



# Safety Canada

THE MEMBER NEWSLETTER OF THE CANADA SAFETY COUNCIL

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## Closing Up the Cottage for the Winter

*Now that the lazy days of summer are over, Canadians are getting ready to close up the cottage for the winter. Although every cottage is different and every cottage owner's closing checklist is different, here are some basics to keep in mind.*

### Water Supply

If your cottage is not winterized, you can take steps to prevent your water supply line from freezing during the winter. You don't want to arrive there next spring to discover the consequences of not having drained the pipes before you close up this fall. Frozen pipes can burst, causing damage and meaning you'll have no running water.

Pipes can be fully drained when you're closing up the cottage. The water supply line can be filled with non-toxic anti-freeze made especially for supply pipes. And pipes that are carefully wrapped at key junction points are better protected against the cold.

As part of your maintenance routine you should also check the inside of your hot water holding tank for residue that can affect water quality and get caught in the faucet screen. Also, you should have your water analyzed regularly by a lab to ensure its quality, especially if the water suddenly shows a yellow or brown tinge. A filtration system can significantly increase the purity level and lessen the wear-and-tear on your cottage water system.

This is also the ideal time to thoroughly check your plumbing and faucets after a summer's wear-and-tear.

### Wildlife

Damages from small animals such as mice and squirrels are a concern to cottage owners. Avoid using poisons to keep out these critters that love to move in when you move out. You should remove all food from cottage before you close it. Bats, mice and squirrels can wiggle in through the smallest of holes. Inspect the building inside and out to make sure there are no small openings for them to enter. Place a wooden cover on the chimney to discourage birds and small animals from entering, and to stop any rain or snow. Tightly close your fireplace damper to prevent animals from getting in.

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# President's Perspective

Our article this month on closing up the cottage reminds me that cottages are prime targets for break-ins during the winter. From where I stand there are a few logical steps that can be taken to protect your cottage and its contents from vandalism and thieves. Cottages are great places for thieves to find valuable items like boats and outboard motors, chainsaws, water pumps, four wheelers and anything else that isn't nailed or screwed down. But by locking doors, windows and outbuildings will reduce crimes of opportunity. Also it is wise to remove any valuables that could attract vandals, such as televisions, stereo and other electronic equipment. Remove or hide any sharp or destructive tools such as knives, axes, saws, crowbars and hammers. Fire extinguishers can cause a mess, but could be useful in case of fire. Use your best judgment on whether to take these or leave them behind.

If you have any neighbours who stay there year-round, ask them to watch your home. Perhaps they could park a car in the driveway to help make the home look occupied.

If you leave the electricity on, you can use portable timers to turn lights on and off at specific times. You can install outdoor

motion sensors that flood the selected area with light whenever movement is detected to enhance security around the cottage.

Other than a good insurance policy there isn't a lot more you can do about it, unless you are willing to pay for a security system.

If you decide on a security system you can get a basic system that offers protection against burglaries. More sophisticated systems include smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. If you have such a system, inform your security company when you are leaving for the off-season and ensure they have your contact information. My view is that taking the time to properly close up (and secure) the cottage is time well spent.

## Safety, It's an Attitude



Jack Smith, President

*Continued from page 1*

## Electrical system

Some people choose to shut off electricity to their home in the off-season by throwing the main switch at the fuse box. If you do this, be sure to turn off all major appliances, your water heater, and electrical room heaters before you turn off the main switch. This will ensure a smoother and safer start-up when you re-open your home.

If you leave your electricity on to operate security systems or lighting, you should turn off the power supply to your major appliances at your main panel. Turn off the power supply to any space heaters. Otherwise they may turn on during cold weather.

To ensure the stove, fridge and other electrical equipment are not used in your absence, remove fuses and hide them in a safe place.

Visually inspect your hydro metre and power lines for damage. If a power line is down or damaged, stay clear and call your Hydro Company. Inspect visible wiring to outdoor lighting fixtures, water pumps and other equipment.

If wires are damaged, remove the fuse to that circuit or turn off the circuit breaker, and call a qualified electrician.

