

# The Vintage Sports



# Car Club of America

VSCCA Newsletter, Number 5, January 2021

Dear VSCCA Members,

Another season is upon us; one we hope will be more fruitful for all of us who like to partake in the varied activities of the VSCCA. As this is written in early January who knows what is in store for this year. It is reasonable to assume, however, that most of our outdoor activities will take place as usual with appropriate deference to whatever precautions may be needed.

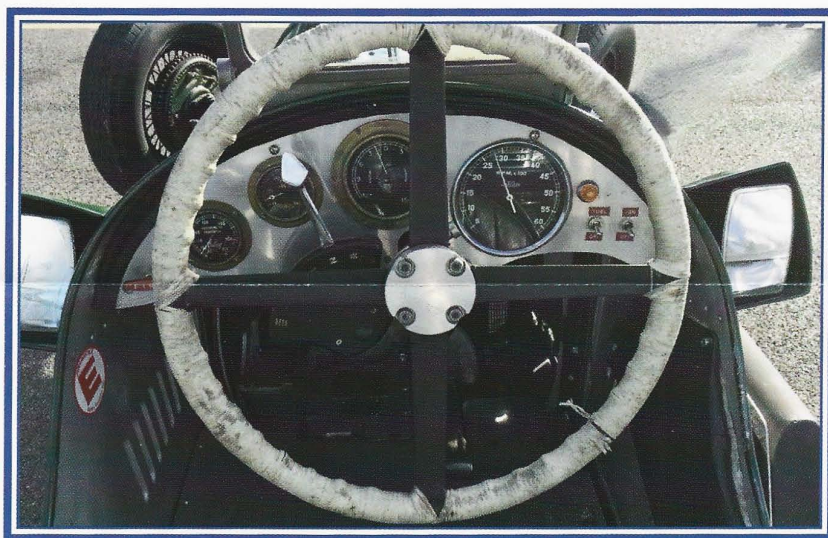
After this has been written but before you read this, we will have held the 2020 AGM via a Zoom call. The primary focus of that meeting, a presentation by club President Sandy Leith, was shared in the recent issue of Vintage Sports Car. In summary, the club came out of 2020 in good shape. If you would like to watch a replay of the AGM it is available in the "Members Only" section of the VSCCA website. Many thanks to our track partners working with us when events needed to be cancelled, postponed or modified to accommodate the circumstances we all found ourselves in.

Now for 2021. The first few months of the year are very much a question at this point. There is light at the end of the tunnel, but we are not ready to resume indoor activities quite yet.

Our outdoor schedule is pretty much as always until we reach October 16 when we hope to add a fantastic "new" Pre-War hill climb. In fact, it is the return of a favorite after almost 20 years, the Castle Hill Pre-War Hill Climb. More on that later. The season kicks off with the Spring Sprints and the Empire Cup in their usual slots. The Driver's School will be back at the Spring Sprints so please make sure that anybody that had hoped to enter that in '21 will sign up at MotorsportReg.

com. The SS will also see two feature groups. Porsche will be the feature at the Lime Rock Historics this year and so we are going to feature Porsche at the Spring Sprints. If you have not had your VSCCA eligible Porsche on the track in a while, this and the Empire Cup will be a great opportunity to get

some track time before the Historics. We will also have an "H-Mod" focus at the Spring Sprints. Just one week after the Empire Cup is the Thompson Vintage Festival. We realize this is not ideal but there was simply no option for 2021. We have made it known that from '22 onwards our strong preference is to have this event be scheduled at least three weekends after Memorial Day and therefore two weekends after the Empire Cup.



For the second year running our White Mountain Vintage Grand Prix at the superb Tamworth, NH track will be held the second weekend in July. This track, a favorite of just about all that have partaken, needs more support in '21 if we are to continue with it. Please encourage your racing friends to join you if they have not entered this event before. Next up is the classic Mt. Equinox Hill Climb the second weekend in August.

