

# MOTORING

SPECIAL AUTOMOTIVE SUPPLEMENT

## Cleaning your car can extend vehicle life

The average price of a light vehicle has risen to \$28,715, according to the Comerica Index. For most Americans, this means their car is the second largest investment they will make in their lifetime.

With the average age of a passenger car in North America being 9.4 years according to R.L. Polk & Co. — and the current economic conditions — motorists are working to stretch the life of their vehicle even longer. To help maintain this significant investment, extending the household cleaning ritual to the family vehicle is more important than ever.

Incorporating a vehicle into any cleaning routine can be easy. Start by examining the car from top to bottom, checking everything including tire pressure, tread depth, wiper blade wear and parts that should be replaced. Regular maintenance tasks and recommended intervals are often outlined in a vehicle's manual.

"For anyone looking to extend the life of their vehicle, maintaining its interior and exterior routinely is



essential. Motorists appear to be following this advice, as the automotive industry has seen an increase in regular vehicle maintenance being completed," says Mark Ferner, an ASE-certified master technician. "Maintaining a vehicle by cleaning interior and exterior with appropriate products and completing manufacturer-recommended engine maintenance can save money on expensive repairs down the line and potentially extend its usable life."

Ferner recommends lifting the hood of the vehicle next to check the motor oil,

which is considered the lifeblood of the engine. Just like dust and dirt can build up in a home, sludge can build up in an engine. To clean sludge out of the engine and restore responsiveness, drivers should use quality full-synthetic motor oil such as Pennzoil. By using Pennzoil motor oil, motorists can clean out up to 15 percent of engine sludge in the first oil change. With Pennzoil Platinum full synthetic motor oil motorists can clean up to 46 percent of engine sludge in the first oil change and it has the ability to continue to clean the engine further during the

next oil change.

If a vehicle's maintenance history is unknown or questionable, and if low-quality gasoline has been used in the vehicle, treat the car with a fuel system cleaner to help restore the engine to its peak condition. In older, high-mileage vehicles, special care may be required to clean out the tough, built-up gunk that has collected in the fuel system over time.

Regular use of a fuel-system cleaner is suggested for those who use a low quality fuel to continually clean the engine and keep it clean of any gunk or deposits.

"When cleaning a vehicle in an effort to maintain its usable life and value, it is not only the drive train that requires attention, but also the interior and exterior as well," says Ferner.

For example, a vehicle's wheels are subjected to a high amount of wear and tear. Tight, intricate wheel spaces can be particularly difficult to clean and polish, as dirt, dust and grime can get into those hard-to-reach spaces.



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