

Spare Me! AAA Finds Nearly One-Third of New Vehicles are Missing Spare Tire

Automakers have been under increased pressure not to eliminate spare tires from new vehicles. According to new research from AAA, nearly one-third (28 percent) of 2017 model year vehicles do not come with a spare tire as standard equipment, creating an unnecessary hassle and expense for motorists. Last year alone, AAA came to the rescue of more than 450,000 members faced with a flat tire whose vehicle did not have a spare tire.

As a replacement for a spare tire, some automakers are including tire-inflator kits that can temporarily repair small punctures in flat tires. A tire inflator kit can only be used when a puncture occurs on the center tire tread and the object remains in the tire. These kits cannot be used if the object is no longer lodged in the tire, or if a blowout, pothole or curb related damage occurs.

“This is a major issue for the motorist who is now stranded, because they can no longer rely on their tire inflator kit, requiring their vehicle to be towed” said Montrae Waiters, spokeswoman, AAA - The Auto Club Group. “If the motorist had a spare tire they would be able to get back on the road, saving them time and money.”

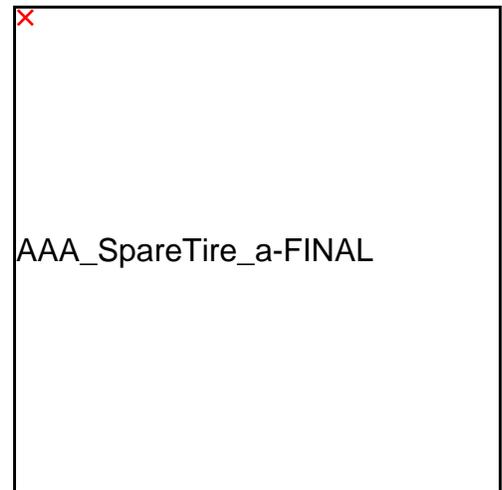
While new vehicles are equipped with tire pressure monitoring systems that alert motorists to low tire pressure, AAA’s roadside assistance data shows that tire-related problems continue to be one of the top reasons why members call for assistance. Even if drivers do have a spare tire, they are often reaching for their cell phones to call for roadside assistance rather than changing the tire themselves.

According to a previous AAA survey, nearly 20 percent (39 million) of U.S. drivers do not know how to change a flat tire.

To keep from being stranded in the event of a flat tire, AAA offers these precautionary tips:

- If your vehicle is equipped with a tire inflator kit, read the owner’s manual and understand system limitations before roadside trouble strikes
- When purchasing a new vehicle, don’t assume it comes equipped with a spare tire. Always ask sales staff for a detailed list of equipment and if a spare tire can be purchased as an option.
- If your vehicle is equipped with a tire inflator kit, AAA recommends that you check its expiration date and replace the kit when necessary, typically between 4-8 years.
- If your vehicle has a spare tire, be sure it is properly inflated and stowed. Check tire pressure monthly, as a flat spare tire is of no value in an emergency.
- Consider roadside assistance coverage. Roadside assistance coverage can offer peace of mind when faced with roadside trouble, including a flat tire. To become a AAA member, visit AAA.com/join.

In addition, drivers should identify a repair shop they trust to help keep their vehicle tires in good shape. AAA Approved Auto Repair network consists of nearly 7,000 facilities that have met AAA’s high standards, including, technician certifications, ongoing training, financial stability, facility cleanliness, insurance requirements, rigorous inspections and customer satisfaction. AAA members have saved a total of more than \$3 million dollars by visiting AAR facilities in the last year. Visit



AAA.com/AutoRepair to find a nearby facility.

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