

ROAD TO SAFETY

Checking Tire Pressure Can Make Travel Safer

(NAPSA)—When the weather outside is frightful, a safe ride is oh so delightful.

One simple way to maintain your vehicle's safety is to check your tire pressure. When your tire pressure is low or underinflated, it can compromise the safety of your vehicle, especially as winter approaches. Colder temperatures affect tire pressure, which is measured by pounds per square inch (PSI). Every 10 degree decrease in temperature causes a tire to depressurize by about one PSI.

"Cooler temperatures are here, and with the holiday season approaching, our goal is to urge drivers to check their vehicle's tire pressure," states Fred Webber, president and chief executive officer for the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers.

All new vehicles will be equipped with a Tire Pressure Monitoring System (TPMS) by 2008. About 70 percent of 2007 models are equipped with TPMS. When the new TPMS symbol lights up on the vehicle dashboard, it is alerting the driver that one or more tires is under inflated. In fact, a sensor on the wheel triggers the symbol to illuminate when at least one tire is 25 percent or more under inflated. The new TPMS symbol is not a substitute for tire maintenance, however. Tire pressure should be checked at least once a month and before going on long driving trips.



Automobiles are now on sale with a Tire Pressure Monitoring System—this warning light alerts drivers to low tire pressure.

Underinflated tires can lead to accidents that cause skidding, loss of control, hydroplaning—especially when the roads are covered with ice or snow—as well as flat tires and blowouts.

In addition, improperly inflated tires also affect a vehicle's fuel efficiency, reducing it by one percent for every three PSI under inflation. Keeping your tires properly inflated translates into a free tank of gas every year.

To find out what your vehicle's proper tire pressure should be, look for the label which is located on one of three places in your vehicle: the driver's door frame, the sill or edge.

To learn more about tire pressure safety, the Tire Pressure Monitoring System, and to view the new TPMS dashboard symbol, visit www.checkmytires.com.