

Motor Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance

Handout

You are more likely to die from a traffic-related motor vehicle crash than from any other hazard of the job.

- In many cases, the unsafe condition of a motor vehicle can cause or contribute to an accident.

You need a regular maintenance program for your motor vehicle.

- The owner's manual sets guidelines for required and recommended service.
- Sometimes drivers skip these regular checkups because they do not notice any problems with their vehicle's operation.
- Having a good mechanic check your vehicle regularly can often prevent a serious problem from developing.
- Most dealers and good repair facilities have computerized programs to check performance in ways that you can't do for yourself.

Among the items that the repair service will check:

- Engine and radiator fluids—Check levels and change fluids regularly.
- Belts and hoses—Regular replacement is a good safety precaution.
- Tires—Check pressure monthly, rotate regularly, and replace when the tread gets to 2/32".
- Battery—Check for corrosion around the terminals and for tight connections.
- Brakes—Your mechanic may observe signs that brake service is necessary before you notice the need while you are driving.
- Special replacement parts—These vary from vehicle to vehicle.

YOU are also a vital part of your vehicle's inspection and maintenance program—get in the habit of taking a good look at it every day.

- Are all headlights, taillights, brake lights, and signal lights working properly?
- Are your windshield wipers still doing a good job, or do the blades need to be replaced?
- Do your tires look low? Proper inflation will improve your gas mileage.
- Check your oil level frequently.
- Check your windshield washer fluid.
- Pay attention if your vehicle responds slowly or handles strangely—these are often signs of a mechanical problem.
- Keep an emergency kit in your vehicle to be ready for the unexpected.

Ignoring signs of trouble may save a small repair charge but may end up costing you big dollars for a major repair that could have been prevented.