Check all household appliance cords. If damaged, unplug the appliance and do not use it until the cord is replaced. If your electrical panel uses fuses, make sure they are screwed in tightly and that you have spares. Don't use fuses higher than 15 amps in normal receptacles and lighting circuits.

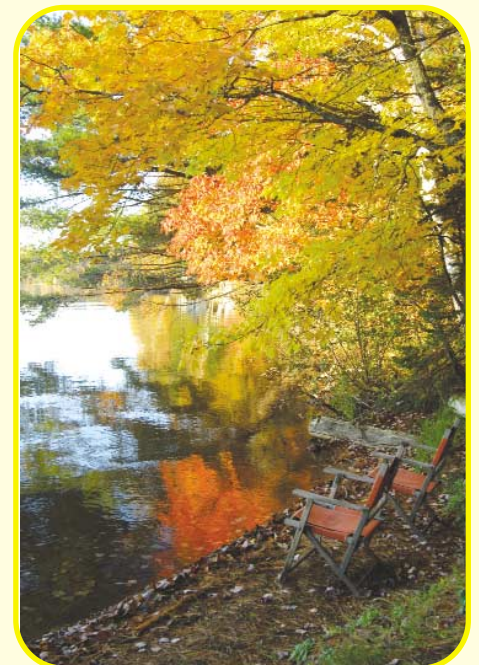
## Boat Motors and other power equipment

When storing power boating motors and other power equipment do not drain gasoline from fuel tanks, instead use a fuel stabilizer (available from your dealer or auto parts store). Winterize your engine(s) away from the water. Store boat motors, lawnmowers and other items with engines in a dry, weatherproof place. Cover anything that may rust over the winter with a coat of oil.

If your cottage is in a heavy snow area, consider installing temporary supports to protect the roof from caving in.

Another option is to hire a reliable local person to shovel the snow off the roof when necessary.

And remember that time spent in preventative measures now will pay significant dividends next spring when you open the cottage for next year's season.



The National Police Award for Traffic Safety was presented on August 24, 2008 at the annual conference of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) in Montréal, Québec. The award recognizes officers who go beyond the call of duty to keep road users safe. It is a joint initiative of the CACP, the Canada Safety Council and Transport Canada, and supports the goals of *Canada's Road Safety Vision 2010*.



This year's recipient of the National Police Award for Traffic Safety went to Chief Inspector Réjean Toutant (centre) and to the Division de la sécurité routière et de la circulation du Service de police de la Ville de Montréal.



Dr. Kash Ram, Director General of Transport Canada Road Safety and Motor Vehicle Regulation presented Staff Sergeant Richard Lavigne of the Ottawa Police Service with this year's Transport Canada Director General's Road Safety Lifetime Achievement award for his prominent role in many initiatives, improvements and accomplishments in traffic safety.

## Upcoming CSC's Awareness Campaigns

**National School Safety Week**  
October 17 – 23, 2008

**National Community Safety and  
Crime Prevention Campaign**  
November

**National Seniors' Safety Week**  
November 6 – 12

**National Home Fire Safety Week**  
November 24 – 30

**National Safe Driving Week**  
December 1 – 7

## WHEELS IN MOTION :

# Tire Safety

Tires are without a doubt the most critical safety component on a vehicle. Where the rubber meets the road affects traction, handling, steering, stability and braking. Because of this, a sudden tire failure can have serious consequences, especially if it occurs at highway speeds in a vehicle with a high centre of gravity.

Under inflation is the leading cause of tire failure. Twenty-three per cent of vehicles have at least one tire under-inflated by more than 20 per cent. An under-inflated tire may not be visibly noticeable; however, they are more prone to damage and failure and contribute to higher fuel costs. The right amount of air for your tires is specified by the vehicle manufacturer and is usually shown on the vehicle door edge, doorpost, glove box door or fuel door. It is also listed in the owner's manual.

The vehicle owner is responsible for prevention of tire failure caused by improper inflation.

Many people seldom ever check their tires. That's why all 2008 and newer vehicles now have the "Tire Pressure Monitoring Systems" to alert the driver

if a tire is low. TPMS isn't mandatory in Canada, and so far, there are no plans to make it so. Transport Canada says it is monitoring the effectiveness of TPMS and will not rule out the possibility of mandatory requirement, but also says that it will make no decisions before looking at several issues, including false or no warnings, sensor battery life, long-term system durability, and the extremely low numbers of tire failures cited in fatal collisions.

