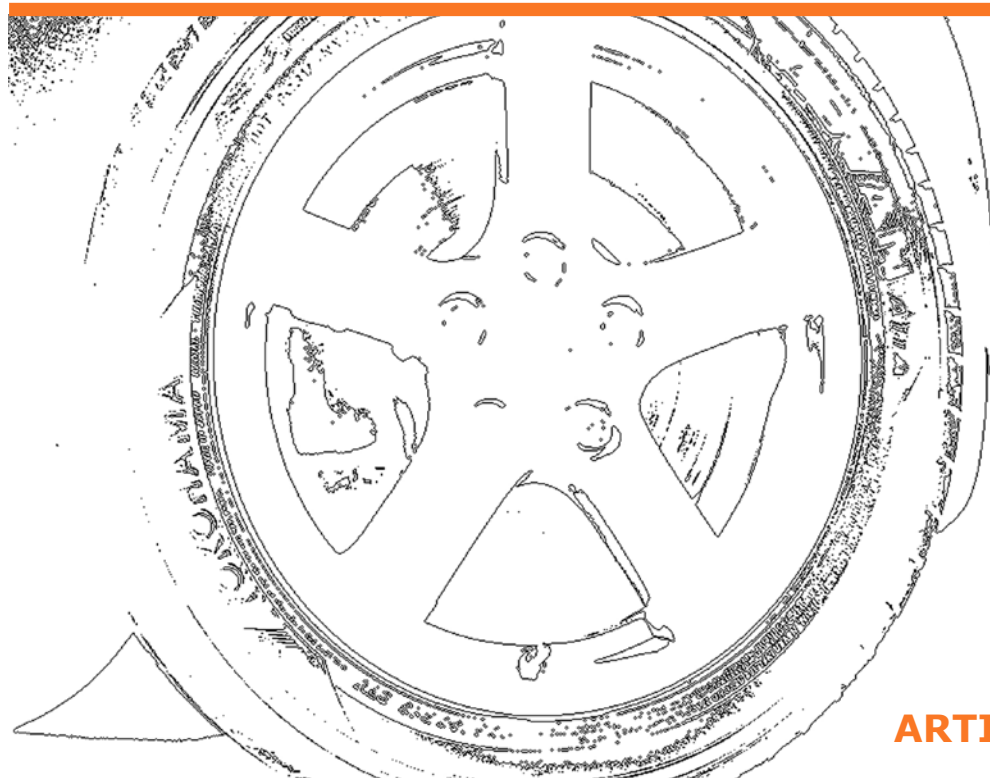


Knowledge

BANK



ARTICLE 20

Windscreen repair and replacement

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Windscreens

Poorly maintained roads, low flying birds, materials falling from lorries and a myriad of other events can cause windscreens to break. Fortunately, laminated windscreens have been legally required for many years, so windscreen damage does not normally cause injury to the occupants of the vehicle. Nonetheless, windscreen damage is one of those problems that pop up from time to time to blight the poor fleet manager's life.

A whole industry has built up around the repair and replacement of windscreens, and mobile windscreen replacement vans are on call 24 hours a day. They offer an efficient service. These suppliers hold vast stocks of replacement units and in most cases your windscreen can be professionally replaced at an address to suit you within hours of the damage occurring.

What is not so widely known is that in many cases you do not need to replace a cracked windscreen. It can be repaired instead for less than half the cost of a replacement windscreen.

In order to be repairable, the damage to the windscreen must fall within the limits set out in the legislation. For this purpose the windscreen is split into two zones, A and B.

Zone A is a 290mm wide area directly in front of the driver, with the boundary being the edge of the arc cleaned by the driver's windscreen wiper. Within Zone A it is OK to repair a crack no larger than 10mm in size.

Zone B comprises all other areas of the windscreen. Here it is OK to repair a crack no larger than 40mm in size.

If the crack is larger than this the windscreen has to be replaced.

The cost of repair may be less than the excess on your comprehensive motor insurance policy. In some cases the insurer will be happy to pay for the whole cost of a repair without deduction of the excess, as it saves them the cost of a replacement window.

Windscreen repair and replacement

A trained technician should carry out a windscreen repair. They will remove any dirt from the crack, then create a vacuum over the damaged area and inject resin to fill the crack. The repair is then dried using ultra violet light and polished so that it is invisible.

You should discourage drivers from putting washing up liquid in windscreen washer bottles. It leaves a residue of fatty acids that impedes vision.

In the not-too-distant future motor vehicles will come fitted with night-vision windscreens. This technology will superimpose an enhanced image of the road onto the windscreen, to help the driver see unlit or poorly lit objects on the road ahead.