



appliance doctor

Winter warnings could be lifesavers

Yesterdays drive home from Tawas, Mich., brought to mind some thoughts for this column. The ice I observed on the edges of ponds alongside the highway made me think of my young life being raised in northern Ontario. The

four inches of snow which covered the trunk of a car passing me gave out a ring of a new Michigan winter season. I thought of the many happy times that people will enjoy this year and how some will not be so fortunate.

If I could just write a list of things to be on the lookout for, and if some of the readers could follow my warnings or advice, then my thoughts would not be wasted.

1. The period of time when accidents occur at an extreme rate is that first time it snows and freezes. We have been accustomed to summer driving and we fail to realize that our reflexes must change for winter use. Before you take off on that first day, why not drive around the neighborhood a few times to get the feel of things. The next time you're at the store, purchase a bag of kitty litter to use the next time you're stuck in a parking lot. It really does help create great traction when you throw a few handfuls under the wheels.

2. Shut off the water supply inside the house which leads to the outdoor

spigots. You would be surprised at how much damage is reported each year by frozen pipes leading to the garden hose. The plumbing industry is kept very busy each winter taking care of these unnecessary freeze ups.

3. Clean out the clothes dryer vent line which directs the air to the outside. Make sure you are not using that plastic or tin foil vent line because it can be very dangerous. Take an old toothbrush and clean the hinges on the flapper door outside. When that little door fails to close all the way, there is a lot of cold air drawn into your laundry room. The end result is a waste of energy because the dryer drum is now ice cold and you add 10 minutes of operation to dry a load of clothes.

4. Use a candy thermometer and make sure the temperature of water in your washing machine is at 100 degrees when you set it for warm water wash. You are not going to wash properly



JOE GAGNON

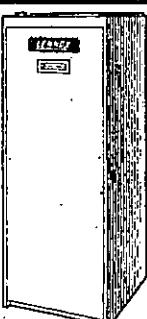
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