



# *Be Car Care Aware*<sup>TM</sup>

## Winterize Your Vehicle And Worry Less <sup>Ⓢ</sup>

(NAPSA)—Providing some extra protection for your car during the colder months can help it perform its best—and prevent a possible breakdown.

“The thought of a breakdown, an engine not starting or otherwise being stranded is stressful as it is, but those things happening in freezing weather adds another level of threat,” said Rich White, executive director, Car Care Council. “An investment of an hour or so to have your vehicle checked can help avoid the cost and stress of a breakdown during harsh weather.”

**Battery**—Very cold temperatures will reduce a vehicle’s battery power, so it’s important to keep the connections clean, tight and corrosion free. Unfortunately, batteries don’t always give warning signs before they fail completely. If your vehicle’s battery is more than three years old, it’s wise to replace it. When choosing a replacement, make sure the new one has adequate capacity for your exact make and model.

**Antifreeze**—While the owner’s manual will have usage specifications for antifreeze, the mixture of antifreeze (coolant) and water inside your vehicle’s radiator is typically 50:50. When properly mixed, antifreeze and water provide excellent anti-boil, anti-freeze and anti-corrosive properties. As a reminder, don’t add 100 percent antifreeze. Coolant should be flushed and refilled at least every two years in most vehicles.

**Oil**—The Car Care Council recommends changing to low-viscosity oil as it will flow more easily

between moving parts when cold. Drivers in subzero driving temperatures should drop their oil weight from 10-W30 to 5-W30 as thickened oil can make it hard to start the car.

Some other quick tips:

- Keep the gas tank at least half full, decreasing the chances of moisture forming in the gas lines and possibly freezing.

- Tire pressure should also be checked, as tires will lose pressure when temperatures drop—consider special tires if snow and ice are a problem in your area.

- If you’re due for a tune-up, have it done before winter sets in. Winter magnifies existing problems such as pings, hard starts, sluggish performance or rough idling.

- Have the exhaust system checked for carbon monoxide leaks, which can be especially dangerous during cold-weather driving when windows are closed.

- Allow your car a little more time to warm up when temperatures are below freezing to let the oil in the engine and transmission circulate and get warm.

- If you live in a place with especially harsh winter conditions, consider using cold-weather washer fluid and special winter windshield blades.

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.

For a free copy of the council’s “Car Care Guide” or for more information, visit [www.carcare.org](http://www.carcare.org).