



SPRING 2011

It pays to think local when choosing your insurance company

When you hear PEMCO's TV ads say, "We're a lot like you. A little different," do you ever wonder what that really means? Or if it's even true?

Wonder no more! PEMCO is different from other insurance companies—both in how it's structured and how it serves customers when Northwest roads and weather dish out their worst.

Not beholden to Wall Street

Unlike most major insurers, PEMCO is a mutual insurance company. That means it's owned by its policyholders, not stockholders. Doing the right thing for policyholders—not driving up share prices—guides company decisions.

PEMCO is headquartered in Seattle and serves Northwest residents only. It doesn't need "blanket strategies" to cover all 50 states and, when a weather calamity strikes, managers don't find out by memo. They only need to step out their front doors.

We can say 'Puyallup'

If a 75-foot hemlock sliced through your living room, the first adjuster you talk with shouldn't be someone sitting 2,000 miles away in a call center. PEMCO claims adjusters live and work locally. They have decades worth of working relationships with area body shops,

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Check in to check up

Insurance needs change over time, and we're here to help!

We'll gladly review your policy with you to check for gaps. Simply call your local PEMCO agent or 1-800-GO-PEMCO and say, "I'd like a policy review." ■



PEMCO EXPANDS TO COVER OREGONIANS THIS SUMMER

Do you have friends or relatives living in the Beaver State? Share a good thing... tell them about PEMCO.



NORTHWEST PROFILE #60 BLUE TARP CAMPERS

SWITCH TO PERSPECTIVE BY E-MAIL

To go paperless, visit
<http://perspective.pemco.com>.

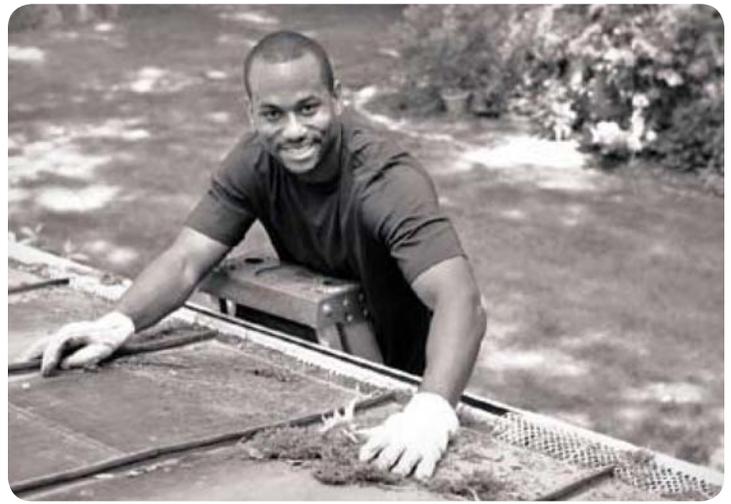
WE'RE A LOT LIKE YOU.
A LITTLE DIFFERENT.



Instead of 'spring cleaning,' think 'spring maintenance'

While you probably can't wait to pack away those winter sweaters and clunky space heaters, bigger problems could be lurking right outside your front door. Ice and water may have quietly taken a toll on your home's exterior. May is a good month to check six key areas:

1. **Gutters and downspouts.** Reattach sagging gutters or downspouts that have pulled away from the house. Clear accumulated leaves and debris, then spray water on the roof to check for gutter clogs and leaks. Make sure downspouts empty at least two feet from your home's foundation.
2. **Paint.** If you see bare wood or peeling paint, now's the time to prime and repaint those areas, provided air temperatures meet the recommended minimums to effectively dry the paint or stain you're using.
3. **Wooden decks.** Check for loose railings or supports before your family gathers for that first barbecue. Pressure wash to remove moss and mildew, taking care to keep the nozzle far enough from the surface that it doesn't shred wood fibers. Reapply water sealant every five years.
4. **Outdoor faucets.** Check for leaks that may have sprung up during winter's freezes and thaws.



5. **Foundation and masonry.** Look for cracks or signs of missing mortar. If you can slide a nickel into any foundation crack, get it checked by a foundation specialist.
6. **Roof.** Now's the time to combat moss and its shingle-damaging effects with an anti-moss treatment (including organic options) formulated for roofs. Trim overhanging branches that keep the roof wet and contribute to moss and needle buildup. And if you're thinking about having your cedar roof pressure washed, make sure your contractor uses a gentle setting. Pressure suitable for cleaning concrete can shred wood fibers, shortening the life of your roof. Apply a water repellent formulated for cedar roofs after pressure washing. ■

Ruin an identity thief's day: Tap your free PEMCO ID Smart™ benefits

Perplexed by an odd charge on your credit card statement? Receiving bills from doctors you never visited? Inexplicably turned down for a job or loan?

Those could be innocent mix-ups.

Or, they could be the first signs an identity thief has locked you in his sights.

Don't waste time wondering, worrying and, perhaps, giving fraudsters the break they need to take over your identity. If you even suspect your identity has been compromised, call 1-800-GO-PEMCO. We'll put you in touch with an identity specialist who will help you shut down the thief and guide you step-by-step in cleaning up any mess left behind.

PEMCO ID Smart is a free, value-added service—yours automatically because you're a PEMCO policyholder. It protects you with unlimited one-on-one access to a highly experienced fraud specialist who becomes your personal advocate for as long as it takes to resolve your concerns.

Take a moment now to tear off the attached **PEMCO ID Smart** cards and give one to each member of your household to keep alongside his or her PEMCO Insurance ID card. And to learn how to protect yourself before trouble strikes, visit pemco-idsmart.com. ■

PEMCO ID Smart is powered by Identity Theft 911®, the nation's leader in identity management and fraud education.



