

# Waterloo Region Record

## Spring into vehicle maintenance with this car care checklist; SPRING CAR CARE TIPS

Friday, May 1, 2009  
Page: D5  
Section: Wheels

Now that winter is just a memory, millions of Canadians will take to the roads to enjoy the warmer weather.

Car Care Canada reminds motorists that spring is the perfect time of year to make sure your vehicle is ready for the upcoming travel season

Whether you're driving across the country or driving across town, Car Care Canada recommends checking the following vehicle components before embarking on your next trip:

### Exterior Checklist:

Wiper blades play an extremely important role in increasing visibility. Replace every six months or when cracked, cut, torn, streaking or chattering.

Check the tires. Make sure to check the tire inflation and inspect the tread for uneven wear, which could indicate the need for a wheel alignment. Finally, look for bulges and bald spots.

Give your car a good washing from top to bottom. Use a product specifically made for automobiles. Always clean the tires and wheels before washing the body, and don't use the same mitt for both.

If you find minor paint damage, cover the paint chips as quickly as possible. For a quick fix until you can get some touchup supplies, dab a little clear nail polish on the scratch.

Spring is an excellent time for waxing, which not only protects the finish but also makes subsequent washing easier. Before proceeding, make sure there are no foreign particles on the paint.

### Under the Hood:

A good rule of thumb is that a change of season requires a change of oil. Changing your car's oil and filter every three months or 3,000 miles, whichever comes first, will ensure that your car operates at peak efficiency.

Get a tune-up if necessary. As part of the 21st Century Tune-Up on today's modern vehicles, the following systems should be inspected: battery, charging and starting, engine mechanical, powertrain control (including onboard diagnostic checks), fuel, ignition and emissions.

Check all fluids. There are several fluids that require attention, including engine oil, power steering fluid, brake and transmission fluids, windshield washer solvent and antifreeze/coolant. The antifreeze/coolant

should be refreshed every two years.

Check hoses and belts. A belt that fails can affect the electrical system, air conditioning and power steering, as well as the cooling system. Cooling system hoses may be deteriorating from within, so old hoses and clamps that appear to be in marginal condition may need to be replaced.

### Under the Vehicle:

Spring is a good time to check the entire brake system, including brake linings, rotors and drums.

Check the shocks or struts for signs of physical damage, such as leaking, rusting, or dents.

Also be aware of the warning signs that you may need them replaced: vehicle rolls or sways on turns, front end dives when braking, rear end squats when accelerating, vehicle sits lower in the front or rear, a loss of directional control during sudden stops, and the vehicle bounces or slides sideways on a winding and rough road.

If you notice any fluid puddles or stains under your vehicle, it is a good idea to have it inspected.

There are several fluids that can leak from the vehicle including antifreeze/coolant, battery acid, brake fluid, clear water, diesel fuel, engine oil, gasoline, gear oil, power steering fluid, shock and strut fluid, transmission fluid and windshield washer fluid.

Be Car Care Aware is a campaign to inform Canadian drivers about the benefits of regular, vehicle care, maintenance and repair.

The campaign's purpose is to empower drivers to make sensible decisions about their vehicles and avoid costly repairs due to neglect.

Be Car Care Aware is spearheaded by Car Care Canada and built around three key themes: safety, environmental protection and maximizing value for money spent on vehicle maintenance and repairs.

To learn more, visit the Be Car Care Aware website at <http://www.carcarecanada.ca>.

© 2009 Torstar Corporation