The Lime Rock Historics will be in the usual Labor Day slot. As noted, the feature is Porsche and it would be great to see a stellar grid of 356s, Speedsters, and the like. We will conclude our track schedule with the Fall Finale: A Pre-War celebration. A couple of months ago I wrote to 30 current and past Pre-War entrants to see what we can do to jump start this group. We received a lot of great feedback and, as a result, Mitch

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McCullough is heading up a committee to look into this with Jason Urban and Sandy Leith.

Concurrent to that effort, we have been pursuing the return of the Castle Hill Pre-War Hill Climb in Ipswich, MA and there is a good chance we will be able to hold it! If you did not partake in the event in the late '90s let me tell you, it is special. A winding and challenging drive leads up to a mansion overlooking the Atlantic. The event will be open to Pre-War cars and possibly MG TCs and HRGs. It will be open to the public and tied into a craft beer festival. More details will be shared in the coming months.

Our driving season will conclude with the 25th Nutmeg Rally to take place in the Hudson Valley area and a special event is planned. Please note the new date for the Nutmeg of October 23. We will close out the year with what we hope can be a "live" AGM followed by the traditional holiday parties.

In an effort to bolster our grids for the 2021 season we will accept, for our wheel-to-wheel events, log book cars and approved drivers from VMC affiliated groups. The cars should meet VSCCA safety regulations, comply with the regulations of the organization issuing the log book, and be equivalent to SVRA groups 1, 3, 4, and 5b, i.e. sports and small bore production cars including pre-1970 sports racing cars under 2-litres all running on treaded tires. Non-VSCCA log book cars will be in their own run group if there are sufficient numbers. Entries should be submitted no later than two weeks before the event and will be charged the non-VSCCA member entry fee. We will post a list of the eligible cars on our website in the coming weeks or the list can be found on the SVRA web site now.

For 2021 we will continue with MotorsportReg (MSR) for event registration. In '20 we saw an increase in online registration from 60% in '19 to 90%. For those 10% who have not used it we ask you to please register for events via MSR. If

you prefer to pay by check, that is fine, you can still register via MSR and mail in a check. If you pay online your card will not be charged until after the event. Using MSR makes life for our hardworking volunteer Event Chairs so much easier in many ways. Worth noting is that Lime Rock is transitioning to MotorsportReg for registration for the Historics Festival.

Our 2021 entry rates will be the same as 2020. We will have the early bird-rate again; enter two weeks before the event and save \$50.

We also are pleased that we will soon have some terrific enhancements to our website. The home page will now feature all of the year's events, links to enter and to see who has entered. It will also feature links to VSCCA news of interest such as emails that have been sent, the newsletter, the magazine, Victory Lane articles, photos and more. In short, there are now good reasons to go there. We will also be revamping the classified page so that individual member's classifieds and those of our member brokers share equal visibility.

With 2020 in our rearview mirror, thank goodness, I would be remiss if I did not mention the retirement from wheel-to-wheel activities of several of our VSCCA friends who have been long-time stalwarts of our track events. Peter Ross, Victor Cromie, Mike Virr, Ernie Steubesand, Chip Brown and our former president, John Schieffelin. First and foremost, we will miss their camaraderie at the tracks but hopeful that we will see them, perhaps at the track and certainly at other VSCCA events such as hill climbs, rallies, and social events. If there are others who have taken a similar decision, I apologize for not noting them, but those noted are the ones that I am aware of. With this list in mind, I would like to share an update on something I noted a year ago. To the best of my knowledge Peter Ross' 56-year span of racing his TC is the longest of any one VSCCA car and driver combination on track. Victor Cromie first autocrossed his father's Riley IMP at Aintree in 1950 and ran it on track with us as recently as 2019. Both are impressive spans of longevity! Hopefully many of our retired PreWar drivers will dust off their helmets and join us at Castle Hill.

