



MAY 2009

PUBLIC WORKS— Did you know...?

CITY OF WOODLAND eNEWSLETTER

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...Summer heat, stop and go traffic, and dust can all cause significant damage to your vehicle. To prepare for the hot season, late spring after all danger of unexpected winter storms has passed, is the best time to get your car ready for summer heat. As we all know, summertime is travel time and with many families planning road trips, it is especially important to perform routine maintenance. The following is a list of Top Summer Maintenance Tips from howstuffworks.com:

Tires~ Tire pressure changes with the rising temperatures - approximately one to two PSI (pounds per square inch) for every 10-degree increase in outside air temperature. Consult your owner's manual or the sidewall of your tire to see what your tire pressure should be and check it with a hand pressure gauge or just let the guys at the service shop do it for you. An under-inflated tire bulges outward and puts undo pressure on the sidewalls of the tire. With enough heat and pressure that tire eventually will blow. An over-inflated tire, on the other hand, makes less contact with the road and can lead to hydroplaning in wet conditions. Use the penny trick to see if you still have enough tread on your tires. Stick a penny in the tread, and if Lincoln's head disappears, you're good. And don't forget about your spare! There's no point in having a spare tire if your spare is in worse condition than the rest.

Cooling System~ The greatest cause of summer breakdowns is overheating. The summertime is tough on cooling systems. Sitting in traffic on a hot day is one of the quickest ways to overheat your car. This is because there's no air flowing across the engine to help keep it cool. A well-tuned cooling system can take long idles in hot weather, but if you have low coolant levels or a busted fan belt, your engine temperature is going to go up -- and fast. Check under the hood and make sure that your coolant levels are fine. The general rule is to flush your radiator and add new coolant at least every two years. Flushing the radiator is done with a special chemical that cleans debris and build-up on the inside of the radiator. For summer driving, coolant should be added as a 50/50 mixture of antifreeze and water.

Battery~ Wintertime is notorious for dead batteries and early morning jumpstarts. But the truth is that hot weather is even tougher on your battery. Summer heat can speed up the chemical reaction inside a battery, causing the battery to be overcharged. This can dramatically shorten the lifespan of your battery. Heat can also damage the battery by evaporating internal battery fluid. The best way to keep your battery running smoothly is to keep it clean. Regularly detach the battery cables and wipe off the terminals. Make sure the battery is strapped down tightly and that all connections are secure.

Air Conditioning~ If you've ever lost your air conditioning on a hot summer day, then you know what a big difference a little cool air makes. The best way to tell if your air conditioner has a problem is if it can't generate or maintain air temperatures that are 50 degrees Fahrenheit (10 degrees Celsius) below the ambient outside air temperature. The most common cause of a malfunctioning air conditioning unit is a low level of refrigerant. This could be caused buy a leak somewhere in the system. Since modern air conditioning systems are complicated creatures, it's best to have a professional check out the problem.

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***These are just some of the ways to keep your summertime driving experiences positive. As with any vehicle during any type of weather, there is no substitute for making necessary repairs in a timely manner, along with proper maintenance such as routine preventive services, tire rotations, and regular washing. ☺***