

MCLB ALBANY SAFETYGRAM

Winter Tire Safety

Everything rides on it

Protection against avoidable breakdowns and crashes. Improved vehicle handling. Better fuel economy. Increased tire life. Just a few of the reasons to take five minutes every month to check your tires. Simply use the handy checklist below.

Safety Checklist

- ✓ Check tire pressure regularly (at least once a month), including the spare.
- ✓ Inspect tires for uneven wear patterns on the tread, cracks, foreign objects, or other signs of wear or trauma. Remove bits of glass and other foreign objects wedged in the tread.
- ✓ Make sure your tire valves have valve caps.
- ✓ Check tire pressure before going on a long trip.
- ✓ Do not overload your vehicle. Check the tire information placard or owner's manual for the maximum recommended load for the vehicle.
- ✓ If you are towing a trailer, remember that some of the weight of the loaded trailer is transferred to the towing vehicle.

Safety Tips

- ✓ Slow down if you have to go over a pothole or other object in the road.
- ✓ Do not run over curbs, and try not to strike the curb when parking.

Remember to check your tires once a month!

You can find the numbers for recommended tire pressure and vehicle load limit on the tire information placard and in the vehicle owner's manual. Tire placards are permanent labels attached to the vehicle door edge, doorpost, glove-box door, or inside of the trunk lid. Once you've located this information, use it to check your tire pressure and to make sure your vehicle is not overloaded—especially when you head out for vacation.

Checking Tire Pressure

Because tires may naturally lose air over time, it is important to check your tire pressure at least once a month. For convenience, purchase a tire pressure gauge to keep in your vehicle. Remember, the tire inflation number that vehicle manufacturers provide reflects the proper pounds per square inch (psi) when a tire is cold. To get an accurate tire pressure reading, measure tire pressure when the car has been unused for at least three hours.

- Step 1:** Locate the correct tire pressure on the tire information placard or in the owner's manual. Especially during the winter, use the highest recommended pressure. Cold weather decreases tire pressure.
- Step 2:** Record the tire pressure of all tires.
- Step 3:** If the tire pressure is too high in any of the tires, slowly release air by gently pressing on the tire valve with the edge of your tire gauge until you get to the correct pressure.
- Step 4:** If the tire pressure is too low, note the difference between the measured tire pressure and the correct tire pressure. These "missing" pounds of pressure are what you will need to add.
- Step 5:** At a service station, add the missing pounds of air pressure to each tire that is underinflated.
- Step 6:** Check all the tires to make sure they have the same air pressure (except in cases in which the front and rear tires are supposed to have different amounts of pressure).

Checking Tire Tread

Tire tread is especially important for winter driving. Deep, sharp tread may provide the little extra edge that will keep you out of the ditch on snow and ice covered roads.

Tires have built-in tread wear indicators that let you know when it is time to replace your tires. These indicators are raised sections spaced intermittently in the bottom of the tread grooves. When they appear even with the outside of the tread, it is time to replace your tires. You can also test your tread with a Lincoln penny. Simply turn the penny so Lincoln's head is pointing down and insert it into the tread. If the tread doesn't cover Lincoln's head, it's time to replace your tires.

For more information, see <http://www.nhtsa.gov/>

Risk Management 639-5249

Prepared by: W. Young

Dec 13