Lastly, this is the second year for the newsletter and, as last year, one of four to promote VSCCA activities for the coming season. You will see the next three issues around the first of April, June and August. We hope you will be able to join us at some of our activities in 2021!

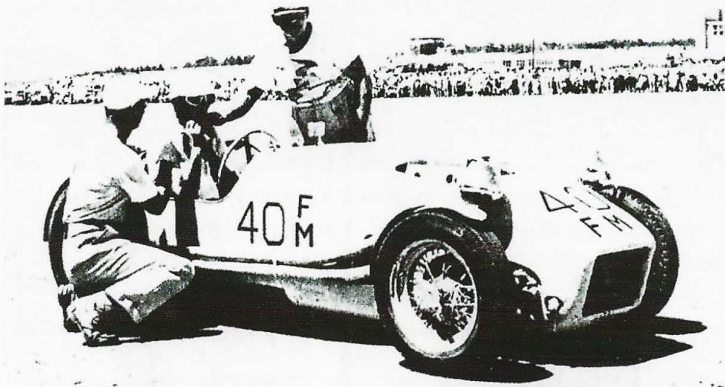
Best regards,

Mark O'Day  
Activities Chairman





# Cars you'll see at VSCCA events: 1949 MG TC Special

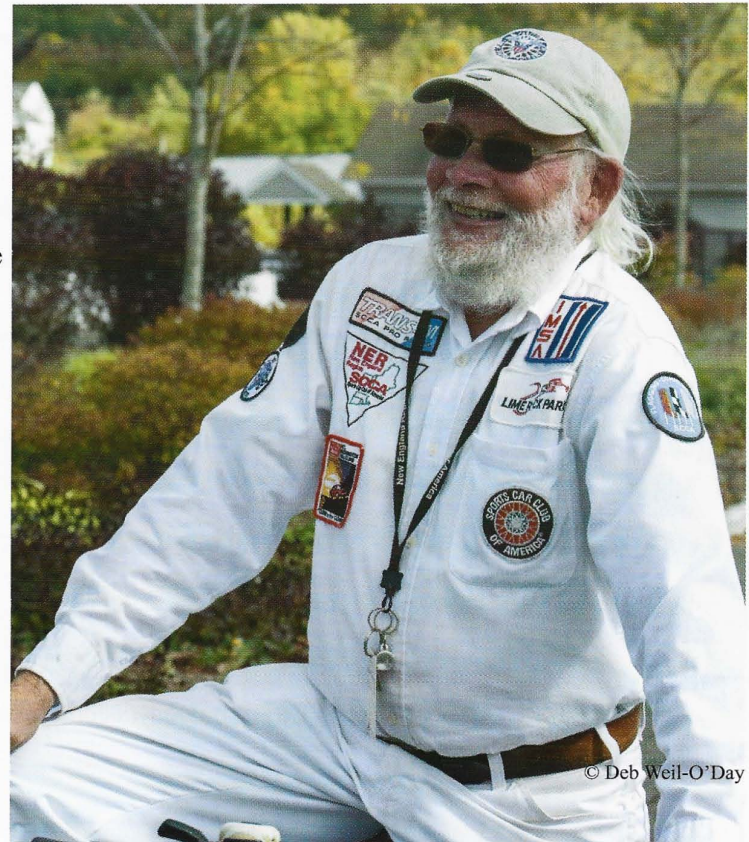


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At first glance Dan Leonard's 1949 MG TC Special looks like Lotus 6 or early Seven. In fact, the TC was rebodied in 1951, two years before the Lotus 6 was launched. Chuck Bowen, a Bell Helicopter engineer bought the car new in Buffalo and rebodied it for racing within a couple of years. He kept to original TC frame and drivetrain. He then built up a frame for the body out of surplus rear rotor shafts from a Bell 27 helicopter and finished it with aluminum and fiberglass panels and wings. Perhaps the "then" photo here could be of the helicopter! This one-off is a unique TC, certainly, and one can't help but wonder if Colin Chapman ever saw it. It would seem pretty unlikely; given that Bowen was from Texas and he raced it there in SCCA events until 1958. From then until 1984 the history of the car is largely unknown when VSCCA member Davis Stern acquired it. After five years it passed on to Dave and Joanne Raymond who raced it for a few years and then it sat dormant until Dan acquired it in 2008. Not surprisingly, it was found to have a lot of stress issues and a full rebuild was in order. Before the roll bar was added it weight a mere 1300 pounds so it is quick and Dan has put in a lot of work sort out the handling. Dan has had a variety of small race cars over the years, including a Lotus 6, but the TC Special is his favorite car to race.

## Course Marshal Profile: Mark Ragsdale

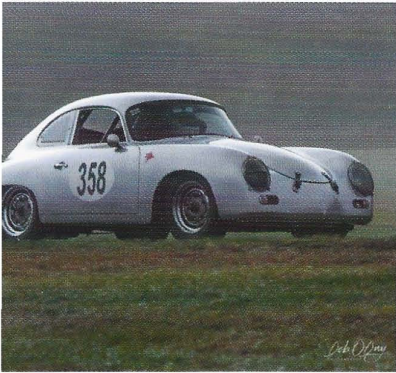
A visit to Mt Equinox in the mid 90s got Mark Ragsdale hooked on vintage motorsports. In 1997 he started flagging with the SCCA and was named the New England Region "Rookie of the Year" that year. He was soon volunteering for VSCCA events, joined the club and has been with us ever since. In fact, he was one of three that worked all four VSCCA events in 2020 (Steve Chisolm and Jean Petryshyn being the other two – thank you!). Mark hails from Denmark, Maine and for a few years worked at Competition Motors with Ben Bragg. Not