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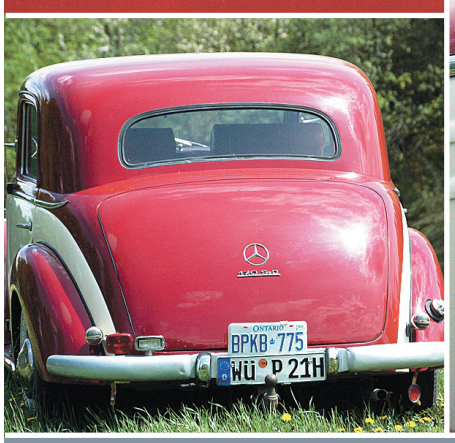

A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO
THE WINCHESTER PRESS

AutoPro eyeing future growth with latest expansion

WINCHESTER

It is a time of new beginnings at Winchester AutoPro.

The County Road 43 business has been a hive of construction activity of late with an expansive addition being erected on the facility's north side.

When completed, the new workspace will allow for two wash bays and two more service bays, bringing the total to eight.

"The other building was old and obsolete," Phil Van Noppen, business owner, said. "To continue to serve our customers better, this is something we had to do in order to grow."

"To continue to serve our customers better, this is something we had to do in order to grow."

— Phil Van Noppen

Since opening in 1980, Winchester AutoPro's exterior appearance has remained largely unchanged, right down to the pumping station terminal, which had not provided gasoline for a number of years.

"We got to a certain point of being stagnant… No space and no room for expansion," Van Noppen said. "It was either go forward or stay the same. We took the leap and hope it is forward."

In total, the expansion project's price tag is roughly $250,000, but, as Van Noppen said, it is important the business continues to grow and invests in the future.

"We could have renovated the old building, but then we wouldn't have been left with much room to expand," he said. "But from a business standpoint, when you upgrade the look of your business you make it more attractive to people."

Going forward, Van Noppen said he anticipates adding some more staff once the expansion is completed, while an open house for the new facility will be held at some point.

Winchester AutoPro's new building is to be open by the end of June.

"It is exciting to have this done," Van Noppen said. "I know our clients like to see us doing things like this."



New look

Winchester AutoPro is in the midst of a major expansion, which is to be completed by the end of June. The shop's original front half (below) was leveled in order to make way for a new facility, complete with two wash bays and two service bays.



Featured on our cover: A German classic

This 1954 Mercedes Benz 170 S-D is part of a collection of European automobiles owned by John Pritchard, who has displayed it on the side of County Road 43 at the western junction of Kerr's Ridge Road in Hallville.

The unique two-tone paint and pristine condition makes it a standout. Pritchard, who owns and operates The Sports Car Factory along with his sons, Mark and Steve, explained he purchased the Benz four or five years ago from an owner in Indian Harbour, N.S.

"He called and asked me if I was interested," said Pritchard. "I told him if he could drive it to Halifax, I would come and see it."

Upon that first inspection, Pritchard was sold. He took possession of the classic, toured around Nova Scotia, the Gaspe Bay and drove it home to Hallville. Since then, he has added a Bowler travel trailer (painted to match the Benz), straps on a kayak, secures a couple of bicycles to the rig and goes camping.



"We certainly get plenty of looks and lots of questions when we go camping," he said.

The 170 is powered by a four-cylinder diesel, one of the first production diesel engines, that averages 44 kpg. The auto was built in one of the few factories not destroyed by Allied bombing in the Second World War. It features rack and pinion steering and independent suspension. The interior is leather (beige in colour), and according to its owner, offers a comfortable ride.

The Sports Car Factory, in operation since 1985, is famous for reconstructing, almost from scrap, British and European autos and welcomes visitors who receive a factual tour from Pritchard.

For more information, call 613-989-2171 or email john@hallville.com

Press Photos – Van Bridger

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Summer highways beckon – are your tires ready?

WINCHESTER

With the summer driving season nearly upon us, Canada's tire makers want drivers to get into the groove with their tires by measuring tread depth.

