

Motorists driving with cracked or damaged windshields may be placing themselves in harm's way

by Bend Weekly News Sources

Although snow may no longer be a hazard on Oregon streets and highways, motorists should be aware of another potential danger—flying gravel. When motorists think of driving safety, they must remember that a vehicle's windshield is a pivotal safety feature.

"Windshields not only support the roof of your vehicle," says AAA Oregon Approved Auto Repair Coordinator Earl Baker. "They protect motorists from being ejected during head-on collisions, roll-overs and vehicle crashes when combined with the use of a safety belt. A damaged or cracked windshield can hinder a motorist's visibility and compromise the structural integrity of the automobile during a roll-over incident."

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, more than 40,000 Americans are killed and more than 5 million injured every year in highway crashes. The agency reports that thirty percent of vehicle fatalities stem from an occupant being ejected or injured in a roll-over.

"This suggests windshield integrity may be a crucial factor in crash survivability," Baker said. "Motorists with cracked or damaged windshields should immediately seek the advice of an auto glass technician who is certified by the National Glass Association (NGA)."

To find the NGA certified technician nearest you, log on to www.glass.org or www.myautoglass.org and insert your Zip Code in the certified technician locator service.

The National Glass Association is a trade association of auto glass professionals that provides technicians with certification criteria that meet industry standards on windshield replacement and installation.

For help in properly maintaining their vehicles, visitors to www.AAA.com can enroll at no charge in the AAA AutoManager®. This application sends users regular email reminders when their vehicles are due for recommended maintenance and provides additional tools to help diagnose vehicle problems and to locate nearby AAA Approved Auto Repair shops.

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