surprisingly, Ben's current and former VSCCA steeds, the Old Gray Mare and Buick, are his favorite VSCCA cars. Other than those his favorite would be a '66 E-Type coupe. These days Mark is focused on the VSCCA and loves our events. He advises us to please check every station every lap. He enjoys doing a variety of duties from flagging to radios, whatever it takes and particularly likes being stationed at the downhill at Lime Rock, seeing the cars on full compression as they turn out from the bottom of the hill. Mark loves to camp as well and, as you might have gathered, his favorite place to camp is at the track! The VSCCA is indeed fortunate to have dedicated volunteers like Mark who has enabled our events for over 20 years.



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# Upcoming VSCCA Events



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## **Spring Sprints & Driver's School Friday - Saturday, May 7-8, Lime Rock Park, CT** **Save \$50 by entering by April 23!**

Kick off your track season with the Spring Sprints and Driver's School. We will be featuring Porsche so calling all 356s, Speedsters and their brethren! There will also be a gathering for H-Mods. School entrants can run just about anything in the school track sessions. If you don't have a Porsche don't worry, you'll get all the usual track time at this two-day event. This is a muffled event. For more information on the Spring Sprints please contact Event Chair Ben Tarlow at [info@midcenturymotoring.com](mailto:info@midcenturymotoring.com) or call 914-402-5799. For more information on the School please contact Charles Bordin at [cbordin123@aol.com](mailto:cbordin123@aol.com) or call 914-968-5700.



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## **The Empire Cup Friday - Saturday, June 4-5, Lime Rock Park, CT** **Save \$50 by entering by May 21!**

The Empire Cup will again be celebrating the Sports Racers of the 1950's and 1960's by offering a dedicated grid in this traditional VSCCA event. Two full days of racing, plenty of unmuffled track time (at least 7 track sessions over the 2 days). This event does have timing and scoring using transponders. You can enter both your VSCCA car and a later closed wheel 1960's - 70s race car. If conditions allow we will have the traditional Friday evening cookout at the track for everyone. For more information please contact Event Chair Charles Bordin at [cbordin123@aol.com](mailto:cbordin123@aol.com) or call 914-968-5700.



