oil flow and lubrication. That said, don't allow the engine to idle for a prolonged period after start-up in cold weather. This doesn't do anything to warm drivetrain components and wastes fuel. After starting your car and allowing it to idle for a short time, just drive easily for several miles to ensure proper vehicle warm-up. A simple rule of thumb is if your car is a 1990 model or older, allow it to idle no longer than 3 or 4 minutes. For newer vehicles, a minute or 2 is all you need.

Don't forget to make time for your vehicle this winter. Proper maintenance and preparation will help ensure that you and your passengers don't get caught out in the cold.

For more tips on vehicle maintenance, visit www.mobiloil.com.

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