

## Winter Weather Windshield Advisory

(Fall/Winter 2003)

Many car owners make special preparations with the advance of winter's colder temperatures and extreme weather conditions. They equip their cars with snow tires, make sure their car's antifreeze is topped off, and might even buy special winter windshield wiper blades. But what about your windshield?

The windshield is a critical component of a car's safety system and needs extra attention during harsh winter months when extreme variations in temperature can make existing damage more severe. Rick Robertson, vice president of Auto Glass of Indiana, offers some tips to protect your car's glass in winter weather

"Make sure you have any existing chips in the windshield repaired as soon as possible," suggests Robertson, "preferably before cold weather becomes a factor. By repairing a chip early, you not only restore the structural integrity of the windshield's glass, you also prevent the chip from turning into a crack, which may require a windshield replacement."

In addition to safety, windshield repair is also a cost-saving option, as most insurance companies will waive the deductible for policyholders with comprehensive coverage.

"Most chips can be inexpensively repaired, depending on their location and severity, but larger ones and ones in the acute vision area mean a windshield must be replaced." The acute vision area is the area on the windshield above the steering wheel that can be covered by an 8.5" x 11" piece of paper. Inspection laws governing windshield repair vary from state to state, so Robertson suggests checking with a certified windshield repair and replacement specialist, where staff and technicians can advise you on repair regulations in your state.

If your windshield has damage when a cold spell hits, turning your cold car's heat and fan settings to their maximum can be bad news, says Robertson. The extreme temperature difference of heated air from your car's defroster hitting cold, air-temperature glass can cause any existing chips to worsen and potentially end up as cracks. "By gradually warming your car and the air inside, you reduce the probability of causing further damage to your windshield," he said.

### Winter Weather Windshield Dos and Don'ts

**DO** have chips in your windshield repaired before cold weather hits.

**DO** gradually warm your car up in cold weather to prevent making chips in the windshield worsen to cracks.

**DO** let your car's defroster partially thaw ice before using a scraper on your windshield.

**DO** take your car to a certified windshield repair professional like a PPG PROSTARS shop to get chips repaired.

**DO** ask your certified windshield repair specialist about your state's regulations on windshield repair and replacement.

**DON'T** turn your cold car's heat and fan settings to maximum in freezing temperatures.

**DON'T** use hot water to defrost your car's windshield.

**DON'T** chop or stab at icy patches while using an ice scraper on your windshield.



*Taking proper care of your windshield in harsh winter weather can prevent repairable chips from turning into costly cracks.*

Robertson says he has also seen car owners defrost their car's glass with hot water. "As tempting as it might be on a frosty winter morning, using hot water left over from morning tea to melt the ice and snow on your car's glass can also turn repairable chips into costly cracks."

Car owners should also be careful when scraping ice and snow off their vehicles, warns Robertson. Chopping or stabbing at icy patches on the windshield can scratch the surface of the glass and can reduce visibility, particularly in sun-glare or on-coming headlights. "Wait until your car's defroster has partially thawed the ice and snow on your windshield before using a scraper. Then, the ice will slide off without any damage."

He adds that the windshield isn't the only glass about which car owners should be concerned. Because of the tempering process under which it is made, side and rear auto glass can suffer catastrophic damage under extreme temperature changes, shattering into small pieces and requiring immediate replacement.

Robertson notes that cold temperatures can affect the quality of repairs and replacements, as well. Temperatures lower than 40 degrees Fahrenheit, and rain or snow compromise the quality and safety of outdoor or mobile glass service. Robertson recommends taking your vehicle to a glass shop that uses original equipment manufacturer (OEM) parts and adhesive materials that won't be affected by freezing temperatures.

"Having your damaged windshield repaired or replaced by a reputable, reliable, quality auto glass shop is important to your safety no matter what the season," he says.

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