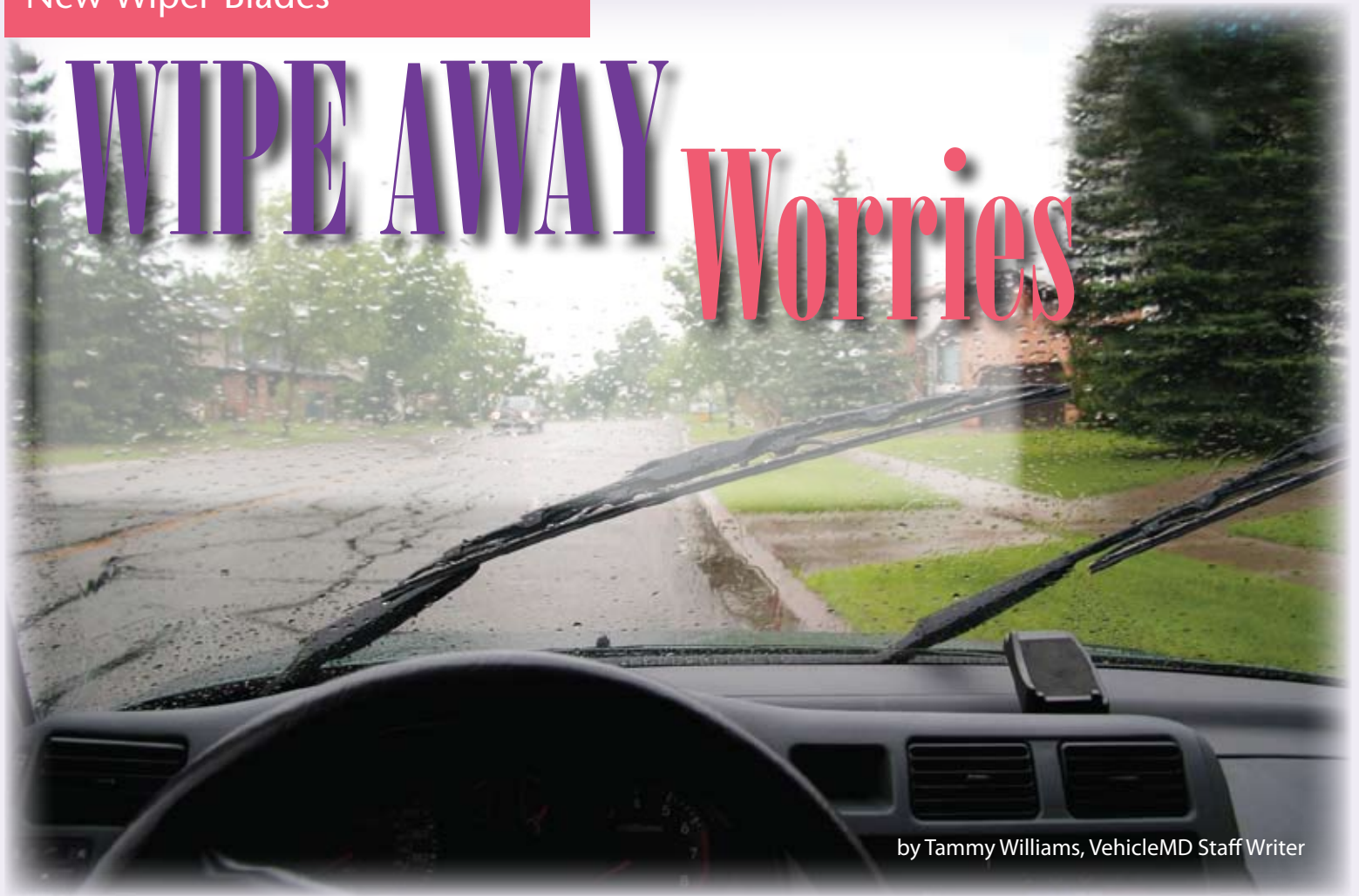


Be Safe With...

New Wiper Blades

# WIPE AWAY Worries



by Tammy Williams, VehicleMD Staff Writer

**D**rivers spend many hours a month in their vehicles, so you want to ensure you are safe. One way to help keep you and your family safe is with new wiper blades.

Think of the last time you were caught in bad weather. Did your windshield wipers work perfectly? Maybe you saw them leave streaks or heard them chatter. Wiper blades in good condition are essential to safety. It's been reported that 80 percent of vehicle accidents are due to poor visibility.

"How many accidents would have been prevented with new wipers?" said Paula Lombard of AutoTex PINK windshield wipers. "We just don't know for sure; however, by looking at the statistics, it's clear that a quick and cost-effective fix like windshield wipers can help keep you and your family safer on the roads."

Replacing your windshield wiper blades can help wipe away your worries, but exactly how often should they be replaced?

Most manufacturers recommend replacing

wiper blades every six to 12 months; however, this time frame can vary depending on where you live. In northern climates that have harsh winters, accumulations of ice and snow can damage wiper blades, meaning they may need to be replaced more frequently. Conversely, extreme heat can also increase the deterioration of wiper blades. Also, for vehicles that spend a lot of time on the road and rack up more miles than most other cars and trucks it is recommended that wipers should not be kept on for more than 12 months.

For the ultimate in wiping performance, you might even consider stepping up to a new style of wiper blades that has taken the market by storm in recent years—beam, or frameless, blades. These blades ditch the old metal frame in favor of a pre-formed plastic or composite backbone that ensures the best wipe possible. Also, because they are constructed in one piece, snow does not build up on these blades, unlike the packed snow and ice that can sometimes

get trapped inside a traditional wiper blade's metal frame.

Finally, there are thousands of pressure points distributed throughout the length of the blade, as opposed to eight or fewer with metal blades, giving beam blades better contact with the curvature of the windshield.

If you drive a newer vehicle, beam blades may have been installed at the factory. If so, it is suggested that after they are worn, they be replaced with beam blades to ensure wipe quality. And if your car didn't come installed with beam blades, ask your service technician if it can be retrofitted. Trust me, beam blades are worth every penny!

As plentiful as the options of wiper blades are, they all have the same function—to help you see clearly and stay safe. If you don't want to be caught in bad weather with inadequate wiper blades, replace them regularly and you can wipe away your worries. +