

Car Care Corner

Stop Ignoring Your Brakes

(NAPSA)—You use your brakes 30 to 50 times a day—slowing around curves, stopping at lights and merging onto highways. Oftentimes, you're driving in less-than-ideal conditions, carrying extra weight, or are being distracted by other cars, road signs and passengers.

“Fortunately, automotive technology has come a long way, enabling our vehicles to keep up with today’s driving demands,” says Jai Mistry, Manager, After-market Engineering for Honeywell Friction Materials, the makers of Bendix® brake products. “Vehicles are more aerodynamic and loaded with developments like Antilock Braking Systems (ABS), stability control and traction control. Sensors and electronics allow our vehicles to function with the utmost sophistication.”

Several of these advancements lead to better handling characteristics because they affect how the wheels work with the road. For instance, traction control helps avoid lateral loss of friction during acceleration. It ensures that your wheels maintain traction with the road even in unfriendly conditions. ABS has a similar role—sensing any wheel lockup while braking and then electronically adjusting the brake pressure to avoid skidding.

“Traction control is designed for acceleration and ABS is designed for deceleration, but both work together as part of the overall braking system,” explains Mistry. “These innovations have allowed us more safety, comfort and control while driving, but have also enabled us to travel at speeds of 60 to 70 mph without thinking twice.”

At 70 mph, it takes more than five seconds and almost 350 feet to stop on dry pavement. Your vehicle will have traveled more than a football field in length



Get your brakes checked regularly by a certified technician.

before it comes to a complete stop. If wheel speed sensors, braking system components, suspension or tires have been neglected, your vehicle may not perform with the precision you need it to.

“We constantly drive in extreme conditions. And many of us are driving bigger, heavier vehicles—like SUVs and full size trucks. Now, more than ever, our braking systems are subjected to extensive wear, yet we expect them to function at optimum levels without much maintenance,” says Mistry. “These are extremely complicated machines. Cars these days feature more sensors, circuits and electronics and for this reason, I can’t emphasize enough how crucial it is to properly maintain them.”

Mistry recommends getting your brake fluid changed regularly, your wheel speed sensors cleaned and inspected every year, as well as your brakes looked at when you visit a service center. When the time comes, use a premium application-specific brake pad, like those offered by Bendix. “This maintenance will result in better long-term performance,” suggests Mistry.

For more on braking technology, or to find a certified mechanic near you, visit www.bendixbrakes.com.