So even though your vehicle is equipped with TPMS, you should still check your tire pressure once a month and before any longer trips.

Tires do not last forever, even if the tread shows little visible wear. As rubber ages, it loses elasticity, hardens and can become brittle. The reinforcing cords inside a tire can also deteriorate and lose strength. This increases the risk of a sudden tire failure the older the tire gets. After ten years, the risk of failure goes up sharply. Because of this, many safety experts say tires that are more than six years old have expired and should be replaced regardless of how much tread is left on the tires.

## Did You Know

All tires sold in Canada have a tire identification number moulded into the sidewall. (See Figure below.) This number provides tire retailers specific manufacturing information about when and where the tire was made. The first two characters following DOT indicate the manufacturer and plant code; the third and fourth characters are the tire size code. The fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth are optional. The final four give the manufacturing date. For example, 2602 indicates that the tire was manufactured in the twenty-sixth week of 2002.

The maple leaf following the number indicates that the tire was made in Canada and certifies that it meets Transport Canada requirements.



## KWIZ KORNER :

# Tire Safety Quiz

### Test your knowledge

#### Question 1

How often should you measure your tires' air pressure?

- A. Once a year.
- B. Every 5,000 kilometres.
- C. At least once a month.

#### Question 2

How often should you rotate your tires?

- A. Every 2,000 to 5,000 kilometre.
- B. Twice a year.
- C. Approximately every 10,000 kilometres.

#### Question 3

Does temperature change affect tire pressure?

- A. No
- B. Yes

#### Question 4

When are worn tires most likely to hydroplane?

- A. Dry conditions
- B. Wet conditions
- C. When roads are under construction

#### Question 5

You can check to see if your tires are bald by using what common item?

- A. A penny.
- B. A tire pressure gauge.
- C. A credit card.

#### Question 6

What is the percentage of vehicles on the road today in Canada that have at least one tire under-inflated?

- A. 75 per cent
- B. 30 per cent
- C. 23 per cent

Answers on page 5

# CANADA LOOSENS BUMPER STANDARD TO ALIGN WITH U.S.

While the Institute is urging the U.S. government to toughen bumper standards, Canada has gone in the opposite direction and weakened bumper rules. In June Transport Canada published a rule that lowers the test speed in front and rear impacts to 4 km/h from 8 km/h. For corner impacts, the test speed was lowered to 25 km/h from 5 km/h. The rollback aligns Canada's bumper test speeds with those of the United States and Europe. The changes go into effect for vehicles made after September 2009.

"Now Canadian consumers will join American car owners in shelling out thousands of dollars in repair bills because the flimsy bumpers on their passenger vehicles don't keep damage away from safety equipment and sheet metal parts in minor impacts," says Joe Nolan, Institute senior vice president.

Canada and the U.S. used to run bumper tests for passenger vehicles at the same speeds. That changed in 1982 when the United States weakened its bumper standard from a 8 km/h test with a no-damage criteria to a 4 km/h test that allows unlimited damage to the bumper system (see Insurance Institute for Highway Safety Status Report, May 24, 1982). The Canadian government in 1983 proposed to follow its neighbour's lead but insurers, consumers, provincial and territorial governments balked so the effort was shelved. Bumper rules in both countries still don't apply to light trucks, and they don't address the problem of bumper height mismatch when SUVs, pickups, and vans collide with cars (see *Status Report*, July 1, 2008).

In justifying the change, Transport Canada cited the need to allow manufacturers the design flexibility to meet a pending global technical regulation for pedestrian safety. Nolan points out that there's no evidence that Canada's tougher bumper standard conflicted with pedestrian protection requirements. Nor is there any evidence the new standard will result in more pedestrian-friendly designs. A report from

the Motor Insurance Repair Research Centre in the United Kingdom suggests the absence of a relationship between pedestrian-friendly bumpers and damageability. Instead Nolan points to substantial evidence that weakening Canada's standard will lead to increased insurance claim rates and costs.

