

BREAKDOWN SAFETY TIPS

Summer is the time many of us head out on the highway, enjoying the freedom of traveling without having to worry about poor road conditions from snow and ice. Even when the roads are less of a concern, most of us at some point will have to deal with a car that has broken down. Whether the problem is a simple flat tire or something more serious, here are some safety tips for handling a breakdown:

- If you notice a problem with your car while driving, **REMAIN CALM**. Keeping a level head is the most important thing in any emergency.
- Be sure to steer to a safe spot before stopping. Park the car as far from the flow of traffic as you can before getting out to check on the problem.
- If you cannot fix the problem, it is usually safer to stay with your car than to set out on foot, especially in an area you are not familiar with. Use a cell phone to call for help or wait for the police to pass by...this is why they call them *patrol* officers.
- Carry flares and reflectors to mark your location on the side of the road at night, and be sure to turn on your car's hazard lights any time you stop beside a roadway.
- If the problem is something you can repair, move to a safe place before trying to fix it. The cost of replacing a flat tire or even your wheel rim is minor, especially when compared to the cost of a serious injury.
- If you have to drive in severe weather or in a remote area, consider putting together an emergency kit. Items such as a blanket, nonperishable food, and water can make all the difference if you break down far from help.

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