



# CAR CARE CORNER

## Stop Vehicle Problems Before They Stop You

(NAPSA)—Whether you're taking a road trip or just commuting to work, the likelihood of your vehicle leaving you stranded is greater than you think.

Each year, AAA rescues 29 million stranded motorists. In 2010, the motor club expects it will jump-start or replace nearly 5 million auto batteries with its AAA Mobile Battery Service, and estimates it will change more than 3.5 million flat tires. And while AAA's well-trained roadside technicians will be able to get three out of five motorists back on the go, more than 11 million drivers will have problems that require their vehicles to be towed—many of which could be avoided with proper maintenance.

Taking care of your vehicle now can cost far less than a major repair later on. AAA recommends two fundamental things you can do to find and fix problems before they happen.

**1. Identify a quality repair shop** and use that facility for all your vehicle repairs and maintenance so you develop a good working relationship with them and they get to know your car.

One way to find quality auto repair facilities that meet and maintain high professional standards for training, equipment, cleanliness and customer service is to look for the AAA Approved Auto Repair sign. You can also search online at [www.AAA.com/Repair](http://www.AAA.com/Repair).

**2. Have your car serviced regularly** based on the manufacturer's recommended maintenance schedule. While some maintenance and repair tasks are best left to certified automotive technicians, there are a few basics you can easily check yourself:

- **Engine Air Filter**—Check the



**Don't let yourself and your vehicle become another roadside attraction; get it maintained and serviced before you leave home.**

air filter every six months or 7,500 miles by holding it up to a 100-watt lightbulb. If light can be seen through much of the filter, it's still clean enough to work.

- **Battery**—Check the battery cables to ensure they are securely attached to the terminals. Clean the terminals if there are any signs of corrosion.

- **Tire Pressure**—Check and adjust tire pressures at least once a month when the tires are cold—including the spare. The manufacturer's recommendations can be found in the owner's manual or on a sticker on the driver's doorjamb.

- **Tire Tread**—Check the tread depth by inserting a quarter upside down into a tire groove with Washington's head facing outward. The tread should cover part of Washington's head.

- **Windshield Washer Fluid**—Check the windshield washer fluid reservoir monthly and test the washer spray nozzles for proper operation and aim.

- **Windshield Wiper Blades**—Check the blades at every oil change or whenever they fail to wipe the glass clean in a single swipe. The rubber inserts usually last six to 12 months.