Why is tread depth important? When even a moderate summer thunder storm strikes, the traction and stopping capabilities of tires nearing the end of their service life can be substantially reduced, particularly at highway speeds.

Sufficient tread depth is what allows tires to grip rain-covered roads, and provide the traction required for control and braking capability.

As every driver who has ever had to make a panic stop on a rain-slicked highway knows, the ability to stop quickly can spell the difference between a stressful driving experience and a serious collision.

Hydroplaning

When the tread becomes too worn, and the tread grooves become too shallow, a tire's ability to efficiently evacuate water is considerably reduced. This can lead to hydroplaning where the tire loses contact with the road's surface and floats on top of the water, resulting in a loss of tire grip or traction. When this occurs, the distance needed to stop in a panic braking situation increases significantly. Hydroplaning, which is extremely dangerous, can also result in a complete loss of control.

A recent U.S. tire study, conducted by *Tire Rack*, demonstrates how dramatically stopping distances can increase on wet roadways depending on tire wear. The study measured panic stopping distances at highway speeds on wet asphalt (equivalent to a moderate rain shower), comparing new tires with partially and fully worn tires.

Not surprisingly, the shortest stopping distance was on new tires with 10/32nds of an inch (eight millimetres) of tread depth. In the demonstration, tires three quarters worn to a tread depth of 4/32nds of an inch (3.2 millimetres) increased the stopping distance, taking a further seven car lengths to stop. On fully worn tires with tread depth at the legal limit of 2/32nds of an inch (1.6 millimetres), the stopping distance was lengthened by yet another seven car lengths.

This study shows that, over the first three quarters of tire tread life, the stopping distance can increase by seven car lengths.

Most tire makers generally recommend that drivers replace their tires before the legal limit of tread wear is reached to ensure their vehicle's tires always have excellent stopping power, particularly on wet road surfaces.

"Keeping track of your tires' tread depth by taking regular measurements is vital to safety, and making an informed decision about when to replace your tires," Glenn Maidment, president of The Rubber Association of Canada (RAC), said. "Motorists who are unsure if their tread depth is sufficient for wet driving conditions should consult their local tire professionals."

Proper tire inflation

Proper tire inflation is a safe driving essential in all driving conditions. Tire under-inflation increases stopping distance, and hampers performance by lessening vehicle stability, particularly when cornering.

Tire makers strongly recommend that drivers measure their tire pressures monthly to ensure they are always inflated to the vehicle manufacturer's recommendation.

"Taking five minutes each month to measure and, if necessary, adjust your tire pressures safeguards optimal tire performance," Maidment said. "Beyond being the leading cause of tire failure and premature wear, under-inflation also wastes fuel and harms the environment."

An under-inflated tire wastes fuel because it does not roll as easily as it is intended. The increased rolling resistance, which worsens with the degree of under-inflation, requires the vehicle's motor to burn more fuel to push the vehicle down the road.

According to the RAC, a motorist who drives 20,000 kilometres per year can save as much as $100 in fuel simply be ensuring their tires are inflated to the right pressure. For drivers who log many more kilometres over the course of a year, the savings can be considerably higher.

The price tag for ignoring tire inflation is high. Canadian drivers rolling on under-inflated tires are expected to waste more than 500 million litres of fuel in 2013. That is enough fuel to power 250,000 vehicles for a full year. All that wasted fuel will release an additional 1.2 million tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

According to RAC research, one third of Canada's 21 million vehicles have at least one under-inflated tire and only 30 per cent of drivers measure their tire pressures monthly.



Tread and inflation tips

To ensure excellent stopping power on wet road surfaces, most tire makers generally recommend that drivers replace their tires before they are worn to the legal limit (1.6 millimetres or 2/32s of an inch).

Motorists are advised to check tread depth once every two months, and at the beginning of each new driving season.

Measuring tread depth is a simple procedure. Here's how:

• The most precise method is to use an inexpensive tread wear indicator, basically a small ruler. To measure tread depth, simply rest the gauge shoulder on the tread, extent the ruler or "pin" to the deepest part of the tread groove and take the reading.

