

A window on driver protection

This week The Cancer Society embarked on a campaign urging car owners to wear gloves while driving, to protect their hands from skin cancer. The main risk, according to The Cancer Society, is from exposure through side windows on long or frequent trips.

The Window Film Association of Australia & New Zealand (WFAANZ) suggests another way drivers can protect against UV damage - window film. Clear or factory-tinted vehicle glass typically blocks only 30 to 60% of UV radiation, while that same glass with window film applied can block over 99% UV radiation.

Pete Arthurs, WFAANZ President, comments, "We applaud the efforts of The Cancer Society in promoting this issue. People don't realise they can still get burnt when driving with the windows closed. Wearing gloves is a great option, as is applying window film to the side windows. Film offers constant protection all year round, and when applied to all side windows it protects every passenger from sun exposure. The ultimate solution, of course, would be to cover your skin and apply window film."

Controlling the UV and heat penetrating through the windows can also make the vehicle cooler, minimise glare, protect the interior and reduce the need for air conditioning. Security films make it harder for thieves to break into a car by smashing through the windows.

The darkness of window film is indicated by a Visible Light Transmittance (VLT) percentage. The lower the VLT percentage, the darker the film. There are enforceable regulations in New Zealand regarding the VLT, where film can be applied and to what type of vehicle.

On any vehicle, the darkest legal tint allowed on a driver and front passenger window is a 35% VLT film. Depending on the classification of your vehicle (MA, MC, MD, etc.) the law can permit darker films on the rear section. The only film allowed on windscreens are anti-glare bands that extend no lower than the bottom of the sun visor, and stone guards on trucks and buses.

"Having your car fitted with legal window film generally makes travelling more comfortable and safer for all passengers," Pete Arthurs said. "The average car can have film applied in a matter of hours. Ensure your installer is a WFAANZ member, this is your assurance you're being looked after by someone who knows the regulations and abides by an industry code of practice."

Motorists wanting a recommendation on the most suitable and legal film for their vehicle can find a list of installers and information about the regulations at www.wfaanz.org.nz.

About window film

Window film has come a long way since its introduction in 1961. Advanced technologies mean window films now offer greater variety of shades, colours and performance levels; the best products are guaranteed to survive the different New Zealand climate zones with scratch resistant coatings for protection and metallic layers for colour stability. Window film can be applied to flat glass windows, skylights, doors, etc. as well as car windows.

About WFAANZ

A non-profit organisation, WFAANZ is dedicated to improving the standard of product and installation of window film in New Zealand. The association sets out strict performance guidelines for its members, so you can rely on a WFAANZ installer.

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