Questions you asked us

My friend says it's illegal to drive barefoot or in flip-flops. I say it's OK. Who's right?

Technically, you are. But according to the State Patrol, it's still not a great idea. Writing for the seattlepi.com, a State Patrol spokesman noted that while you can't be ticketed for your choice of footwear, it could contribute to an accident. Flip-flops can get caught on the brake or gas pedal. And, if you break down and decide to walk for help, you could find yourself wishing for a sturdy pair of shoes. ■

\$5-a-gallon fuel on the horizon? Four tips to stretch your mileage

Historically, gas prices peg 33% higher in the spring (when demand rises) compared with prices in the fall and winter, according to the American Automobile Association (AAA). However, political turmoil in the Middle East combined with increased fuel demand in China and Latin America have forced prices at the pump even higher this year.

Is now the time to trade in your current ride for a hybrid? Not so fast. The folks at Edmunds.com tested some widely touted fuel-saving tips to separate fact from fiction. Their biggest finding: YOU control your mileage almost as much as the car you drive.

Tip No. 1: Curb aggressive driving and save up to 37%. Avoid jackrabbit starts, hard braking, and zooming up to traffic lights. AAA found accelerating from a dead stop takes 20% more gas than ramping up from 5 mph. What's more, less-intense driving lets you look farther down the road and better anticipate changing conditions—a huge safety plus.

Tip No. 2: Cut speeds on the open road from 75 mph to 65 mph and save up to 14%—avoid speeding tickets, too!

Tip No. 3: Use cruise control and save up to 14%. Cruise control eliminates natural variations in accelerator pressure. However, for safety's sake, don't use it in wet or icy conditions, on curvy or mountainous terrain, or in heavy traffic where you constantly need to adjust to road conditions.



Tip No. 4: Minimize idling and warm-up time and save up to 19%.

Consider shutting off the car if you'll be idling longer than a minute. And as for warm-ups, AAA reports that even in the coldest climates, most cars need no more than 30 seconds to warm up.

So which common gas-saving tip did the Edmunds testers say is false? The idea that you should avoid running the AC or opening the windows. While both cut mileage slightly, neither made much difference—so go ahead and stay cool! ■

TAKING THE BUS, INSTEAD?

*If you've cut back on driving, call us.
We may be able to reduce your premiums.*

Think local *(continued)*

arborists, roofers, and other specialists whose services book up quickly following natural disasters. (You like being first in line, right?) And, if a claim is truly unusual, PEMCO adjusters can walk down the hall to talk with top decision-makers—no need to grind through a multistate chain of command or wait over the weekend for a response.

Living locally, giving locally

PEMCO gives 5% of its pretax profits to Northwest charities that primarily benefit education, youth, public safety, and health. Last year, 98% of PEMCO employees also donated their own time to support causes ranging from blood, food, and clothing drives to volunteering with at-risk students.

PEMCO's president, Stan McNaughton, puts it like this: "We know you, because we are you. We live in the same neighborhoods, travel the same roads, endure the same storms, support the same schools, donate to the same charities. And because we insure only Northwest residents, we take care of you like no one else can." ■

SPOT ANYONE YOU KNOW AMONG OUR NORTHWEST PROFILES?

Since 2007, 57 Northwest profiles—from Blue Tarp Camper to Urban Chicken Farmer—have celebrated what makes Northwesterners unique.

To check out the entire profile family—or create your own—visit werealotlikeyou.com and be sure to follow us on:



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youtube

Suggest an article

Is there an insurance topic you'd like us to cover in Perspective? Whether it's something you'd simply like to know more about or a consumer tip for fellow readers, we'd love to consider it for a future issue! Please e-mail your ideas to perspective@pemco.com.

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PEMCO Insurance Co.
PEMCO Mutual Insurance Co.

325 Eastlake Avenue East
Seattle, Washington 98109

1-800-GO-PEMCO
(1-800-467-3626)

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PEMCO
perspective

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Please tell us what you think about PEMCO or our products. Click "Write a review" on pemco.com. We value your candid feedback and may share it (anonymously) on our website.

'Stealth texting' scuttles benefit of texting-while-driving bans

In a counterintuitive and disturbing twist, crash rates have crept up in some states that have banned texting while driving.

So says the Highway Loss Data Institute (HLDI), which examined crash statistics in Washington, California, Louisiana, and Minnesota from before and after their bans took effect. With a non-statistically significant bump of 1%, Washington was at the low end of the increased crash range. Minnesota, at the upper end, saw crashes climb by 9%.

Researchers suspect that, to avoid detection by police, texters hold their phones in their laps, hidden from others' view, and look down—taking their eyes off the road—while they tap out messages. Driving simulator tests show a head-down position increases crash frequency.

Drivers under age 25 are much more likely to text than older drivers, with 45% admitting in an HLDI survey that they've continued texting while driving despite state bans (that compares with 48% in states without bans). Many reported they didn't think police strongly enforce the bans.

The upshot: Until drivers focus on the message behind the laws—that is, distracted driving leads to crashes—legislation aimed at eliminating a single distraction may have little impact and, in some cases, make the problem worse. ■

FAST FACT

In a study of drivers' phone records, Insurance Institute for Highway Safety researchers found a four-fold increase in the risk of injury crashes associated with phone use.

PEMCO ID Smart™ Wallet Cards

Step 1 Cut along dotted lines

Step 2 Fold in half

Step 3 Tape ends together



PEMCO **iD smart**[™]
IDENTITY FRAUD SERVICES
POWERED BY Identity Theft **911**[®]

If you suspect your identity has been stolen, or if you have identity-fraud concerns, call 1-800-GO-PEMCO to be connected to an Identity Theft 911 fraud specialist.

POWERED BY Identity Theft **911**[®]
From panic to peace of mind.[™]



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