

Auto Safety Report

Tips For Cold Weather Driving

(NAPSA)—The winter months often lead to difficult driving conditions and even more potential hazards for your vehicle.

Taking simple maintenance and safety precautions prior to and during the winter season can help keep your family safe on the roads.

A wise precautionary measure is to equip your vehicle with an emergency kit containing battery, jumper cables, a flashlight, matches, a 'Help sign', and oil/dry absorbent for traction, as well as extra gloves, hats and blankets.

The following safety tips cover topics ranging from fluid checks to defogging. The tips come from experts at Pep Boys:

- **Check Tires**—The deeper a tire's tread, the better it is in the snow and the more resistant it will be to hydroplaning. If the tire tread is wearing differently between the edge and middle of the tire, check the pressure. If the tires on one side of your car are wearing faster than the tires on the other side, it's probably time for a wheel alignment.

- **Keep It Running**—An auto breakdown in cold weather can lead to a number of dangerous situations. Stay on top of regular engine maintenance, such as oil changes and fluid checks. Also, consider having an antifreeze flush and fill performed. The procedure can help ensure that your car's heater works well and it can help prevent the engine from overheating.

- **See Your Way Clear**—If your wiper blades have cracks or notches in them, it's time for a new set. Also, keep in mind that wiper blades should be able to completely clear your windshield in three swipes—without streak-



Regular auto maintenance becomes even more important in the cold weather.

ing. If you're expecting particularly harsh weather this year, a set of winter wiper blades may be in order. It's also a smart idea to top off your washer fluid regularly and to keep an extra gallon in the trunk of your car.

- **Defogging**—Drivers can reduce surface fog formation and speed the defogging process by applying a defogger spray to the inside of the windows. Setting your vent to "fresh air" instead of "circumvent" helps, too. It decreases the humidity in your car.

- **Say No To Snow**—Stock up on ice scrapers, snow brushes and de-icers for vehicle windows and locks. It's a good idea to keep these items in your home and office, as well as your car. That way, you can remove snow and ice from your car before having to open its doors or trunk.

For more information, visit one of Pep Boys' 595 store locations or go to the Web site, pepboys.com.