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The Pressure's On to Check Your Tires National Tire Safety Week Runs June 2-8

SACRAMENTO, CA – Pounds per Square Inch (PSI), alignment, and tire tread aren't things that drivers typically think about on a daily basis, yet failure to check and maintain your tires can result in what the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates to be 11,000 tire-related crashes each year. National Tire Safety Week, June 2-8, is a week dedicated to educating drivers about the importance of tire safety and aims to reduce the number of collisions caused by tire neglect.

“While tire inspections need to become a part of everyone's regular vehicle maintenance routines, the focus of National Tire Safety Week is to bring necessary awareness and encourage drivers to make sure that their tires meet safe driving standards,” said Rhonda Craft, Director of the California Office of Traffic Safety. “Inspecting your tires – especially before long summer drives or vacations -- takes very little time and can save not only your life but the lives of your passengers and other drivers.”

According to NHTSA, only 19 percent of consumers properly check and inflate their tires, and one in four cars has at least one tire that is significantly underinflated. Having properly inflated tires not only ensures better fuel economy, but it also improves vehicle handling, increases the life of tires, and protects cars from breakdowns and crashes. According to the California Air Resources Board, the fuel efficiency from correct inflation also lowers emission levels, helping clean the air.

“The public awareness efforts that accompany National Tire Safety Week are a result of a combined partnership of retailers, manufacturers and other traffic safety partners in the industry,” added Craft. “Together, we're working towards safer roads and more educated consumers.”

The California Office of Traffic Safety encourages all drivers to perform the following tire inspections during National Tire Safety Week and on a monthly basis, thereafter:

- Check your tire pressure according to your car manufacturer's recommendations for pressure levels. Most are posted on either the driver's door or door post. Don't forget to check the spare!
- Inspect your tires. If your tread is worn down to 1/16 of an inch, your tires need to be replaced. Always insure your old tires are properly recycled. Also look for uneven wear and tear; this may indicate you need a tire rotation or wheel alignment.
- Make sure that your tire valves have valve caps.
- Do not overload your car. Refer to your owner's manual for the maximum recommended load for the vehicle. This is especially important for 12-15 passenger vans, which have a higher risk of rollovers.

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To ensure driver and passenger safety:

- Slow down when going over potholes or other objects on the road.
- Avoid running over curbs and try not to strike curbs when parking.

Taking the time to check your tires now can save you money – and your sanity – later. For more information, visit www.safercar.gov. Information about other OTS efforts can be found at www.ots.ca.gov or via facebook.com/CaliforniaOTS and twitter.com/OTS_CA.

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