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MEDIA ALERT

Division of Consumer Protection reminds drivers to check out vehicles "bumper-to-bumper" before hitting road trips statewide this spring, summer

"AAA estimates 36.1 M drivers expected to travel 50 miles or more over Memorial Day"

(For immediate release...)

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah - Francine A. Giani, Executive Director of the Utah Department of Commerce, announced today that the Utah Division of Consumer Protection is reminding the public to check out their vehicles, campers or trailers road readiness with a trusted mechanic before heading out of town. According to AAA Auto Club, 36.1 Million drivers are expected to travel 50 miles or more over Memorial Day weekend.

"When we plan a trip, often packing lists and car snacks are given more attention than your vehicles' road readiness," cautioned Francine A. Giani, "Make sure everything checks out bumper-to-bumper to avoid emergency breakdowns. If you happen to be approached on the road and told your vehicle, camper, or trailer needs an unplanned repair, ask for a warranty and make sure to get the terms in writing before the repair occurs."

Tips for Consumers: Road Trip checklist

- 1. Work with a Trusted Repair Shop** – Routine maintenance can help avoid emergency repairs on the road. The best time to find a mechanic or auto repair shop is before you need one. Ask family and friends to recommend trusted repair shops and mechanics. Check names with the Utah Division of Consumer Protection's "Buyer Beware List", <http://consumerprotection.utah.gov/downloads/buyer-beware.pdf> and read about companies online. Make a contingency plan for repairs by identifying auto shops along your route and keep a smart phone and laptop handy for on the road research.
- 2. Check Tires Wear and Air Pressure** – 83% of American don't know how to properly inflate their tires, according to the Rubber Manufacturers Association. Drivers should check pressure levels on all tires plus the spare for vehicles, trailers and campers. Temperature changes can affect tire pressure as you travel

through different climates. Proper pressure levels can be found in the owner's manual or on a sticker most often located on the driver-side door jamb. Check tire tread depth by placing a quarter upside down in the grooves. If the top of Washington's head is exposed at any point, it's time to start shopping for new tires. Look for uneven tire wear which can indicate problems with suspension, wheel balance or alignment that need repair.

3. **Is Your Car Battery Properly Charged?** - At every oil change, check the battery cables and ensure they are securely attached to the terminals. Clean the terminals if there are signs of corrosion. Disconnecting the cables to clean the hidden areas where they contact the battery terminals is the best way to remove external corrosion. Most car batteries have a three to five year service life, depending on local climate and vehicle usage patterns.
4. **Keep Wipers Working** – Check wiper blades to see if they are worn, cracked or rigid with age. Damaged wiper blades won't adequately remove debris, compromising the driver's vision and safety. The life of a rubber insert is typically six to 12 months depending on its exposure to heat, dirt, sunlight, and rain.
5. **Examine Engine Fluids** - Check engine fluids and top off levels before hitting the road. Make sure the air conditioning system working properly.
6. **Prepare for Emergencies with Road Side Kit** – Be ready for the unexpected by keeping an emergency road side kit in your vehicle with jumper cables, tire inflator, first aid kit, etc. to aid in any emergency breakdown.

For more information, contact the Utah Division of Consumer Protection at (801) 530-6601 or log on to; www.consumerprotection.utah.gov

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