



Risk Management *Tips*

Is Your Vehicle Ready for Winter Weather?

Having a well-maintained vehicle is a critical step toward an effective vehicle safety program. Many auto accidents are the direct result of poorly maintained vehicles. Before the inclement weather sets in, carefully inspect your vehicles to identify and correct maintenance issues that may contribute to an accident.

While it is strongly recommended that any inspection be completed by a certified professional, AAA provides the following tips for conducting a personal vehicle inspection. Depending on what you find, you may need a trained mechanic to follow up and correct defects.

- Check your headlights. Look for burned-out bulbs and dirty lenses.
- At each fill-up, check your brake and signal lights for burned-out bulbs.
- Check all glass, inside and out, to make sure it is clean. Repair or replace cracked windshields as soon as a crack becomes apparent.
- Check tire treads and air pressure weekly.
- Check your brakes every time you drive. When pushed, the pedal should stay well above the floor. Have a mechanic inspect your brakes when you hear squealing or scraping noises.
- Monitor your steering wheel movement and suspension when driving. If your steering wheel moves two inches or more before your wheels respond, have a mechanic repair it.
- Check your windshield wipers several times a year and frequently during cold weather.

Other general maintenance procedures, such as tune-ups, cooling system maintenance, and oil changes, contribute to the safe operation of your vehicle.

Make these recommendations a constant reminder for your drivers, each and every time they get behind the wheel. Markel's *Managing Vehicle Risks Safety Guide* has a checklist you can use to remind yourself to perform these procedures. Download a copy from our web site, www.childcareinsurance.com, by logging in under Safety Resources.



If you have a safety or risk management question or a suggestion for a topic, please contact Markel's Risk Management Department at safety1st@markelcorp.com.