



**Better Business Bureau<sup>®</sup>  
of Central and Northern Alberta**

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## Media Release

# Winterize your Car Before Driving Conditions Get Dickey, BBB Advises

[September 21, 2006, Edmonton, AB] – Autumn is upon us and that means cold, sleet or snow is not far behind for much of the country. We live in a climate that experiences harsh winter weather conditions and the Better Business Bureau advises you to start winterizing your car this month, **before** driving conditions get dicey.

“No one has a crystal ball to predict exactly when the first snowfall or sub-zero temperatures will arrive. We urge car owners to take steps now to help ensure that their vehicles will run smoothly and not put family members at risk this winter,” said Chris Lawrence, president and CEO of the Better Business Bureau of Central and Northern Alberta.

She noted that proper car maintenance also benefits the family’s budget. “Installing a clean air filter and driving on properly inflated tires, for example, can improve your car’s gas efficiency. That is going to save you money at the pump,” Chris Lawrence added.

To help your family vehicles make it through winter’s worst, the BBB recommends the following protective measures:

Read your owner’s manual to make sure your vehicle is up-to-date on recommended maintenance.

Your battery should be in top condition as it takes more power to start your car when it’s cold outside. Are the cables clean of corrosion or dirt and the connections tight?

Make sure your cooling system is working efficiently. Flush and refill the radiator and add anti-freeze if necessary.

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Be sure your tires (including the spare) are in good condition and properly inflated. Thin or uneven tread wear can be very dangerous in winter weather. Also check your brakes and brake fluid level.

Change your oil and oil filter. Check your owner's manual for the different grades of oil that are recommended for winter. Maintaining a full tank of gas and adding a de-icer to your fuel can help keep moisture from forming.

Have a professional inspect and replace your air filter, rubber hoses and drive belts. Old, damaged or loose hoses and belts can pose a danger in severe weather conditions.

Inspect headlights and flasher hazard lights and check your wipers and washers to make sure they are in good working order. Fill your washers with windshield washer fluid that is appropriate for cold weather. You may want to consider switching to winter wiper blades, which function well under extremely cold and snowy conditions.

Be sure your block heater, interior heater, defroster and exhaust system are working properly. Make prompt repairs, if needed.

Equip each family vehicle with winter safety supplies, including an ice scraper, spare bottle of washer fluid, battery jumper cables, warm clothing, first aid supplies, flares, blankets, flashlight with spare batteries, a small shovel, some sand for traction and bottled water and high-energy snack bars. Encourage family drivers to always travel with their cell phone.

Unless you are an auto service pro, the BBB suggests that it is probably best to engage the services of a reputable auto service center or repair facility to perform these procedures.

“Ask friends and family for recommendations and check with your Better Business Bureau ([www.edmontonbbb.org](http://www.edmontonbbb.org)) about the shop's reliability,” Chris Lawrence. “You should also look for auto repair facilities that display certification by the Alberta Motor Vehicle Industry Council (AMVIC).” Businesses that are involved in the repair and maintenance of automobiles, trucks, or recreation vehicles in Alberta must be licensed by AMVIC.

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