

Car Care Corner

Your Car—Braced For Cold Weather?

(NAPSA)—If you hate cold weather, imagine how your car feels. Fortunately, most preparation is very simple to do and costs very little. The first step is to be aware of the age of two key car functions, report experts at Jiffy Lube.

Battery And Radiator Check

The two-year mark is an important anniversary for both the battery and radiator system. Safe battery service and inspection should be part of routine maintenance. Batteries that are 24 months or older should be monitored for warning signs such as sluggish starting and the accumulation of a corrosive powder on and around the terminals. These are warning signs of corrosion and age, but it may fail even without such indications.

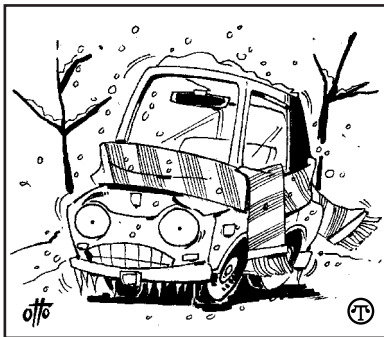
Average battery life can range from about 3 years up to 4 or 5 years. And the antifreeze/coolant in some cooling systems may not provide adequate protection past the two-year mark, so it may need to be replaced.

Windshield Washer Fluid Tip

Speaking of fluid, if you are one of the many that mixes water with windshield washer fluid during the summer to save a little money, you may have a big mess on your hands when the temperature drops below the freezing mark. It is also important to make sure all fluid levels are topped off prior to a deep freeze.

Good Gas Tank Manners

If you keep your gas tank closer to empty instead of full, you could be in trouble, suggests Lucille Treganowan, the spokeswoman for Jiffy Lube and one of America's most trusted car care authorities. "By keeping more gas in the tank, you can help avoid the formation of condensation in the gas tank that occurs when temperatures fluctuate widely as



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they do during the winter months. This condensation drips down into the gas and can freeze and/or prevent the car from starting."

Look At Lines And Hoses

Cold weather can also cause lines, hoses and other parts to become brittle and break, causing some larger problems down the road. If you are unsure what to look for under the hood, take your vehicle to a convenient auto service center, such as Jiffy Lube. Along with changing the oil, following manufacturer's recommendations, they will check the level of other vital fluids like antifreeze/coolant, transmission, brake, differential oil, power steering and windshield washer. They will also check on the condition of such devices as belts and wiper blades.

Now that you have made sure that your engine will be on your side even if the weather isn't, it may be good to give it a good wax before your city begins using rock salt on the road. And during a trip to the supermarket, buy a bag of your own rock salt to keep in the trunk in case of an overnight sleet. You never know when it will come in handy.

For more car care tips, visit www.jiffylube.com.