

# SAVE YOUR WIPERS!



Ralph Seekins

Don't get me wrong. We sell windshield wipers for cars and trucks in our parts department, our repair shop, our body shop, and our QuickLane Tire and Auto Center. Thank you very much for buying them. However, I'm going to tell you a fairly simple way how to buy fewer. So, here we go. . .

I went over to the supermarket across the street last week when the weather was trying to decide whether it should snow or rain. When I got out of my truck I spent about 15 seconds lifting the wipers off the windshield into the "up and parked" position. I was inside for about 20 minutes. When I came back out there was a dusting of snow on the windshield. I pushed the wipers back down onto the windshield. As they slapped back into place, little bits of snow and ice scattered

from the impact zone. Had I left the wipers in the down position on the warm windshield when I went into the store, water created from the melting snow would have frozen the rubber blades in place. I'm sure this has happened to your vehicle during our winter months. But, because the wipers weren't frozen to the glass, they quickly brushed away the snow without first having to rip themselves free. I could drive safely much quicker without damaging the thin rubber contact area of the blades.

Windshield wipers are made with a tapering blade – the thinnest part makes contact with the glass. As the contact area wears away, the wiper becomes less efficient. Sometimes, huge chunks of the blade snap or are ripped off making it difficult to properly clean a wet or snowy windshield. The only remedy is a new blade and always sooner than you would like it to happen.

So, whenever I know that there could be a condition where ice could accumulate on the windshield – like when it's snowing and the windshield is

warm from the drive to work – and I'm going to park outside for any length of time, I pull those wipers up and off the windshield. And, I do this whenever it is snowing – even just a little – or it looks like it might snow before my next trip. It really does work well at keeping the wipers working efficiently for a longer time. I know it will work for you as well.

While speaking of windshield wipers, let me tell you another little secret. Cheap wipers are generally worth what you pay for them – particularly up here. Rubber is made in many different compounds. The stuff that stays more pliable in cold weather naturally costs a little more to make and the better compounded wipers consequently cost a little more. I highly recommend you pay just a little more for the quality wipers. They will last longer and keep you safer on the road in difficult weather.

*Ralph Seekins has more than 42 years' experience in the automotive industry. He started as a mechanic, worked in sales, and for the past 36 years, has been the owner of Seekins Ford Lincoln.*