• Motorists can also give their treads the "Bluenose" test. Inserting a dime upside down into the tread groove does this. If the top portion of the Bluenose's sails is visible, it is time to replace the tire.

Tire makers recommend an easy, four-step approach to proper tire inflation:

• Identify the right air pressure for your tires by referring to the vehicle placard. Check the owner's manual for its exact location. Never rely on a visual inspection. A tire can be under or over inflated by 20 per cent or more and not be noticeable.

• To get an accurate reading, use a reliable tire gauge and remember to only measure pressure when your tires are cold. If you have been driving, wait three hours before measuring tire pressure.

• Remove the cap from the valve stem, press the tire gauge onto the valve and take the pressure reading using a reliable tire gauge.

• Add air until the recommended air pressure is achieved. If you overfill the tire, release air by pushing on the metal stem in the centre of the valve, then re-check the pressure.

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Your automobile policy

To list or not to list?

Submitted by Brister Group Insurance

Your personal automobile policy is a legal document, which outlines what coverage and protection is available to you. It is very important to know that your policy is a contract and it requires you, under OAP1 section 1.4.1 of the wordings, to:

"... promptly tell us of any change in information supplied in your original application for insurance, such as additional drivers, or a change in the way a described automobile is used."

Q. What does this mean?

A. It means you have an obligation to advise your insurance broker of any driver(s) that have regular or frequent use of your vehicle when completing an application and/or if usage changes after you have completed the application.

Q. What will happen if I do not disclose a driver either on the application or thereafter?

A. It means, claims under your policy, with the exception of certain accident benefits, may be denied and your policy may be cancelled. For example, if there is someone living in your household who is a licensed driver, but not listed, and they are involved in an accident while driving a vehicle named on your policy, the claim could be denied and the policy cancelled.

Q. How do I know if I am required to list a driver or not list a driver?

A. The best advice is to describe the situation to your insurance broker and they will help you make that determination.

Here are some helpful tips

Drivers who should be listed/named on your automobile policy:

- Any and all licensed drivers living in your household.
- The actual owner of the vehicle (may not be the registered owner). For example, a grandparent who bought a vehicle and is the actual owner but "gifted" the vehicle to someone living in the household.
- The registered owner of the vehicle.
- A person with regular and/or frequent use of the vehicle, such as driving to school several times/week.
- A person using your car as a part of a car pooling arrangement.
- A car insured on your policy, but is garaged elsewhere with another driver; this driver must also be named on your policy.

Drivers who are not required to be listed on your automobile policy:

- A friend or neighbour who you give permission to borrow your vehicle.
- A short term visitor in your home who you loan the vehicle to on one or two occasions during their visit.

Remember that if you loan your vehicle out:

- You must provide consent to loan your car to another driver.
- The driver must be authorized by law to drive your vehicle.
- If the driver has an accident while driving your car, the incident goes on your insurance record.
- When you lend your car, you are also lending your driving record.
- The person borrowing your car cannot be using it as part of a routine i.e. every Friday for groceries.

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Road trip tips for spring drivers

A road trip is a great way to get outdoors and make the most of a warm day, but there are a few tricks of the trade drivers can employ to ensure their road trips are as enjoyable as possible.

• **Give your car a good wash.** Salt and sand can build up on a vehicle over the course of a snowy winter, so a power washing will help remove excess salt, sand, or dirt and help the car run more smoothly.

• **Get the vehicle a tune-up.** A tune-up, including an oil change, should be part of your pre-trip planning. Make sure winter hasn't caused any damage to the vehicle's body and ask your mechanic to perform a thorough inspection of the vehicle's suspension and brakes. If any problems arise, address them before embarking on your road trip.

• **Subscribe to a roadside assistance program.** Roadside assistance programs, whether it's CAA or a program offered through your insurance company, provide a measure of security to road-trippers. Many roadside assistance programs provide variety of emergency assistance for members, including:

- towing service if your vehicle cannot start or operate safely,
- battery service if your car's battery needs a jump,
- flat tire service if you get a flat tire and don't have a spare or cannot change the tire yourself,
- fuel delivery service if your car runs out of gas, and
- lockout service if you lock your keys in the car.



