



## Tips for your Vehicle's A/C System Care

*April is National Car Care Month, time to review care and repair tips for your vehicle's air conditioning system.*

LANSDALE, PA ([PRWEB](#)) March 8, 2004 --April is National Car Care Month and the beginning of the air conditioning season in many areas. Is your vehicle's A/C system up to the summer challenge?

The A/C in your vehicle is a sealed, high-pressure system containing a refrigerant providing cooling. As the refrigerant moves through the system, it absorbs heat and cools the air entering the passenger compartment. If the system has not developed a leak, and the related mechanical components are working, the A/C should operate properly.

There's a simple test for any A/C system, says Paul DeGuseppi, manager of service training for the Mobile Air Conditioning Society Worldwide. Set all the controls for maximum cooling, close all the doors and windows start the engine and run it for about five minutes. Position the vehicle in the shade when performing this check. If the temperature from the outlets gets cold, this indicates a properly functioning system.

If the system is performing properly there is no need to have the system serviced. The refrigerant doesn't need to be cleaned or refreshed, and vehicle and A/C system manufacturers do not recommend the addition of other chemicals or so-called performance enhancing additives to the system.

A system that operates properly shouldn't need additional maintenance, DeGuseppi continues. Consumers should be careful to avoid purchasing unnecessary parts or services if the A/C is working well.

When repairs are needed, be well informed. Every technician performing A/C repairs is required by the U.S. Federal Clean Air Act of 1990 to have passed a certification test. Make sure certified technicians perform your repairs.

To reduce environmental damage from refrigerants, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has listed several refrigerants as acceptable for use in mobile air conditioning systems. However, only two are approved for use by all vehicle manufacturers.

Vehicles made before 1994 most likely contain CFC-12 (R-12), a chemical that has been phased out because it depletes the stratospheric ozone layer that protects the earth against harmful ultraviolet radiation. Newer vehicles, after 1994, use HFC-134a (R-134a), which is less damaging to the atmosphere.

Vehicle owners can help protect the stratospheric ozone layer and the climate by insisting on professional A/C service using proper tools and procedures, said Dr. Stephen O. Andersen, U.S. EPA. Insist that your vehicle A/C be repaired by certified technicians using certified recycle and recovery equipment.

Older air conditioning systems can be changed over or retrofitted to use R-134a, but the change may be expensive and may require replacing components and installing the new refrigerant. Although retrofitting is not required by law in the U.S. and the use of R-12 is still permitted if the system is in good



condition, the retrofit may be worthwhile if expensive repairs are needed on an older vehicle.

Always ask what refrigerant is being added to your vehicle. Anything other than the OEM recommended chemicals may void your warranty or cause a part to fail.

Founded in 1981, the Mobile Air Conditioning Society (MACS) Worldwide is the leading non-profit trade association for the mobile air conditioning, heating and engine cooling system segment of the automotive aftermarket. Learn more at [www.macsw.org](http://www.macsw.org)



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