

What is the big deal about having a roadworthy car?

Motorists should not only make sure their cars are roadworthy for their own safety and for the safety other motorists, but also because their insurance policy may not pay out if they are involved in an accident.

Motorists may often hear about vehicle roadworthy tips and driving safety in general during the holiday season, especially over the festive season. However, these are every-day issues, when people commute to work on a daily basis.

Due to years of driving on our roads, complacent drivers may often think that the carnage on our roads is a mere inconvenience, such as missing a meeting or just the nuisance of being stuck in traffic for hours on end. However, road safety should be taken seriously because a road accident poses a serious threat to anyone who uses our roads.



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DIY Advice

Many motorists may feel that they cannot afford to keep their cars in a roadworthy condition. Proper vehicle maintenance may not be as expensive as is commonly perceived by motorists. Arrive Alive, together with AutoZone, has provided, via arrivealive.co.za, useful downloadable resources to keep cars roadworthy. Motorists should remember that vehicle maintenance should always be carried out by qualified mechanics or technicians. Car owners should not use poor quality parts, which do not meet their vehicle manufacturers' specifications.

Roadworthy Statistics

The Road Traffic Management Corporation disclosed that approximately three-quarters of vehicles were not roadworthy in South Africa. Such non-roadworthy vehicles may have cracked mirrors, worn-out tyres, and faulty head and tail lights, brake lights, indicator lights, ineffective brakes and more. According to the AA, "seven to ten percent of vehicle crashes are related to vehicles that are not roadworthy." While that number may be small, motorists should remember that many things are lumped together under 'roadworthiness'. For example, a cracked mirror is less likely to cause an accident when compared to worn out brake pads, which are likely to cause an accident.

Arrive Alive, the South African champion of road safety says: "Vehicle roadworthiness is one of the important requirements for the safety of all our road users." Arrive Alive also refers to contributing factors to car crashes, namely: "Driver and vehicle fitness and environmental factors."

The Democratic Alliance's Transport Policy Report revealed eye-opening statistics, which state that there are over 10,000 fatal accidents each year, costing the country in excess of R60bn each year. In addition to this, over 17,000 South Africans are killed each year on our roads, which includes pedestrians who have lost their lives.

An example of one of the above-mentioned fatal accidents was when a large truck, whose brakes had failed, ploughed into many cars in Alberton, Gauteng recently. Many innocent lives were unfortunately lost on that day.

Attitude is everything

Not only should motorists have a compliant attitude towards maintaining roadworthy cars, but keeping their cool and obeying the rules of the road are critical to road users' safety. According to the Road Traffic Management Corporation, "more than 90% of crashes are due to lawlessness. Pedestrian and driver negligence and ignorance have a huge cost, both financially and in human suffering."

It is not all doom and gloom

There are many pluses for motorists who keep their vehicles in a roadworthy state. Drivers can save a lot of money in the long term, which can be spent on themselves or their families instead.

If drivers' cars are maintained properly, they could save thousands of Rands on fuel costs in the long term, as their cars would be operating at their peak efficiency. Motorists may also be able to prevent extremely costly major repairs like failed engines. Another major plus for motorists is a higher resale value on their cars if they are properly maintained.

Let's not forget how terrible it for a motorist to get stuck on the side of the road only to be exposed to tow truck drivers at the least.

Car Insurance

Car insurance is often seen by South African drivers as an expensive, unnecessary luxury. This sentiment is reinforced by the fact that experts believe that less than 35% of motorists have any form of car insurance.

However, car insurance plays a crucial role in keeping drivers' cars on the road, in roadworthy state. Should a motorist's car be in an accident, an insurance payout would allow for the car to be repaired professionally. Insurance is also important when it comes to paying for the repairs of third party vehicles. Not many motorists have enough spare cash for the repair of any damage they caused to other cars, never mind their own cars.

There is no excuse for not having any car insurance because there are many different types of car insurance deals out there, to suit all the different budgets. When it comes to car insurance, always remember to read the fine print.

Last but not least, motorists should remember to keep their cool while driving, as this is not only likely to prevent any accidents from happening, but will also mean they will enjoy their journey.

Sources:

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