Spring check-up

Troy Wilson of Akcent Motor Sales in Winchester was busy giving this car its spring tune-up, checking filters, fluids, the battery, and more. Press Photo – Casselman

These services can act as a safety net should an issue arise when you're on the road and far away from home or far away from a service station. Keep your membership card in your wallet and store their customer service number in your cellular phone should you accidentally lose your membership card or lock it inside your car.

• **Bring cash as well as credit cards on the trip.** When embarking on a road trip, don't assume you will have ready access to an ATM on your trip or at your destination. This means you may reach a point when you have no cash on hand. While it's a good idea to bring some cash along on the trip, bring a credit card or cards as well should you find yourself with no cash. A major credit card, such as a Mastercard, American Express, or Visa, is likely to be accepted at most filling stations.

• **Invest in a road navigation system.** A road navigation system can be your best friend, helping you find your way in places with which you are unfamiliar. Road navigation systems can alert you to traffic conditions while providing directions and alternate routes. Some systems will even alert you to nearby filling stations, lodging, or restaurants.

How to pack a car safely

Packing the car for a road trip can be complicated. Although the goal may be to cram as much as possible into the car and get on the road quickly, part of the safety plan for this year's adventure should include packing properly to avoid injury.

• **Adjust tire pressure prior to travel.** Consult the owner's manual to determine the proper tire pressure when the vehicle is carrying a full load.

• **Know the car's limits.** It also is important to stay below the maximum permitted weight or maximum load capacity for the car or truck. The load capacity is specified in the owner's manual.

• **Store the heaviest items at the lowest, most central part of the vehicle.** This helps reduce effects on handling that can lead to problems with steering or braking. Drivers should keep the overall centre of gravity lower to help reduce the risk of rollover.

• **Make sure everything is secured in the car or truck.** Use crates or boxes to house smaller items. Use straps or rope to tie down anything loaded in the back of a truck or SUV to the vehicle's cargo anchors. Load as much as you can into a car's trunk to avoid having loose items in the passenger area.

• **Keep a clear view of mirrors and the rear of the vehicle.** Do not pack any items higher than the level of the rear seats. Not only can these items fly forward in the event of sharp braking or a crash, but they also may obscure the driver's view of the road.

• **Invest in a roof rack or cargo box.** Only place light items on the roof of the car so you can free up interior space. Secure roof items tightly, as they will be caught by the updraft while driving and you do not want to send them airborne and onto the roadway. Also, if you do use the roof for storage, be aware of how much taller the items will make your vehicle so you know if you can safely drive beneath underpasses.

• **Make sure passengers can be seated safely.** Do not seat more passengers than can be restrained by the seat belts in the car. If there is not enough room, it is safer in the long run to take two cars.

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Tips to make buying a preowned vehicle less stressful

Buying a preowned vehicle is a lot less stressful than in decades past. Buyers who do their homework can find the right deal if they stay patient. Here are some tips:

• **Research the vehicle you want to buy.** The Internet has made it easier than ever before to conduct research regarding certain vehicles. In a relatively short period of time, consumers can learn about a vehicle's standard features, safety records and warranty information, and may even find opinions about the vehicle online from past or current owners of the same model. Owner opinions might be especially valuable, as owners might shed light on any mechanical issues you might not be able to glean from other sources.



• **Determine your price range.** Settling on a price range is an important part of the process when buying a preowned vehicle. If you will be financing the vehicle, then you likely won't save as much on insurance as if you buy the vehicle outright. That's because lending institutions typically mandate that a vehicle be fully insured while it's being financed. If your insurance is going to be as high as it would be to purchase a new vehicle, then you might want to make a larger down payment so your monthly payment is lower. A preowned vehicle is likely to need more immediate maintenance than a brand new car, so keep that in mind when figuring out a price range you can be comfortable with.

