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**Don't Miss the Obvious When it Comes to Vehicle Safety**

*Windshield Maintenance Tips for Car Care Month from Glass Doctor*

**/24-7PressRelease/** - WACO, TX, April 05, 2008 - The most obvious and easily overlooked safety component in a vehicle is right in front of the driver's face. Windshields not only keep insects and rain out, they are vital for seatbelts and airbags to properly function.

During National Car Care Month (April), Glass Doctor reminds drivers to fix minor windshield chips before they turn into cracks that compromise vehicle safety. According to the Car Care Council, which sponsors National Car Care Month, the seatbelts, airbags and windshield are what automotive engineers refer to as a vehicle's safety restraint system (SRS).

"Most drivers don't realize a properly installed windshield is designed to be strong enough to keep the airbag inside the vehicle in case of a crash," Glass Doctor President Mark Dawson. "The windshield also is considered to be part of the roof support. If there is a rollover, the windshield helps to keep the roof from crushing the occupants."

Windshields are made from two pieces of glass that sandwich a laminate film. If the glass cracks, the laminate film will be damaged as well. A crack could weaken the windshield to the point that in a collision the windshield could break and fly out of the vehicle instead of shattering but staying in place for the SRS to work correctly.

"Now is the time for drivers to look at their vehicles for any winter damage, such as chips, cracks and bad seals," Dawson said. "Simple upkeep can save drivers money, time and possibly their lives or the lives of their loved ones later down the road."

Drivers can follow these preventive maintenance tips to help keep themselves and their passengers safe:

- Repair chipped windshield glass immediately. Chips can block driver visibility. Thermal shock (the stress caused by drastic differences in outdoor and indoor temperatures) can turn a ding into a crack when the air conditioning or heating is activated.
- Replace worn windshield wipers. Bad wipers can impair vision in rainy conditions and scratch windshield glass.
- Refill windshield washer solvent to keep the glass free from dirt, insects and glare.
- Clean windshields with a proper glass cleaner, not a strong abrasive that could scratch the glass.
- Apply a glass protectant to repel water and dirt, which improves visibility, either personally or by a professional Glass Doctor service technician.

"We encourage drivers to repair a chip early rather than wait for it to turn into a crack," Dawson said. "Repairing the chip restores the structural integrity of the windshield and it's much cheaper than replacing a windshield. The repair takes 30 minutes or less, and once it's done the vehicle is ready to drive. Windshield repair is a permanent solution, because it will not damage the laminate. Plus windshield repair is good for the environment, it's one less windshield in our landfills."

During Car Care Month drivers can schedule an appointment to receive an estimate for their windshield damage from their local Glass Doctor franchise at 1-800-838-GLAS (4527).

About National Car Care Month:

National Car Care Month (NCCM), a vital part of the "Be Car Care Aware" (BCCA) consumer education campaign, is designed to increase public awareness about the benefits of good vehicle maintenance and repair. Because nine out of 10 motorists pump their own gas, under-hood checks are rarely performed and vital maintenance and repairs often go undone. A vehicle that's been well cared for, as opposed to one that's been neglected, is safer, more dependable and more economical to operate. In addition, emissions are reduced, improving air quality. National Car Care Month is sponsored by the Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association (AAIA), with the Car Care Council serving as the brand and messaging source. For more information about National Car Care Month, please contact Rich White at 240-333-1088 or [rich.white@aftermarket.org](mailto:rich.white@aftermarket.org) and visit [www.carcare.org](http://www.carcare.org).

#### About Glass Doctor

Glass Doctor is the largest chain of full-service glass replacement providers in the nation. Recognized by Entrepreneur magazine among its "Franchise 500," Glass Doctor franchisees offer complete glass replacement, service and repairs to the automotive, residential and commercial markets at more than 360 locations in the United States. Glass Doctor is a subsidiary of The Dwyer Group, Inc. For further information or to find the location nearest you, visit [www.glassdoctor.com](http://www.glassdoctor.com).