

Auto Safety Report

Check “The Safety Triangle” For Safer Driving

(NAPSA)—Preventing and avoiding accidents is easier if drivers take a few simple steps to keep their vehicle’s safety system in top condition.

The Car Care Council reports 5.2 percent of all motor vehicle accidents could be avoided if drivers practiced proper vehicle maintenance—this includes regular oil changes and once-a-year checks of what is referred to as The Safety Triangle.

According to Bob Bondurant, a leading authority on advanced driving skills and auto-safety, The Safety Triangle is a key safety system in any vehicle and contains the components that are most important in avoiding accidents: shocks, brakes and tires.

“Braking and stopping quickly compresses a vehicle’s shocks and springs, and expands the front tire patches. Properly working shocks give you good traction and let you stop safely,” Bondurant explains. “That’s why it’s so important to get your shocks and the rest of The Safety Triangle checked by an ASE-certified mechanic every year or 12,000 miles.”

In addition, Bondurant suggests that if vehicle owners find they need to replace any components of The Safety Triangle, they use only name brand parts.

Recently, Bondurant teamed up with the makers of Monroe shock absorbers to spread the word about The Safety Triangle. They hope to make drivers aware of the link between vehicle maintenance and vehicle safety.

Bondurant recommends the following tests as an easy way for drivers to test their vehicles’ Safety Triangles at home:

• **Shocks—The Bounce Test.** Shocks are key to vehicle safety. They play a crucial role in keeping a vehicle’s tires in contact with the



“The bounce test” is a way for drivers to check their vehicles’ shocks from home.

road. To check a vehicle’s shocks, push down on the front and rear bumpers and let go. If the vehicle comes up quickly and does not bounce, the car is probably fine. If the vehicle bounces more than once, it may be time to see a mechanic.

• **Brakes—Stop For Safety.** The same amount of pressure applied to the brake pedal should stop a vehicle smoothly and evenly every time it is pressed. If a driver notices that the brake pedal requires more pressure to stop the vehicle than usual, it may be a good idea to take it in for inspection.

• **Tires—Don’t Take Treads Lightly.** Drivers can inspect their vehicles’ tires at home by inserting a dime or a nickel into the treads at various points on the tire. The tread should come up to at least half of the coin’s height. Also, Bondurant recommends regularly inspecting tires for bulges or uneven wear.