• **Find a reputable seller.** Working with a seller you're comfortable with can make the process of buying a preowned vehicle a lot less stressful. Private sellers tend to sell preowned vehicles at lower prices, and buyers are sometimes more at ease because they don't feel as pressured with a private seller as they might at a dealership. However, dealerships offer a greater sense of security, as their preowned vehicles are often certified and backed by warranties.

• **Test-drive the vehicle.** It might seem simple, but consumers have the right to test-drive a preowned vehicle just like they would a brand new car on the lot at a dealership. In fact, the test-drive is perhaps more important with a preowned vehicle than a new vehicle. A new vehicle will likely feel good no matter what on a test-drive, but test-driving a preowned vehicle may reveal certain issues. When test-driving, take the vehicle on a long enough ride to accelerate from a stop, get a feel for the vehicle's visibility, braking, cornering, and ability to climb hills, and see how the vehicle drives on the highway. The ride should be long enough so you can get a true feel for how the vehicle drives, and you should pay attention to any noises along the way, such as noises coming from the engine or any creaks, rattling, and squeaks that tend to be commonplace with older vehicles.

• **Don't be afraid to negotiate.** Preowned vehicles may have a suggested price attached to them, but that price is entirely contingent on the condition of the vehicle and it's certainly open to negotiation. This is true whether you are buying from a dealership or a private seller. If the seller refuses to negotiate, you can always walk away and continue your search.

Things to look for on a vehicle history report

When shopping for a preowned vehicle, you should always ask for a vehicle history report, regardless of whether you're buying from a dealership or a private citizen. If the seller refuses, it's time to look elsewhere. When a seller eagerly provides a vehicle history report, buyers should examine a few things on the report so they can be more comfortable should they ultimately purchase the vehicle.

• **Number of previous owners:** All vehicle history reports list how many owners a vehicle has had in the past. In general, the more owners a vehicle has had, the more risk you're assuming as the buyer. Vehicles that tend to change hands often are less likely to have been well maintained.

In addition to how many owners a car has had, look at who those owners were. Vehicles that were once owned by a rental car company, for instance, were likely not treated very well, as few people care how much abuse their rental car endures. However, a car once owned by a rental agency likely has lots of highway miles on it, and such driving is less taxing on a vehicle than city driving where the vehicle's engine is stopping and starting more frequently.

• **Specifics:** Just because a seller provides you with a vehicle history report does not necessarily mean that report matches up with the vehicle you might be buying. A dishonest seller might try to pass off the history report of another vehicle of the same make and model as his own. This is done to hide a suspect vehicle history or even when thieves are selling a stolen car to an unsuspecting buyer. Check the vehicle identification number, or VIN, on the vehicle to ensure the car you're looking at matches the car on the history report. In addition, each vehicle history report describes the car, so if the description does not match you might be holding an inaccurate report.

• **Location:** The vehicle history report will show where the car has lived over the years. Vehicles that have spent ample time in harsh weather, such as Northern Ontario or another region with a prolonged winter, have likely had their share of weather-related wear and tear, more so than a car driven in warmer climates. While this does not mean past owners didn't properly maintain the car, some buyers might be wary of purchasing a vehicle that has endured too many harsh winters.

• **Physical appearance:** Does the physical appearance of the car match up with its history report? Sometimes a vehicle owner does not report when a car has been in an accident. Owners might do this to avoid higher insurance premiums or to mask the vehicle's history because they intend to sell the car down the road. If a car exhibits any signs of body work that aren't on its history report or if the car drives awkwardly but has supposedly not been in an accident, buyers should consider this a major red flag and strongly consider walking away from the vehicle and continuing their search elsewhere.

