

# *Be Car Care Aware*™

## Potholes Pose Plenty Of Problems

(NAPSA)—They lurk on rural highways and city streets, ready to cost you time, trouble and money. They're potholes, and they occur when water permeates the pavement—usually through a crack from wear and tear of traffic—and softens the soil beneath it, creating a depression in the surface of the street.

While most drivers know immediately when they hit a pothole, what they often don't know is if their vehicle has been damaged in the process. To help determine if hitting a pothole has hurt your vehicle, watch for the following warning signs:

- **Loss of control**, swaying when making routine turns, bottoming out on city streets or bouncing excessively on rough roads. These are indicators that the steering and suspension may have been damaged. The steering and suspension are key safety-related systems. Together, they largely determine your car's ride and handling. Key components are shocks and struts, the steering knuckle, ball joints, the steering rack and box, bearings, seals and hub units, and tie rod ends.

- **Pulling in one direction**, instead of maintaining a straight path, and uneven tire wear. These symptoms mean there's an alignment problem. Proper wheel alignment is important for the life span of tires and helps ensure safe handling.

- **Low tire pressure**, bulges or blisters on the sidewalls or dents in the rim. These problems will be visible and should be checked out



**Don't let your car go to pot: If you hit a pothole, have a professional check out the vehicle.**

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as soon as possible as tires are the critical connection between your car and the road in all sorts of driving conditions.

“Hitting a pothole can cause plenty of problems—damaging tires, wheels, steering and suspension, wheel alignment and more. If you've hit a pothole,” said Rich White, executive director, Car Care Council, “it's worth having a professional technician check out the car and make the necessary repairs to ensure safety and reliability.”

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.

### **Learn More**

For a free copy of the council's Car Care Guide or for more information, visit [www.carcare.org](http://www.carcare.org) or call (240) 333-1088.