

Be Car Care Aware™

It Can Really Pay Off

(NAPSA)—Routine auto maintenance can help drive down your car costs—especially compared to other professional services.

Over the past decade, the cost of hospital services has risen more than 100 percent; financial services are up 90 percent. Meanwhile automotive maintenance and repair has risen only 44.5 percent, making auto repair the darling of the service industry, according to the Car Care Council.

Automotive parts have proved to be an even better buy with their price rising only 4.2 percent in the past 10 years (based on percentage changes in the Consumer Price Index from 1990 to 2001).

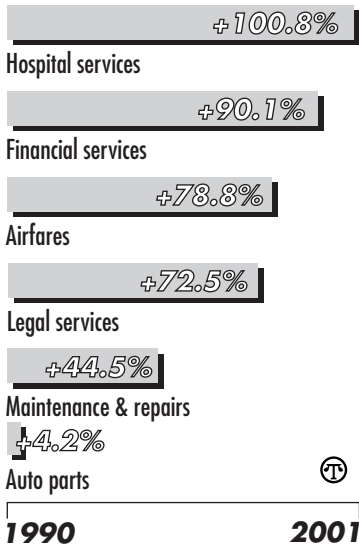
That's good news for America's do-it-yourselfers (DIY) who perform their own vehicle maintenance and repair. Forty-eight percent of all households in the United States boast at least one automotive DIY.

"Whether it's an oil change, replacing brakes or new belts and hoses, that periodic repair bill is a drop in the bucket compared to monthly payments on a new car," says Rich White, spokesperson for the Car Care Council. "The bottom line is, a properly maintained vehicle is safer, more dependable, cleaner and more valuable."

"Perhaps the smartest way to get a solid return on investment is to keep your car through what we call the 'Cinderella Era,'" says White. "It's that period of time after the payoff when your car is still in great shape and needs only modest repairs."

Figures from Runzheimer International, a management-consulting firm that measures travel and

Changes in the Consumer Price Index between 1990 and 2001



Auto repair is the darling of the service industry, thanks to nominal increases during the last decade.

living costs, confirm the Council's claims. Recent figures from a Runzheimer study show that trading a vehicle every eight years instead of every four can save more than \$2,481.75 a year after the payoff. That includes repairs and maintenance, license, registration and taxes and insurance.

The Car Care Council is the source of information for the "Be Car Care Aware" consumer education campaign promoting the benefits of regular vehicle care, maintenance and repair to consumers.

Visit the Council's Web site: www.carcarecouncil.org.