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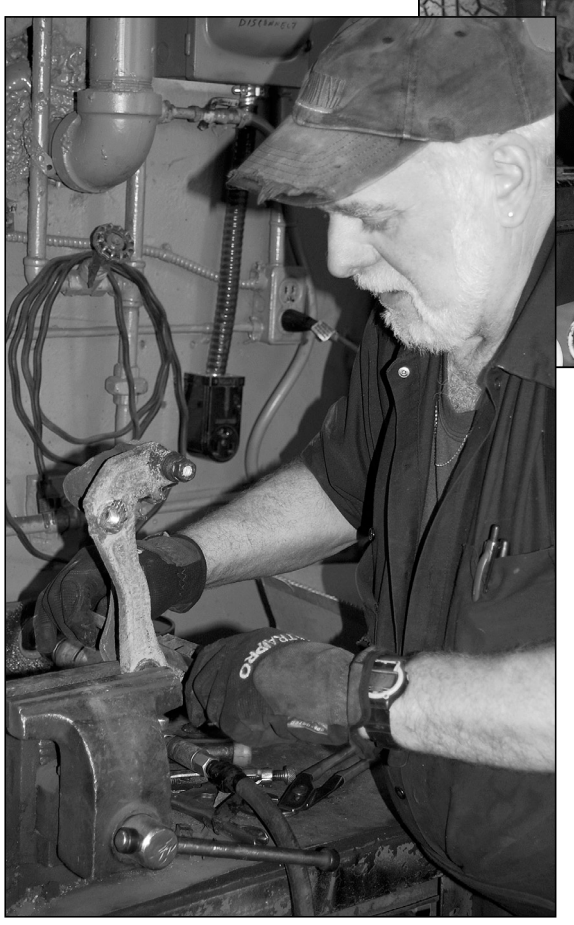
Following an accident that crunched the front end of this car, D's Collision Center of Winchester was hired to replace it. Patrick Wood is pictured here finishing up some last minute additions, such as attaching the bug deflector.



Disappearing rust

As part of a brake repair job, Steve Knapp of W.J.L. Boyd & Sons in Winchester was busy sanding the rust off this piece of the caliper assembly.



Stopping leaks

Mechanic Matt Richardson of D&J Motors in Winchester just finished welding parts of this truck's exhaust system.

Press Photos – Casselman



Making it safe

Mechanics at Raymond Kelly's Garage in Winchester are busy making cars safe to drive. Doug Kelly is pictured here getting ready to make some necessary replacements.

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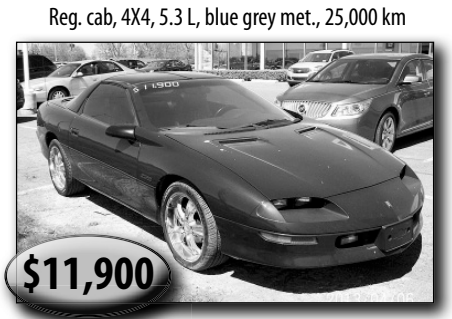

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Top driver distractions

Distracted driving can be very dangerous. Diverting one's attention from the road for mere seconds can have serious, and potentially fatal, consequences.

Any activity that takes attention away from driving is considered a distraction. These include taking your hands off the wheel, daydreaming, or engaging in any behaviour that takes your eyes off of the road. Certain activities are known distractions, and understanding which habits can be dangerous and making strides to correct behaviours can help save lives, prevent injuries, and reduce accident-related expenses.

> Nearly three out of four Canadian drivers admits to engaging in a behaviour that is considered a distraction

An Allstate Canada marketing survey of 1,605 Canadian adults conducted between July 26 and July 28 found that, although the vast majority of Canadians thinks driving while distracted is unacceptable, nearly three out of four Canadian drivers admits to engaging in a behaviour that is considered a distraction. That is perhaps in part because drivers are not aware just how distracting some the following behaviours truly are.

Using mobile phones

Leading the list of the top distractions behind the wheel are mobile phones. Phones now do more than just place calls, and drivers often cannot pull away from their phones, even when driving. The use of a hands-free device does not lower distraction levels. The percentage of vehicle crashes and near-crashes attributed to dialing is nearly identical to the number associated with talking or listening.

Accident rates have increased thanks to texting, which involves a person taking his or her hands and eyes off of the road. A 2009 study by *Car and Driver* magazine compared the dangers of texting while driving to the effects of driving drunk to see which would be more dangerous under the same conditions. Measuring the time it takes to brake after being alerted by a red light to stop, the reaction time was recorded when the driver was legally drunk, reading an e-mail and sending a text. Texting easily elicited the slowest response time.