How can a Canadian car buyer find a vehicle that has good bumpers once the new rules take hold? Transport Canada points them to results of the Institute's bumper tests (iihs.org), plus evaluations by the Research Council for Automobile Repairs in Europe (rcar.org). "Clearly Transport Canada recognizes that this rule change could lead to cars with poor bumpers," Nolan says, "but apparently regulators believe it is up to individual consumers to protect themselves from the harm the new rule allows."



## KWIZ KORNER ANSWERS :

1. C. You should measure your tire pressure at least once a month all year round using a good quality tire gauge. When you check the air pressure, make sure the tires are cool – meaning they are not hot from driving.
2. C. Your tires wear at different rates - rotation can extend their useful life. A general guideline for tire rotation is approximately every 10,000 km, but check your owner's manual for the recommended interval.
3. B. Changes in air temperature cause changes in tire pressure, which is especially important

4. B. Wet Conditions. Tread grooves are designed to push water out from under the tread. If tires are worn, they are more likely to hydroplane – this means they surf along a film of water! Just like a water skier.
5. A. Using a simple tool like a penny can help you evaluate whether your treads need to be replaced. Place the penny upside down in the tire tread. If you can see the top of Queen Elizabeth II's Crown, the treads are worn and need replacing.

6. C. Twenty-three per cent of vehicles have at least one tire under-inflated by more than 20 per cent, this will increase fuel consumption, reduce tire life, increase greenhouse gas emissions and can lead to sudden tire failure.

## ON THE JOB :

**Safety Tips for Work Trips****Be safe wherever your work travels take you**

It can be a refreshing change, an interesting adventure and a change of pace to leave our familiar work environment and take a trip for work. For some, this is a welcomed change and for others, a way of life. Regardless, a business trip can take you to another city or to places where the food, water, hygiene, climate and environment are very different from what you are used to. Whether or not you think you have "travel savvy," there are precautions you can take and preparations you can make to ensure that you are safe, secure and healthy on your trip.

**When you travel**

If you will be travelling internationally, consult a doctor or travel health clinic at least four to six weeks before travel so they can determine your need for immunizations and advise you on what preventive medication precautions to take to avoid disease.

When booking flights or travel times arrange whenever possible, to arrive at your destination in daylight. If you must arrive late evening or early morning, reserve a car service in advance to avoid having to find a cab. The conference or hotel may be able to recommend a service for you.

Don't forget your meds. If you take medication for a pre-existing condition, bring enough to last the trip, and some extra in case your return flight is delayed. As a precaution, have a copy of your prescription, or a doctor's note, in case you need to prove that the medication is necessary. Consider dividing your medication supply and keeping it in two different pieces of luggage, in case one piece of luggage is lost or stolen, or carry it with you.

Protect your documentation. Make sure your passport does not expire before or during your trip. Some countries require that it be valid for up to six months after your return home, so check the expiry date. Keep photocopies of your passport and visa, and keep them separate from the original copies. Also keep a record of credit cards, bank cards, and contact telephone numbers, and leave copies with someone back home. At the hotel, store your passport, airline tickets, extra money and other documents in the hotel safe.

Stay connected. Establish a check-in procedure and make sure your friends or family back home know where to reach you. Give someone at home a copy of your travel itinerary and check in with them when you arrive and periodically thereafter. It's also a good idea to find out ahead of time where to contact Canadian government offices abroad.

Know your surroundings. Ask the hotel for advice on safe areas to visit or walk through in the neighbourhood. They will tell you which areas to avoid.

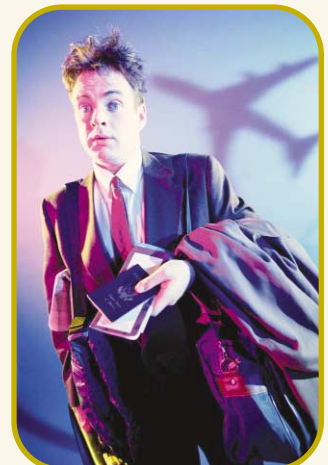
Hide your valuables. Carry your passport, travel documents, plane ticket, traveller's cheques and cash in a concealed money belt worn around the waist. Do not draw attention to yourself by displaying large amounts of cash, expensive jewellery or electronic equipment. If possible, use the bank machine more often or travellers' cheques instead of large amounts of cash. Consider carrying a second "dummy" wallet, with some local currency, a small amount of U.S. dollars, a few old receipts, and expired credit cards to make it look real. Keep some money in an outside pocket to avoid fumbling through your purse or wallet for tips and other small expenses.

