



Spring Cleaning

Our vehicles operate in a harsh environment that affects various automotive components. We have had a lengthy winter of slushy, salt-laden snow attacking every area imaginable on your automobile. This article addresses some of the things that need attention after a lengthy winter.

Clean the road grime build-up from the backs of your wheels: Dirt accumulation can cause wheel imbalance setting off severe vibrations that can accelerate wear of tires, steering and suspension components. Also with today's aluminum alloy rims, road salt corrodes rims faster than oxygen. This would be a perfect time to have your tires filled with nitrogen, which has been proven to greatly inhibit corrosion of the bead areas on aluminum wheels.

Check your braking system to be sure it is in top condition. Rust and corrosion can impede braking performance but they happen so gradually we do not notice it.

Service your vehicles battery and inspect all wiring. This is an excellent time to have your battery terminals cleaned to remove corrosion build up. And while under the hood inspect all wiring. A single loose or dirty connection can leave you stranded as the wiring harnesses are essential pathways for the on-board computer to receive data from all its many sensors.

Internally, soot and carbon can begin to contaminate essential engine systems (fuel rail, fuel injectors, intake air plenum runners, valves, combustion chambers and the EGR system to name a few). You can restore the health of these systems by performing a fuel system service. The benefits will be instantaneous. You'll have more power, easier starts, improved pick up/ take off response and better fuel economy. The environment will also benefit as you'll have lower tail pipe emissions.

Another spring clean up that may be required is servicing the throttle body and the hot wire in the mass air flow sensor. Periodic cleaning keeps your vehicle performing well while giving you the best fuel mileage.

And when all that's done, replace your air filter and cabin air filters (if so equipped): Filters should be replaced ever 20,000 km or once a year. There's no time like spring to get the benefit of the fresh air.

With today's vehicles, it's easy to ignore regular maintenance schedules. The complex computer systems used to operate vehicles have an uncanny ability to hide minor problems, which not only rob your vehicle of fuel and power, but can lead to larger issues if ignored too long. Your best chance for years of trouble-free driving is maintain your vehicle according to the manufacturer's guideline at the mileage intervals recommended.