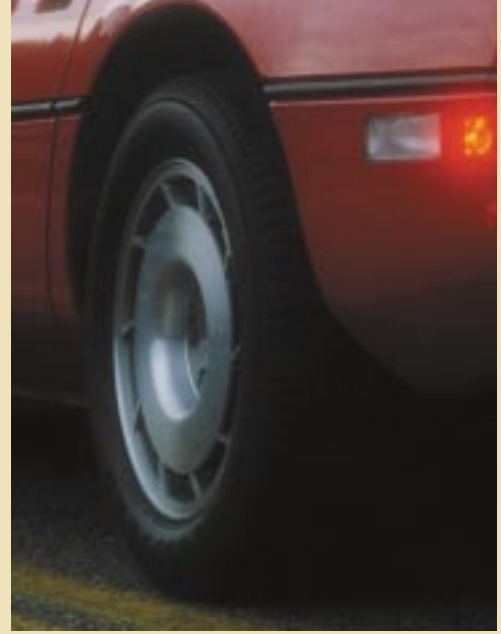


Under Pressure

New cars have “idiot” lights for everything: oil, temperature, transmission fluid, air filters, unbuckled seat belts, open doors—you name it. But tire pressure is often forgotten. And that’s really idiotic. Properly inflating your tires can save you hundreds of dollars a year in fuel costs alone. Plus, it helps tires wear longer, and you are more likely to avoid crashes.

Tires lose an average of two pounds of air each month during cool weather. But that loss speeds up in warmer weather and at higher driving speeds. Waiting until the tire looks low is a sure way to burn money.

You can avoid this extra cost by buying something as simple as a \$3 pressure gauge. Use it to make sure your tires are inflated properly. You’ll find your car’s correct tire pressure on the sticker attached to the driver’s door edge, door post, or in the owner’s manual.



How Much Fuel Left?

Before breaking out the gas grill or getting the motor home ready for camping, check to see how much fuel is in your propane tanks.

How? Well, you could do a lot of math—weigh the tank and subtract the container weight, then divide that by 4.24 (the pound weight of propane per gallon). Or you can do it an easier way and not have to disconnect the tank.

Pour a glass of water over the tank. The moisture will bead up differently below the line of liquid propane. This tip is something you may want to remember when it is time to store your grill or camper before next winter.

Remember, use ORM before using your grill or motor home. You can reduce the chance of serious injury by adhering to the manufacturer’s precautions.





Darwin Down Under

Darwin Awards celebrate Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by commemorating the remains of those who contribute to the improvement of our gene pool by removing themselves from it in really stupid ways. The mid-year Darwin Award winners and runners-up were selected in September. One of the runners-up was Peter, a 52-year-old owner of a machinery- and equipment-training school in Perth, Australia.

It just stands to reason, one should follow safe practices while filming a safety video. But Peter violated that rule of common sense while filming a forklift-safety demonstration. With the cameras rolling, he was thrown from the cabin of his forklift and crushed. Subsequent investigation revealed the culprits responsible for the fatality: driver error and high speed over varied terrain, coupled with an unused seat belt. His final safety demonstration was the most convincing of his career.

To see more Darwin Award winners, visit their web site at www.darwinawards.com.

You Snooze, You Lose

You've probably tried everything to stay awake on those late-night drives: playing the radio, singing Elvis songs, running the air conditioner full blast—even driving with your head out the window.

But the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration has found that the best short-term solutions to drowsy driving are drinking two cups of coffee, not driving between midnight and 6 a.m., or taking a short nap (15 to 20 minutes). They didn't mention a "Jailhouse Rock" solo.

Planning a Trip?

By Rae Mack

If you are, your first stop should be the National Traffic and Road Closure Information web site. Their address is www.fhwa.dob.gov/trafficinfo.

The first stop at that site allows you to pick the state or states you are traveling to. Just click on the map or on the state's name. For instance, I clicked on Virginia. The next screen gave the URL for the Virginia Department of Transportation.

The site then gave me a choice of places in Virginia. I could choose between road construction information, traffic cameras, or incident and conditions maps. I chose Northern Virginia Road Construction Information.

What popped up was information about the construction at the 95-495 Springfield interchange. It had a map and aerial photo and explained what work is being done. There was a spot (project schedule) that I clicked on and found out where work crews are and when they are working. This was definitely good information to have before my next TAD trip to the D.C. area.

If I lived in that area, I could have clicked on "commuter solutions" and used the wealth of information there to find out how to get out of stalled traffic.

That page gave information on the Metro, Park and Ride lots, the Virginia Railway Express, OmniRide, vanpools, carpools, buspools, Telework, Guaranteed Ride Home, Metrochek, and even biking.