© Mark Sherman

## **Thompson Vintage Motorsport Festival Thursday - Saturday June 10-12, Thompson, CT** **Save \$50 by entering by May 28!**

The 7th annual Thompson event will take place at Thompson Speedway in the beautiful "quiet corner" of Connecticut. As with last year, the VSCCA and the VRG will be sanctioning the event this year. There will be one VSCCA all-comers grid for all VSCCA eligible cars. If we have 32 entries by March 15 we will add a second grid - please sign up now if you intend to enter! For more information on the Thompson event please contact Event Chair Steve Morici at [moricimotorsportswest@yahoo.com](mailto:moricimotorsportswest@yahoo.com) or call Steve in California (PST time!) at 760-249-1112.



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## **White Mountain Vintage Grand Prix Friday - Saturday, July 9-10, Tamworth, NH.** **Save \$50 by entering by June 25!**

The event that gives you more track time than any other - over three hours in 2019 on the fantastic 2.5 mile Club Motorsports circuit! Eligibility is open to VSCCA cars and guests with VSCCA-type cars as well as small bore front-engine cars with largely stock bodies made up to 1970 (or of that type, a '73 Alfa GTV is acceptable, for example) and running on treaded tires. This is a muffled event - 90 dB limit. For more information, please contact Event Chair Mark O'Day at [mdoday@comcast.net](mailto:mdoday@comcast.net) or 603-580-5827.



# The Vintage Sports Car Club of America



## 2021 Schedule of Events

Date	Event	Early Bird Entry deadline <i>SAVE \$50!</i>	Location
May 7-8	Spring Sprints & Drivers School: Porsche and H-Mod feature	16-Apr	Lime Rock Park, CT
June 4-5	Empire Cup: Celebrating the Iconic Sports Racer	21-May	Lime Rock Park, CT
June 11-12	Thompson Vintage Motorsports Festival	27-May	Thompson, CT
July 9-10	White Mountain Vintage Grand Prix	25-Jun	Tamworth, NH
August 7-8	Mt. Equinox Hill Climb	NA	Arlington, VT
Sept 3-6	Lime Rock Historic Festival 39	TBA	Lime Rock Park, CT
Oct 1-2	Fall Finale: A Pre-War Celebration	17-Sep	Lime Rock Park, CT
Oct 16	Castle Hill Pre-War Hill Climb (to be confirmed)	NA	Ipswich, MA
Oct 23	25th Nutmeg Rally	NA	Hudson Valley, NY
Nov 6	VSCCA Annual General Meeting	NA	Salisbury, CT
Dec 11	Boston Holiday Lunch	NA	Boston, MA
TBA	Righetti Holiday Brunch	NA	West Point, NY

Date	Charity Events (of interest to members)	Charity	Location
Jun 25-27	2021 Vintage Charity Tour	Connecticut Hospice & Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research	White Mountains, NH
Late July/ Early August	Spadaro Memorial Drive	Sloane Kettering Memorial Hospital	New York area
Jul 31-Aug 1	Vintage Racing Stable Rally, Dinner & Concours	Boys & Girls Club of NH	Sanbornton, NH
Sept 10-12	Radnor Hunt Rally & Concours	Boy Scouts & Thorncroft Equestrian Center	Edgemont, PA



