

FantomWorks Seasonal Maintenance Tips

1 Batteries, Plugs & Wires: All of these components give the spark to your vehicle and they work extra hard when it's cold. Winter stress can compromise their performance up to 60 percent. Test and replace old or weak batteries, plugs and wires, especially those more than three years old. It will certainly be cheaper than a tow and replacement down the road.

2 Tire Pressure: Cold weather can reduce tire pressure, so make sure all tires, including the spare, are properly inflated and balanced. You can check the inside of your car door to find out what the proper air pressure should be.

3 Belts and hoses: Inspect and replace worn or cracked belts, as well as hoses that are blistered, brittle or too soft. Belts and hoses older than five years, even if they look intact, might need to be replaced.

4 Brakes: After a season of snow and ice it is advisable to inspect the brake system, including lines, hoses, parking brake and brake fluid for proper level. We rely on our brakes and something as simple as a brake pad change can help put an end to any worries about brake safety.

5 Suspension & Wheel Alignment: Deep potholes aren't friendly to shocks and struts. An inspection to determine wear or leaks can alleviate bigger issues down the road. Also having your wheels properly aligned after a season of tough conditions can help keep you on the road in a safe direction.

6 Fluid Levels: There are lots of things to check but don't skip over any of them: engine oil, transmission fluid, brake fluid, antifreeze/coolant and, yes, even windshield washer fluid. Commonly a brake fluid flush can get your sluggish brakes working as good as new and because this is recommended once a year there is no better time to get it done.

7 Engine Air filter: Changing out the engine air filter is a quick job that can be done during any oil, brake or transmission fluid change.

8 Windshield Wipers: Check them for wear and cracks and replace them if necessary, think about doing this each spring and fall.

9 Clean the interior: It's easy to use your car or truck as a storage area for all kinds of things (including useless junk and garbage), especially in the cold months when you don't feel like cleaning your car in the freezing cold. Take the time to declutter your car, losing the extra weight can significantly increase your gas mileage too. It's worth it.

10 Clean the exterior: Take special care to address the undercarriage where road salt can eat away or corrode the metal. A thorough cleaning at a car wash should do the trick