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Motorists Warned To Be Careful In Cold Weather

Nothing makes as dull reading as a set of statistics. That is, unless you are a statistician or one of those statistics.

The sense-numbing traffic-accident statistics are no exception. True, the frequency of traffic accidents is proving to more people that "It can happen to me." But the constant flood of safety messages in print and over the air seem to fall on unlistening ears somewhat like the monotonous rhythms of an acid rock combo.

Maybe we are oversaturated with safety messages. Maybe we have begun to tune them out like a henpecked husband tunes out a nagging wife. Or, we are convinced that the other guy drinks and drives, handles his car like a maniac or just doesn't care.

BUT A DEEPER ANALYSIS of the situation reveals two discomfoting facts:
1. The drinking or reckless driver as often as not collides with an innocent party--perhaps one who just wasn't paying attention until too late.

2. It is almost a psychological impossibility for a normal person to pay 100 per cent attention to his driving 100 per cent of the time. It is human nature to let your mind wander even momentarily. A pretty girl in a miniskirt may distract a man. Thoughts about what to cook for dinner may distract a woman. Luckily, most of us find these lapses short and without mishap.

So even if we live up to the requirements of operating a care safely, we are not immune to accidents.

WHILE NONE OF US has any power over what the other guy does, there is something all of us can control. That is the condition of the cars we drive. In keeping our cars in good shape we can minimize our chances of accidents.

In the heavily trafficked high speed highways we drive on, the condition in which our cars are kept can mean the difference between a close call and a disaster. This state of affairs becomes particularly pertinent this time of year.

Days are shorter, increasing the added hazard of more night-time driving. Highway conditions are, likely as not, poor. In-city traffic volume is at its highest due to increased business volume and holiday-season shopping. And holiday-time drinking adds to the menace.

While most responsible drivers keep these conditions in mind, the added hazard makes it more imperative to have certain elements of the car in top condition.

Obviously safe tires, sound braking systems and accurate steering are vital to safe operation. These components in good working order can help compensate for driver errors.

BUT OTHER COMPONENTS must be in good condition for complete safety. A set of worn shock absorbers can help put a car out of control should a chuckhole or bad bump be encountered.

Improperly aimed headlights can help conceal a bad traffic situation, particularly in winter with added hours of darkness. An unresponsive engine can hinder safely passing in a tight spot. A leaky exhaust system can make the driver drowsy or, in extreme cases, kill him with carbon monoxide, especially in winter when windows are closed. Defective signaling devices like horns or flasher lights can fail to warn another driver. And these items get more of a workout this time of year.

The list is long and grim. True, there is no substitute for sober, alert driving practices. But these alone are no free pass to accident-free driving. Keeping your car in shape is almost as vital.

Champion Spark Plug Company urges you to visit your neighborhood service station or garage to get your car in tiptop shape for fall and winter.

Next time you get behind the wheel, ask yourself one simple question: "Am I and is my car in condition to drive?"

Prepare Your Car Now...



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NO
DEALERS



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