Moving objects

Whether there's a pet bouncing in the front seat or children being boisterous in the back, passengers and items moving around the car are significant distractions. Turning around to look at the kids or to reach for a ball that may be rolling around on the floor of the car can take a person's eyes off the road. If something really is important and needs to be addressed, it is much safer to pull over and take care of it before getting back on the road.

Daydreaming

Many people will admit to daydreaming behind the wheel or looking at a person or object outside of the car for too long. Perhaps they're checking out a house in a new neighbourhood or thought they saw someone they knew on the street corner. It can be easy to veer into the direction your eyes are focused, causing an accident. In addition to trying to stay focused on the road, some drivers prefer the help of lane departure warning systems.

Eating

Those who haven't quite mastered walking and chewing gum at the same time may want to avoid eating while driving. The majority of foods require a person's hands to be taken off of the wheel and their eyes to be diverted from the road. Reaching in the back seat to share some french fries with the kids is also distracting.

Try to eat meals before getting in the car. For those who must snack while en route, take a moment to pull over at a rest area and spend 10 minutes snacking there before resuming the trip.

Reading

Glancing at an advertisement, updating a Facebook status or reading a book are all activities that should be avoided when driving. Even poring over a traffic map or consulting the digital display of a GPS system can be distracting.

When driving, attention should be placed on the task of safely getting from point A to point B. All other activities taking place in the vehicle are distractions that can end up risking a person's life.

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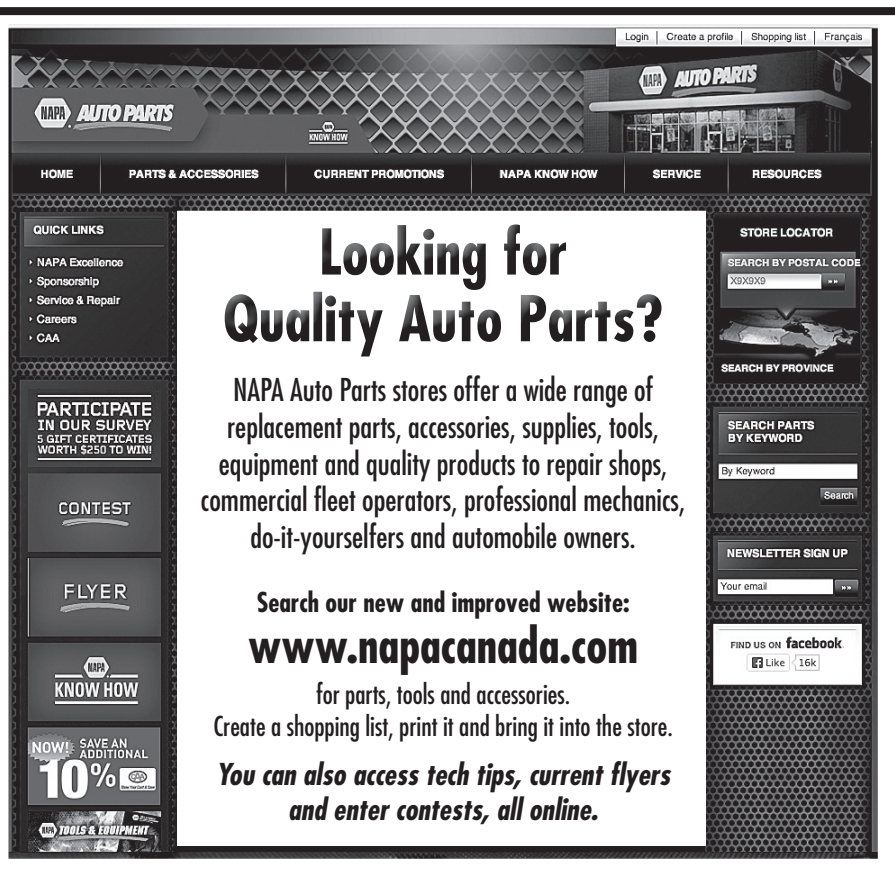

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