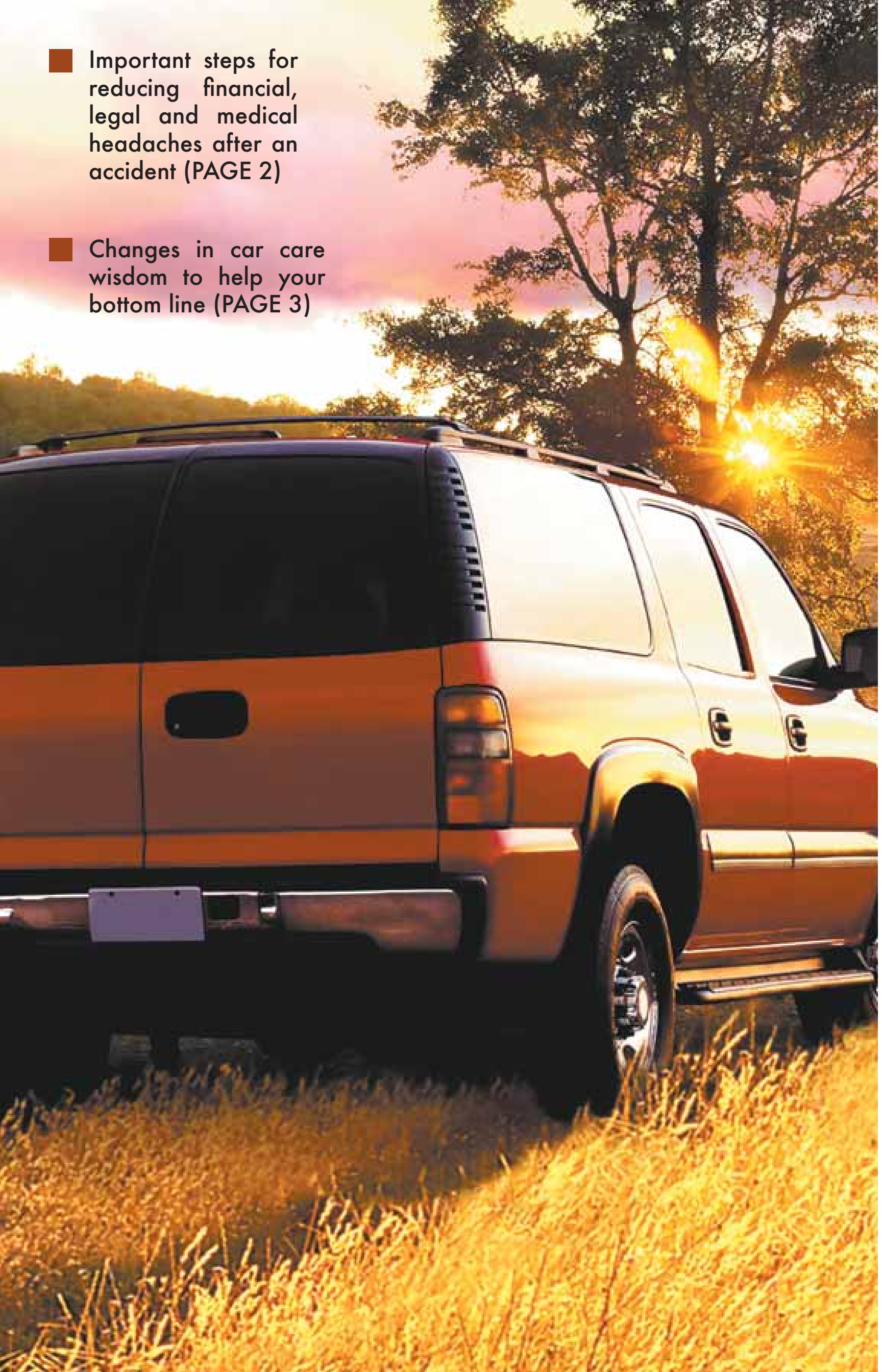


# SPRING CAR CARE 2010

SPECIAL SECTION OF THE TIMES COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS



■ Important steps for reducing financial, legal and medical headaches after an accident (PAGE 2)

■ Changes in car care wisdom to help your bottom line (PAGE 3)



### 10 tips for 10 critical minutes:

## Important steps for reducing your financial, legal and medical headaches after an accident

**Y**ou swerve, hit the brakes and hope for the best. But the worst occurs, sending your car careening into danger -- and a lot of damage.

What you do in the next 10 minutes could have a critical impact on the outcome of your accident from a financial, legal and personal perspective. Who you call, what you say, and how you record the details of the event all are important in the long-term resolution and repair of your collision.

There are some six million auto accidents every year, that means one in eight people will be involved in a crash this year alone, according to the National Safety Center. With these kinds of odds, it is important to be prepared

so you can react calmly, quickly and intelligently when an accident happens.

**1. Create a collision kit for your car.** Include copies of your vehicle registration and insurance verification card so you can keep a copy and leave one in your vehicle in case it is towed for repairs. Also include a sketch pad and pencil, disposable camera, flares, bottled water, and a first aid kit. For a downloadable accident report form that will help you gather the information at the scene, visit [www.carstar.com/resources](http://www.carstar.com/resources).

