



For Immediate Release  
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## The Spring Tune-up: Do Vehicles Still Need Them?

**Kal Tire partners with 'Canada's car doctor' to show drivers what winters do to modern vehicles, and how to improve safety heading into road-trip season.**

**VERNON, BC**—Thirty years ago, the [spring-tune up](#) was an annual tradition that involved changing spark plugs, switching to a summer motor oil and greasing ball joints. Today, with the evolution of vehicle design, many of the old spring tune-up tasks have been made redundant, and yet it's more important than ever for drivers to inspect their vehicles for wear, especially after winter.

"Our environment is hard on vehicles, whether you've got rain and hills, gravel and heavy snow or bumper-to-bumper traffic and potholes, it all causes wear and tear that's accelerated by winter," says Sean Thompson, mechanical program manager, Kal Tire. This April, [Kal Tire](#) is teaming up with 'doctor of cars' Bill Gardiner for a cross-Canada tour to show drivers how winter conditions can impact a vehicle's safety and performance.

"The spring tune-up' has become important for different reasons," says Thompson. For example, suspension components such as tie rods that would have been greased each spring before, now have 'lifetime' lubrication. Once that part is worn—more likely after the slush and grime of cumulative winters—it can only be replaced. "Now it's actually more important to have your vehicle looked at for wear and tear in the spring because parts that used to require frequent greasing are now in permanently sealed-in grease systems. When we inspect components, we're looking at what winter has done to really push these parts over the brink."

### What does winter do to vehicles?

**Alignment/suspension**—Salt, gravel, slush...abrasive winter grime can wear the seals of suspension components such as ball joints and tie rods as well as wash away lubrication on suspension points. Worn components can separate and lead to loss of control of the vehicle. Alignment problems caused by potholes can cause vibrations and steering issues that can lead to unsafe handling.

**Rims**—Road grime can also corrode and rust rims, and potholes can lead to bent rims, both of which can cause leaks in the space between the rim and the tire, and tire damage.

**Tires**—At spring changeover, winter tires coming off or all-weather tires staying on should be inspected for tread depth, inflation, cracking, sidewall bruising and unusual wear, which can be an indication of suspension problems caused by potholes.

**Brakes**—Drivers tend to put their brakes to the test over the winter to reduce sliding. Brake pads and rotors should be inspected to ensure optimum performance. Worn shocks can also have a dramatic impact on emergency braking distance.

**Filters/fluids**—The debris and grime of winter months needs to be kept away from the engine with clean, properly installed filters, the first line of defense for the engine. A clean cabin air filter, often overlooked, improves effectiveness of heating and cooling for improved defrosting and visibility. For fluids, even with an on-board oil reminder system, monthly checks of the fluid quality and quantity is important. An engine oil change is usually prudent at this time.

**Wipers**—Wiper blades work almost non-stop in the winter, and the rubber is often worn by spring, just in time for frequent rain. “More than 90 per cent of your driving decisions are based on what you see, so visibility is critical. If it bought you even a second of reaction time, that could make a big difference in an emergency,” says Bill Gardiner.

“All of this is preventative maintenance that’s going to improve the performance, lifespan and safety of your vehicle’s most important parts. It’s also going to help ensure you don’t have a breakdown at an inconvenient time or place,” says Gardiner.

To help drivers’ spot signs of issues early on, the national tire dealer performs a True Service Inspection with all tire and maintenance services. The report uses green, yellow and red columns to indicate the condition of important vehicle components such as brakes, steering and suspension.

During the first two weeks of April, Gardiner will be stopping in Kal Tire locations in Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon, Winnipeg and Toronto to demonstrate for journalists how Canadian winters can take a toll on vehicles, and how spring inspections can help improve vehicle safety and performance heading into spring and road-trip season.

#### **About Kal Tire**

Kal Tire is Canada’s largest independent tire dealer and one of North America’s largest commercial tire dealers. Kal Tire’s Mining Tire Group is a global leader in mining tire service and supply, operating on more than 150 mine sites across five continents. The company has warehouse facilities across Canada servicing over 250 Kal Tire retail and commercial stores. As the largest truck tire retreader in Canada, Kal Tire owns and operates 10 truck tire retread facilities plus an additional five earthmover retreading facilities located in Canada, the United Kingdom, Chile, and Ghana, West Africa. The company employs more than 5,400 team members.

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**The following media resources are available on Kal Tire’s online [newsroom](#):**

1. News Release – [The Spring Tune-up: Do vehicles still need them?](#)
2. Video and images
3. Why Spring Tune-Ups Matter - Infographic
4. Articles:
  - [Helping Your Tires Survive Pothole Season](#)
  - [What’s the Difference between Summer and Winter Wiper Blades?](#)
  - [What Causes Uneven Tire Wear?](#)
  - [Why Change your Oil and Air Filter?](#)

**For more information, please contact:**

Nikki Kinakin  
Communications Specialist  
P: 250-558-3273 / C: 250-309-7901  
[Nikki\\_kinakin@kaltire.com](mailto:Nikki_kinakin@kaltire.com)