

Tips to Keep Your Vehicle Fleet Winter Hardy



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ROSWELL, Ga.-Take winter seriously and implement a comprehensive vehicle maintenance management program and policy, urges Ownersite Technologies, based here.

"Winter is extremely hard on vehicles of all types, and especially on fleet vehicles that are under heavy use," says Ownersite Technologies founder Steve Eppinger. "Yet, fleet vehicles are frequently driven by multiple operators with little to no coordination of effort. Without a clear program and policy, not only for winterization but also for cold-specific vehicle maintenance and operation, fleets may suffer an unusually high failure rate in cold weather."

In winter, Eppinger notes, it's particularly important to adhere to recommended preventive maintenance schedules and stay to the low end of the mileage recommendation.

Key core activities include replacements such as oil changes, fluid top-offs, aging battery and spark plug replacement, and even scheduled checks for excessive wear on crucial equipment like brake pads and belts.

As part of its season-ready approach, Ownersite.com enables fleet operators to set up automated reminders for both odometer-based and date-based maintenance activities and adjust reminder intervals to account for the harsh realities of winter.

The customization features of Ownersite.com also allow a customer to establish periodic reminders for non-routine operations that can substantially improve winter reliability. Eppinger's "Top Three" most beneficial non-routine operations are:

- 1. Fuel Up.** Maintain fuel levels at no less than a half a tank of gas at all times. Water vapor that collects in the bottom of a tank can be drawn into the fuel line and freeze, preventing engine start. In areas of extreme cold,

gas-line antifreeze is a beneficial additive.

2. Clear It Up. Inspect vehicle wipers and consider switching them to heavy-duty blades in areas prone to frequent snow showers and storms. Heavy-duty blades also can cut through some ice buildups. Check each vehicle to make sure every light is working at full beam.

3. Roll On. Drastic temperature changes can cause substantial tire pressure fluctuation. Drivers should check tire pressure several times a month. Improperly inflated tires can reduce gripping action when drivers need it most.

Ownersite Technologies offers Ownersite.com, a web-based and mobile vehicle records management platform. The service incorporates full support for individual season schedules and enables customers to establish reminders for non-routine checks that help avert costly winter breakdowns. For more information visit www.ownersite.com.