# VSCCA Safety Harness Regulations effective 2021 season



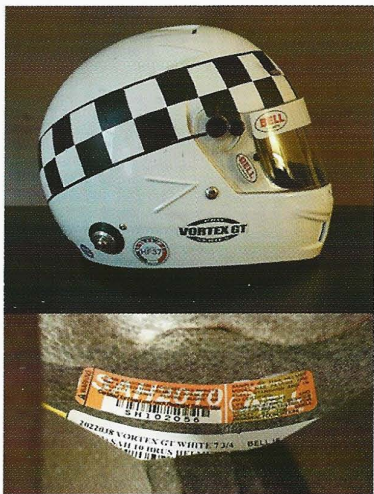
For the 2021 season expiration dates on the belts will be strictly enforced. Safety harnesses have one of two specifications – FIA and SFI. Due to safety issues the VSCCA strongly advises safety harness purchases be FIA specification. SFI specification will still be accepted. FIA approved harnesses perform better, are made of better material, and have an expiration date five (5) years from the date of manufacture versus two (2) years for SFI approved harnesses. Each piece of your harness system will have an expiration tag. If your belts have 2020, 2019, or earlier on the tag they are expired! If you anticipate entering an event with another club you are reminded to check the safety rules for that event to avoid problems at scrutineering there.

## VSCCA Medical Requirements for the 2021 season

There are no changes or updates to the VSCCA medical requirements for the 2021 season. They are the same as they have been for several years now. Drivers who would like to enter one of our wheel-to-wheel track events must have an approved medical that is valid through the event they are entering. For 2020 we provided a one-year extension through the 2020 season for approved medicals due to the pandemic. The extension is not valid for the 2021 season. If your medical is valid through June 1, 2021, for example, your medical allows you to enter the Spring Sprints. It does not allow you to enter the Empire Cup on June 4-5. Don't be disappointed! You can download a form on [vscca.org](http://vscca.org) and if you need your medical updated, schedule a doctor's appointment now! Medicals are not required for hill climbs (or the Preservation class should we have that at any events).

## VSCCA Helmet Regulations effective 2021-2025

The topic of helmets was covered at length in the issue number 4, 2020 of the VSCCA Newsletter (available at [VSCCA.org](http://VSCCA.org)). What follows is a synopsis of that article.



- For the 2021 season the VSCCA will accept helmets with the following Snell designations: 2010, 2015, and 2020. Please note that other clubs may not accept 2010 helmets and you should check with that club. For example, the SVRA will not accept 2010 helmets in 2021.
- For the 2022 season 2010 Snell helmets will no longer be accepted for VSCCA wheel-to-wheel events. You must have a 2015 or 2020 Snell approved helmet for the 2022 season.
- If you race with an organization that requires the helmet to carry the FIA specification, be aware that not all SA2020 helmets meet this requirement. To meet the FIA standards, the individual manufacturer has to supply the FIA with helmets for testing. Always check with the supplier before purchasing.
- The VSCCA does not accept helmets that are approved by the SFI (even though the SCCA does).
- You can't use a Snell M prefix helmet when driving a race car. The Snell M helmets are for motorcycle use and have a larger eye-ports then the Snell SA. The Snell SA helmets have also been tested for roll bar impact, compatibility with Hans devices and are fire resistant.

- There are still a large number of Snell SA2015 helmets on the market. These are being heavily discounted by many of the suppliers and can be used in the VSCCA until at least 2025.
- The Snell Memorial Foundation states the following "Helmet price is not an indication of protective capacity". All Snell helmets have passed the same testing, regardless of price.
- If you are not sure if you have a Snell 2010 or 2015 helmet look under the lining at the back and there will be an orange sticker noting SA2010 or SA2015. If there is a "H" between the SA and the year that denotes it is HANS compatible.



