

Car Safety Corner

The Secrets Of Savvy And Safer Auto Glass Shoppers

(NAPSA)—For most motorists, shopping for auto glass happens by necessity. When it's time to replace a broken car window or windshield, you need to know how to get the best value for your auto-glass dollar, especially because your automotive glass choices impact your vehicle's performance and structure.

First, not all replacement auto glass is created equal. Your vehicle's original, factory-installed windshield meets automaker requirements for size, shape, thickness, strength and visual quality. Replace it with the same brand. Original equipment (OE) windshields fit best and help maintain the structural and performance integrity of your vehicle during an accident.

The windshield engineers at Carlite® recommend OE windshields. Key reasons for this recommendation are collision performance, driver visibility, interior comfort and protection of the vehicle's interior. As an example, OE windshield makers carefully control vinyl moisture during manufacturing to optimize adhesion of the glass to the vinyl interlayer. This improves penetration resistance, an important factor in occupant safety during a collision.

Another safety-related concern is functionality of the windshield-wiper system. OE windshield wipers are engineered to work with the designed-in sag and bend of the windshield. This allows for optimal windshield-wiper performance in inclement weather.

The passenger-side air bag depends on the windshield as a backboard when deploying. An improperly installed windshield with the wrong adhesives, poor



A Good Fit—Original equipment windshields fit best and help protect you in case of an accident.

installation techniques or inadequately cured adhesives can pop loose from the sheet metal, rendering the air bag ineffective. This could put the front-seat passengers at risk of severe injury. And, if the windshield came loose, it would not protect occupants from loose debris that could actually fly into the passenger cabin, causing injury.

The different vinyl interlayer formulations found in knockoff or aftermarket windshields can sometimes result in diminished ultraviolet (UV) protection compared to OE windshields. Also, OE solar tint glass absorbs more solar energy, transmitting less heat and UV rays into the vehicle. This reduces the load on the air conditioner, decreases fabric fade and degradation of other interior materials and shields occupants from the sun's effects.

The average consumer isn't expected to be an automotive glass expert, but the auto glass engineering experts at Carlite suggest that each consumer start by requesting brand-for-brand replacement glass and shopping at certified repair facilities to help assure safer driving. To be a savvy glass shopper visit www.carlite.com.