Watch your luggage. Do not leave your luggage unattended or in the care of a stranger. On your luggage tag, use only your first initial - not your full name. To further protect your identity, include your business address (not your home address) and use a luggage tag that has a flap that hides your name and address.

Safeguard your hotel room. Ask for a hotel room that is above ground level but no higher than seven stories up, within reach of most firefighting evacuation buckets and ladders. Ask for a room close to the elevators, and ensure it has a peephole, dead bolt and chain lock. Don't let anyone know which room you are staying in. Tell the hotel not to give your room number or name to anyone. If the hotel clerk accidentally says your room number out loud, ask to change rooms. For added security, bring a simple rubber doorstop to place under your hotel room door to prevent it from being pushed open from the outside. Close the door securely when you enter or exit the room, and check that any sliding glass doors, windows and connection doors are locked every time. Do not invite strangers or acquaintances into your room or accept invitations to others' rooms. Arrange to meet in a public location such as the hotel lobby or restaurant.

Prepare to act quickly. To avoid delays in hallways, have your key or card ready to use.

**Enjoy your trip and play it safe when you travel.**



## PUBLIC SAFETY :

**CLEANING YOUR GUTTERS**

***Cleaning the gutters is one of those necessary tasks that every homeowner hates.***

***If you let it go, though, you'll have gutters that won't drain and tiny trees sprouting on your roof.***

Take care when you do any kind of work on your gutters, because of the dangers of falling. To clean your gutter, you should start with a ladder. Be careful not to lean the ladder on the gutters themselves, as they might break. It's recommended that you use a ladder stabilizer to clean your gutters. Both of these tools can be either rented or bought for low amounts of money. To clean the gutters, scoop out all the large debris such as leaves by hand. You can also buy a tool called a gutter scoop for no more than a few dollars. You can then put it in a bag, so it doesn't get caught in the lawn mower.

Once that's done the odds are good that there will be mud caked on the bottom of your gutters. You can use a regular garden hose to wet the mud and wipe it off with a towel. This whole process might take a while depending on how large your house is. Once completed you should check if your down spouts are clogged. You can do this by shining a flashlight down them, or running a steady stream of water down them. An alternative to this labour intensive process is a leaf blower. This is of course not the safest way, but it's the easiest by far. You will still have to wash the mud off the bottom, but it will definitely save a lot of time and energy.

