

Winter Car Care And Driving Tips

Save Money, Energy And Help The Environment

(NAPSA)—Winter cold and snow create difficult operating conditions for you and your automobile. In addition to performing routine maintenance and using quality products, this is the season for extra preparation and care. What can you do to get through the nastiest of conditions?

“Cars don’t like cold,” says Tom Olszewski, automotive technical advisor, ExxonMobil Lubricants & Specialties. “It’s the time of year when all sorts of vehicle ailments crop up. Keeping your car properly maintained and tuned, and modifying your driving habits can save you money, reduce fuel consumption and help the environment.”

Routine Maintenance

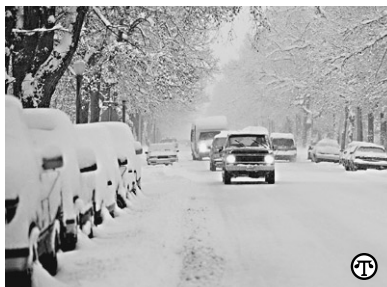
Make sure your battery and charging system are in good operating condition. A battery’s cranking power is reduced significantly in freezing weather. Be especially alert if your battery is four years old or more. It may work well only when the weather is warm. A good practice would be to carry a set of quality jumper cables at all times in the vehicle. There are also portable power packs available for use in emergency starts.

Filters, Coolant and Hoses

Make sure all filters—oil, gas and air—are in good condition. Check coolant and thermostat to ensure proper engine warmup, as well as heater and defroster operation. Coolant should be changed every two years; extended-life coolants last about five years. Check for leaking or soft hoses and replace.

Tire Pressure

Check tires for excessive wear



Cold weather requires additional maintenance to keep cars running well.

and proper inflation. Do not under-inflate or over-inflate your tires. Low-pressure increases wear and increases fuel consumption while over-pressure can reduce traction, especially in icy conditions.

Lubrication

To ease engine start-up load during cold weather, use a multi-viscosity oil such as Mobil 1 0W-30 or Mobil 1 5W-30, which helps provide car starts at temperatures down to 25 to 30 degrees below zero Fahrenheit or lower. The use of these low-viscosity oils not only speeds startup, but helps reduce wear by flowing quickly to critical engine parts. The use of lower viscosity oils also helps improve fuel economy. Motor oil should be changed routinely to help prevent excessive moisture and fuel buildup in winter conditions. Consumers can have their motor oil-related questions answered by calling ExxonMobil’s toll-free information line at 1/800/ASK-MOBIL.

Vehicle Warmup

When starting a vehicle in cold weather allow the engine to idle for a few seconds before driving off to

insure proper oil flow and lubrication. Do not allow engine to idle for a prolonged period after start-up in cold weather. This practice wastes fuel and does not warm up drive train components. After starts, drive easily for several miles to ensure proper vehicle warmup.

Slow Down

Do not exceed speed limits and keep safe driving distances. Unnecessary speed up, slow downs and stops can decrease fuel economy by up to two miles per gallon. Avoid gas-wasting jackrabbit starts and pace your driving to help avoid the need for sudden stops, which is especially critical during wet and icy road conditions.

Icy Windows and Locks

Make sure you have window ice scrapers and de-icers available. Also, make sure your windshield wipers and front and rear defrosters are working properly. A de-icer for door locks is also useful, but a heated key can help when locks are frozen. There are spray-type traction aids for use in icy conditions that help when a vehicle is stuck. Having a small shovel is also useful to dig out of the snow. A bag of sand in the trunk will give added traction, but can be used to sprinkle on the snow and ice to get better traction. And don’t forget personal protection such as a warm coat, hat and gloves, and a blanket in case you get stuck in a storm.

“Your car will be a more dependable means of transportation throughout the winter if properly cared for,” says Olszewski. “If you take care of it, it will more likely take care of you. And it will do it for a lot less money.”