

# Tires can relieve pressure

Tires are probably the most neglected but one of the most important parts of the automobile. They provide the only contact a vehicle has with the actual road surface. For that reason, the condition of your tires is vital to safe driving and optimum vehicle control.

In routine tire care, the Ontario Motor League says the most important consideration is maintaining proper inflation pressure. Proper inflation levels insure necessary traction and braking capacity, correct steering and smooth cornering — and extend the life of the tire.

Auto manufacturers recommend a range of inflation pressures to suit intended use and loading of the vehicle. Expressed in pounds per square inch (psi), the manufacturers' recommendations represent minimum inflation figures.

Although tire pressure should never fall below those levels, it may be increased

slightly. For instance, extended highway travel — especially with heavier loads — calls for a higher pressure stability and vehicle control improves with pressures increased by about three to five pounds. Check your owner's manual for proper level.

Tire pressure should be checked monthly — don't forget the spare — when tires are cold (less than three miles of driving). Since heat build-up after several miles of driving will raise tire pressure, don't bleed air from a hot tire thinking you're bringing it to the proper level. Recommended pressures refer to cold tires.

Similarly, cold weather can cause pressure to drop — approximately one pound per 10-degree temperature drop. So check tires even more frequently in winter.

In addition to affecting vehicle control, underinflated tires wear faster. Low

pressure causes more flexing and allows too much heat build-up in the tire. Also, more tread than necessary comes into contact with the road causing excessive wear and drag and adding to fuel consumption.

Extreme over-inflation can also be dangerous. It causes tires to impact damage and weakening of the carcass. It also causes excessive wear in the centre of the tread.

One critical mechanical difficulty in a car that shows up in a tire's tread wear, adds the Ontario Motor League, is the misalignment of wheels. Uneven wear on front tires, for example, could be an indication that front suspension alignment is off. Wheels out-of-balance also may cause tires to wear irregularly.

Tires should be replaced when damaged or when tread depth reaches 1/16 of an inch.

# Got gas pains? Here are a few tips on saving

You can cut your fuel consumption from 10 per cent to 25 per cent with these simple energy-saving driving habits and better car maintenance.

**TRY** to maintain a constant highway speed of 55 m.p.h.

**AVOID** jack rabbit starts. They use more fuel and wear out your tires.

**ACCELERATE** strongly and smoothly when passing or merging with fast traffic. Press the accelerator evenly, not abruptly.

**WATCH** traffic well ahead of you so you can adjust your speed accordingly.

**IF** you have a manual transmission, always drive in the highest gear which will give you adequate transmission without "lugging" the engine.

**DON'T** rest your foot on the brake pedal. This practice decreases brake efficiency, reduces brake lining safety, increases fuel consumption and causes the engine to work harder than necessary.

**TURN OFF** the motor if you are waiting for someone. Long periods of idling to warm up the engine are also unnecessary and wasteful. A half minute at the most (to allow the engine to become lubricated) is all that is necessary. Drive especially gently with a cold

engine. **TRY** to avoid traffic jams by staggering your working hours or listening to the traffic reports and taking alternate routes.

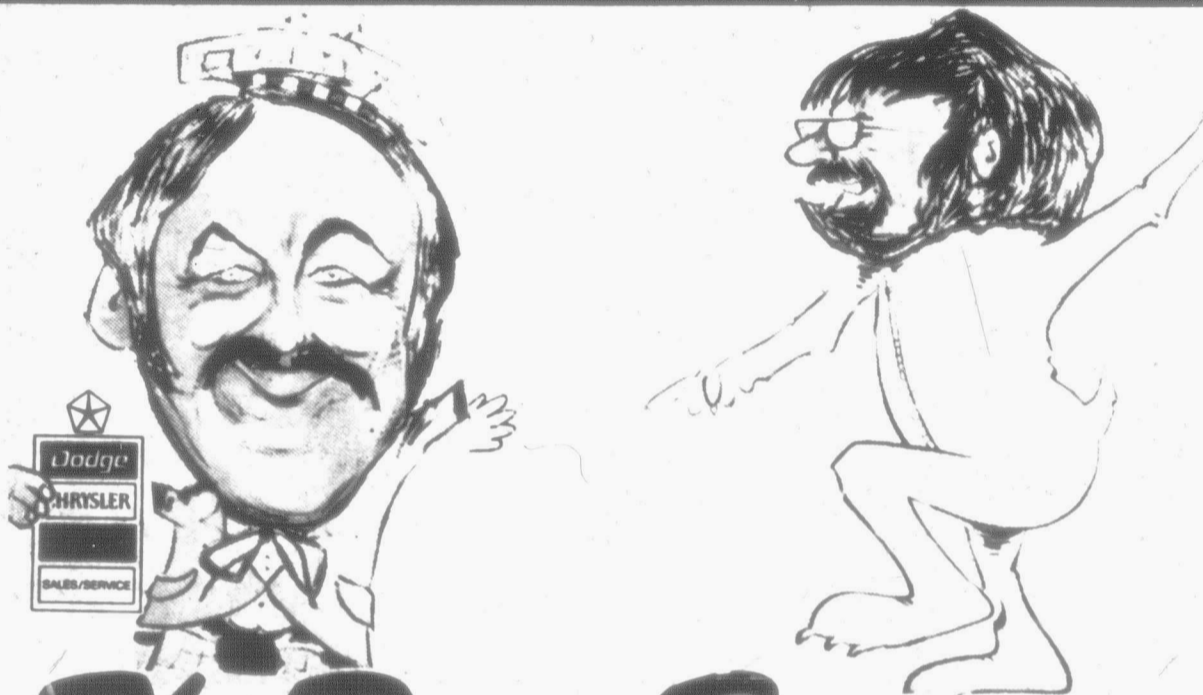
**DON'T** store heavy items in your trunk. They may be costing you gas. Remove roof racks when not in use, they increase wind resistance significantly.

**DON'T** just say "fill'er up". Gas station attendants will "top off" the tank to the brim and spill some gas in the process. An "over-full tank" will also cause spills every time you accelerate or go around the corner.

**ANTICIPATE** stops well ahead of time. This will allow you to slow down gradually and avoid abrupt stops which not only waste gas but also cause needless wear on brakes and tires.

**MINIMIZE** the use of air conditioners. When in use in hot weather with stop and go driving, the air conditioner can increase fuel consumption by as much as 20 per cent.

**MAINTAIN** your car properly. Make sure that you get fall and spring tune-ups. They should include complete checks of fuel, ignition and cooling systems, lubrication, mechanical, electrical, drive train and brakes.



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