



Auto Safety Awareness Program

Media Release

Get a Grip – whatever the weather

Motorists are being urged to check their tyres ahead of any trip - long or short - over the Queen's Birthday weekend. This year's Auto Safety Awareness Program (June 2 - 9, 2008) aims to encourage drivers to check the condition of their tyres, at least once this week, and then on a regular basis.

Now winter is here, it is particularly important for tyres to be in good working order. Drivers should be prepared for poor weather conditions including fog, rain, ice and even snow. Motorists should be aware that there are a disturbing number of vehicles on the roads, including caravans and trailers, which may be ill-equipped to stop quickly in wet conditions.

Tyre treads are designed to disperse water and keep the rubber in contact with the road surface. But if the tread is low, or non-existent, in wet conditions, a film of water forms between the tyre and road surface, allowing the tyre to slide, or aquaplane, rather than grip the road.

VACC/RACV tests have found on wet roads, braking at 80km/h on worn tyres added an extra three car lengths in stopping distance compared to near-new tyres.

ASAP partners - VACC, RACV, VicRoads, TAC and the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) - recommend all drivers take responsibility for their tyres.

"As surgeons, our interests are both in accident prevention and the management of road trauma victims. It is the horror of the human misery we deal with which highlights to us the need for any preventative measures," RACS, Victorian Road Trauma Committee, Chairman, Garry Grossbard, said.

"The consequences of being unable to stop in time may not be uppermost in the public's mind until they or their family are personally touched and in need of our trauma services. Perhaps attention to visibly incompetent tyres may reduce this likelihood," Mr Grossbard said.

State Minister for Roads and Ports, Tim Pallas, has backed the Get a Grip message for the 2008 Auto Safety Awareness Program.

Video clips on www.autosafety.net.au explain how to check tyres. Site visitors can also enter a competition to win one of five sets of brand new tyres and one of 50 tyre pressure gauges.

Ends.

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