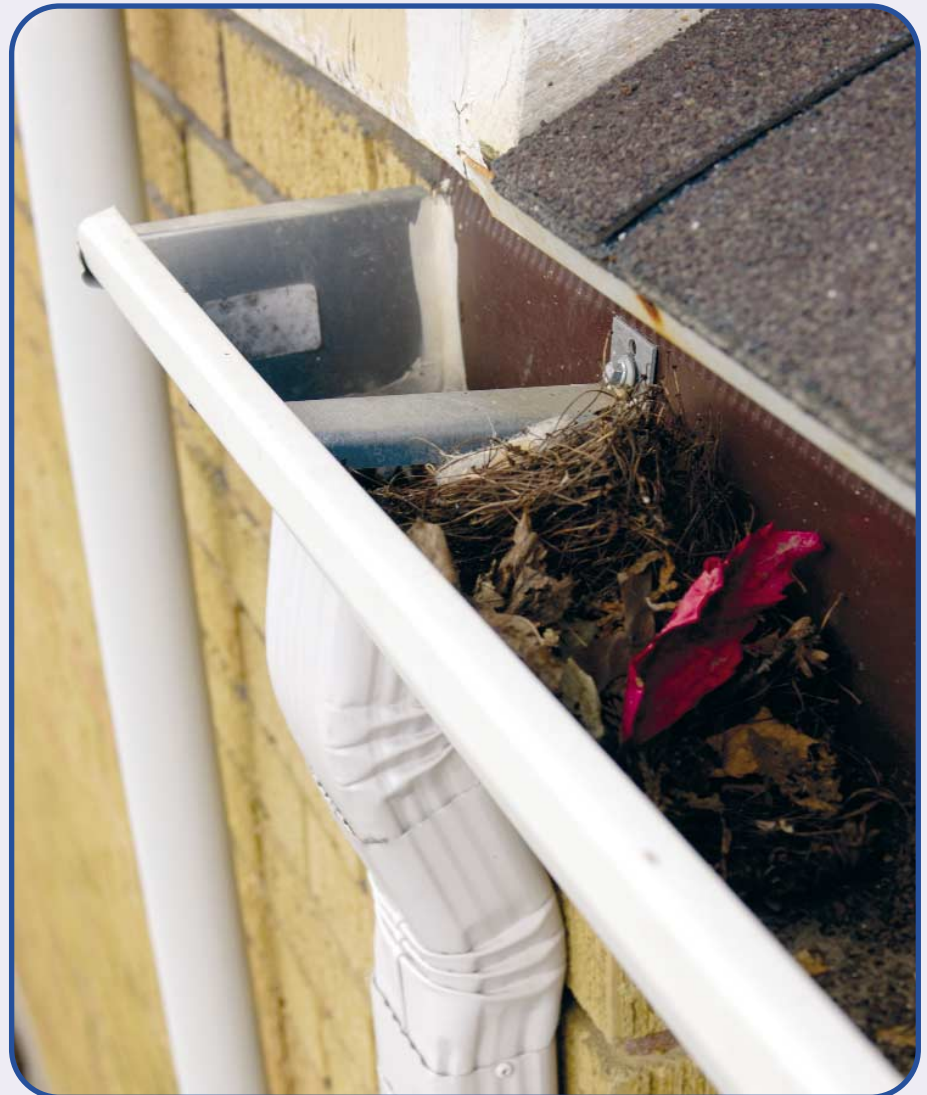
### Keeping your gutters clean

There are a lot of things you can do to prevent the amount of debris that enters the gutters. You can buy mesh that goes over them to prevent leaves from falling in, while still allowing water to enter. Such a product will save hours of your time the next time it's your turn to clean the gutters.

There are plenty of products at your local hardware store that cover your gutters. It's recommended that you

consult with the manufacturer of your gutters before making any decisions.

For the winter you can buy a heated cord to melt ice and snow in gutters. It simply runs along your gutter and when turned on will melt all ice. You can leave it up all year round, but only turn it on during winter. Leaning against gutters is one of the most common mistakes made. They are not meant to be leaned upon, and could come loose causing you to fall. Remember, your safety is more important than clean gutters.



## Elmer the Safety Elephant's New Website

CSC is proud to announce the new and improved look of Elmer's new website. This endeavour was sponsored by **Bridgestone Firestone Canada**, a company that cares about promoting safe activities for children. Elmer's safety tips and advice are featured in enticing and bright animation and will continue to reach over one million children every year. Children are welcome to come visit Elmer's Safety Village and browse through the fun. Parents and educators will find downloadable resources to facilitate and compliment safety lessons for children. The website [www.elmer.ca](http://www.elmer.ca) hopes to grow with time and sponsorship funding. It will feature more safety topics and provides endless possibilities of new partnerships.



## Did you Know?

### DID YOU KNOW?

Over 7 per cent of hospitalizations for major injury in Canada are the result of workplace incidents.

### DID YOU KNOW?

About one in five physicians in Canada were internationally educated.

### DID YOU KNOW?

On average, 120 children receive organ transplants in Canada each year.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Western provinces vary substantially on the use of prescription drugs for managing pain and other symptoms near death.

*(Source: Canadian Institute for Health Information)*

# Safety Canada

Safety Canada is the member newsletter of the Canada Safety Council, an independent, national, not-for-profit safety organization. It is also published online. While strenuous efforts are made to ensure the content represents the best current research and opinions, no guarantee, warranty or representation is made by CSC as to the absolute correctness or sufficiency of all information, and CSC assumes no responsibility therewith. Articles may be printed with credit, except those copyrighted to other organizations.

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