

# Car Care Corner

## Replace Shocks, Struts at 50,000 Miles For Improved Ride and Handling



(NAPSA)—It's relatively easy for most vehicle owners to determine when their tires, brakes and windshield wipers are worn out. Shocks and struts, on the other hand, aren't nearly as simple to inspect, despite the fact that these safety-critical components are highly susceptible to everyday wear and tear, which impacts ride and handling performance.

When should you consider replacing your vehicle's shocks and struts? Think 50,000 miles, according to engineers for Monroe®, North America's leading brand of shocks, struts and related automotive technologies. Monroe has launched an education initiative urging consumers to follow a 50,000-mile shock/strut replacement recommendation. For many popular-selling vehicles, replacing worn shocks and struts after 50,000 miles or more can improve vehicle handling characteristics and comfort. Actual mileage may vary depending upon driver ability, vehicle type and type of driving and road conditions.

"Shocks and struts might not be readily visible to the consumer, but they play a major role in defining the vehicle's steering, stopping and stability characteristics," said Richard Alameddine, vice president of marketing for Tenneco Automotive. "Replacement at 50,000 miles is a sensible maintenance cycle that helps owners

improve ride and handling performance and ensure adequate steering, handling and braking response in emergency situations."

Shocks and struts play key roles in maintaining consistent, firm tire-to-road contact by absorbing impacts and reducing vehicle pitch and roll. Without fully functional shocks and struts, a vehicle's tires can more easily lose traction, leading to reduced steering and braking control.

Third-party research has demonstrated the safety role of modern shocks and struts. In one series of tests, vehicles equipped with one 50-percent degraded shock absorber and three fully functional units required 4.3 percent more time and 5.7 percent greater distance to brake from 60 to zero miles per hour over uneven pavement. One popular SUV model required nearly 10 percent additional braking time in the same test conditions.

"Shocks and struts wear out gradually, so a driver might not notice significantly degraded ride and handling performance," Alameddine said. "The key is to replace these worn parts so your vehicle rides more like it did when it was new."

For more information on inspecting and replacing shocks and struts, visit [www.monroe.com](http://www.monroe.com) or contact your local automotive service provider.