**2. Call 911 first.** Provide as much detail as possible about the location of the accident and the condition of those

involved.

**3. Remain calm and collected.** Even though you may be scared or even injured, it's important to stay as calm as possible. Don't say the accident was your fault or make any statement that might be used against you later. Be tactful and courteous, even if you're angry. If the other people involved in the accident are belligerent, don't argue with them. Let the police be the intermediary.

**4. Turn off your car and avoid danger.** Turn off the engine and leave the car where it is if you feel it is safe. Use the hazards if it is dark. If the car is in danger of being hit, drive slowly to the side of the road or a well-lit parking lot. Warn other motorists to proceed around the accident with caution.

**5. Assess your condition.** If you think you're hurt in any way, stay in your car. Only accept medical help from a professional -- and provide medical help to others ONLY if you're trained to do so. Provide honest, detailed information to medical personnel so they can treat you.

**6. Call a friend or family member.** A close friend or family member can provide support and help collect the accident details. If you are transported for medical care, they can remain behind at the scene.

**7. Record the accident details.** Photograph the cars involved and traffic conditions. Sketch what happened, including street names, road signs and details on car movements. Get the names, addresses, phone numbers, and license plates of those involved.

**8. Identify the witnesses.** Look for other drivers and bystanders who may have seen the accident. Get their names, addresses, phone numbers, and their recollection of the accident.

**9. Have a collision plan in place.** Know where you'd like to have your car repaired ahead of time so you don't have to make a sudden decision.

**10. Collect your personal items.** If your car is being towed, make sure you've collected your valuables, electronics, briefcase, purse, vehicle information, and any other items you may need while your car is being repaired. Also take your copies of your vehicle registration and insurance verification card.

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## Changes in conventional car care wisdom help your bottom line

Though we're only one full decade into the 21st century, the amount of change that has taken place in those 10 years is phenomenal. Whereas the Internet was largely seen as something to play with a decade ago, it now serves to pay our bills, stay in touch with friends and even order our movie tickets or meals.

But how we live our lives isn't the only way things have changed in the last 10 years. How we treat our vehicles has also changed dramatically. Much of the conventional wisdom preached by our fathers and grandfathers with respect to vehicle maintenance has fallen by the wayside in the 21st century, as manufacturers of both vehicles and vehicle maintenance products have changed the way they do business.

Perhaps no technological advancement has done more to change how we view vehicle maintenance than the emergence of synthetic motor oil as a superior alterna-

tive to traditional petroleum motor oil. Once the industry standard, petroleum motor oils' well-earned reputation for forming sludge, gums and varnishes as they break down has led industry insiders and even weekend car enthusiasts to embrace synthetic motor oils. Because of their ability to resist the stresses of high temperature oxidation and evaporation loss, synthetic motor oils are far more resistant to sludge and deposit formation, enabling vehicle engines to run more smoothly and offer greater fuel efficiency.

Cars can crack the 100,000 mile barrier and still be reliable. During the recession of 2009, many vehicle owners began looking at their cars and trucks as more long-term investments. Whereas the years leading up to the recession saw many people trading their cars in after three or four years, the post-recession vehicle owner now wants more bang for his buck.

Fortunately, it's now entirely possible to keep a car running strong for 100,000 miles or more. With the advancements in engine design, breakthroughs in engine metallurgy and regular preventive maintenance check-ups with your mechanic, motorists are now keeping their vehicles 24 percent longer than they were in 2002.

Synthetic motor oils greatly enhance a vehicle's performance. The uniform molecular structure of synthetic oil helps engines operate more efficiently by reducing friction and wear, improving performance in extreme temperatures and, best of all, by improving fuel economy. So while conventional wisdom might infer the auto industry has regressed during the 21st century, the advancements made in automotive maintenance technology have enabled vehicles to perform better and last much longer, helping drivers save money while restoring their peace of mind.

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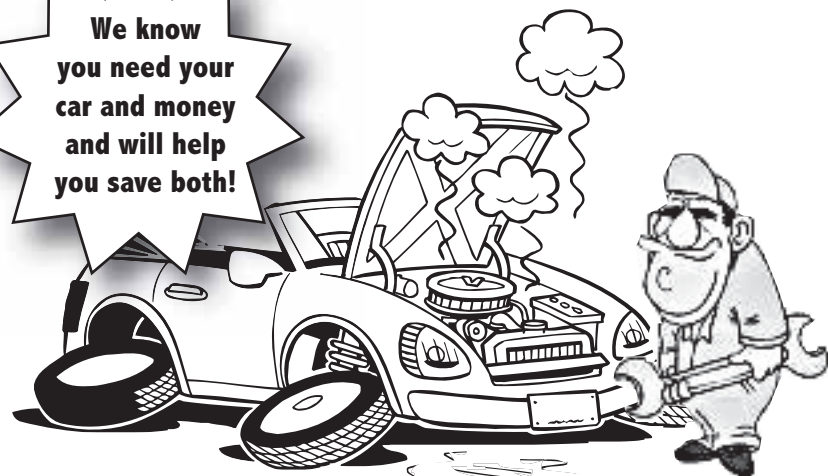
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