# Best of V&SCCA Photography

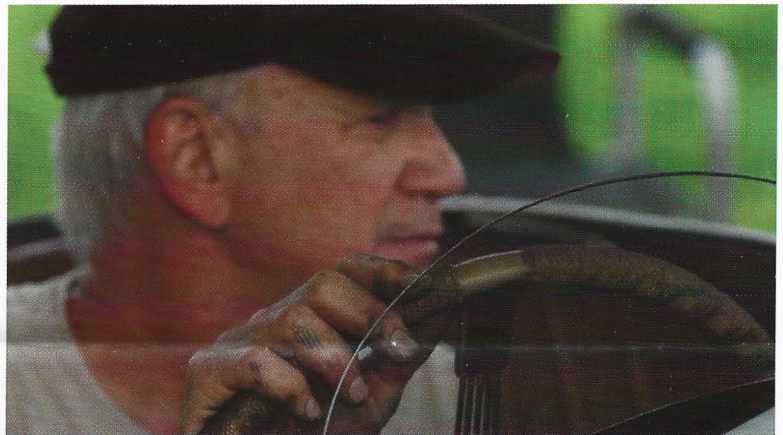
The VSCCA is fortunate to have our endeavors chronicled by several outstanding member photographers. Here is what they submitted as favorites from their portfolios.



© 2020 Auto Photos Ed Hyman



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© Michael DiPleco



© Sean S Smith Motorgrafix



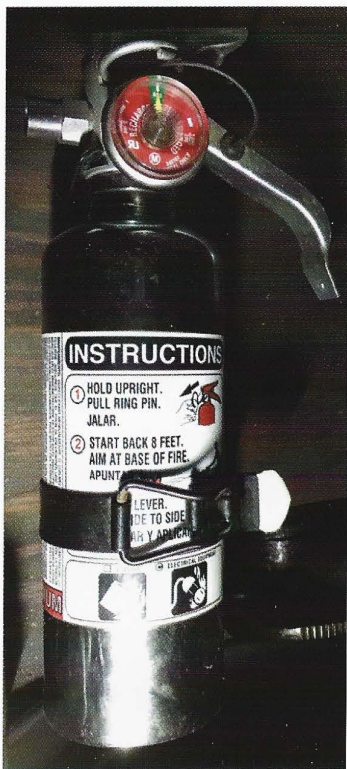
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# Tech Tips: Fire Extinguishers



I'd like to cover a part of your car that probably hasn't been looked at for a while, your fire system. The VSCCA requires a handheld fire extinguisher to be mounted securely and within the reach of the driver. We also require a sticker on the body pointing to the location of the fire extinguisher or activation handle or button. If you are using a handheld fire extinguisher, there's not a lot to making sure it's safe to use. Check the gauge and make sure that the mounting bracket is fastened properly. If you are running a fire system in your car, there is more to check. Almost all fire system bottles have an expiration date on them as well as a gauge. Please don't wait until "Spring

Sprints" to find out that your

gauge reads low and you should always check the date on the bottle. If your fire system bottle doesn't have an expiration date and you can't remember the last time you changed it, it's time. If your fire system uses a separate battery to operate it, make sure you install a new one on a regular basis. Follow the instructions that came with your fire system and perform a system check and arm the system as part of your buckle-up procedure. You should also remove the battery after each event. I've had many cars come into my shop with the old battery still in place, along with a lot of corrosion. If you are using a "Tee" handle cable operated system, install the safety pin into the bottle and make sure the cable hasn't rusted inside the outer cable. Make sure the cable gets lubricated and moves freely before installing it back into the head of the fire bottle. I recommend leaving the pin out of the bottle, except when servicing the cable. The chance that the pin may be left in the head of the bottle is too great. You can use the safety pin that goes through the "Tee" handle to avoid an accidental discharge. I remove the pin from the "Tee" handle during the buckle-up procedure, whether I'm driving or helping someone buckle-up. My own opinion is that if you need to activate the system in an emergency, pulling the pin out with your driving gloves on could be a problem. Another area that should be checked is the soft aluminum fire system distribution tubing. Look closely to make sure that there are no cracks in the tubing from vibration or rubs from making contact with another object. I think that if you



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have the room, having a handheld extinguisher, as well as a fire system would be highly recommended. As always, if you're not sure, ask your mechanic or one of the VSCCA tech inspectors for guidance. Our inspectors have many decades of experience and are always willing to help.

Safety first!

Mark Lefferts



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