

## **April 2008 – Earth Day, National Car Care Month, National Occupational Therapy Month**

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Each month, the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) identifies general themes which coincide with the scope and vision of the Department's boards and bureaus. You can view a full listing of events that the DCA will be attending, many of which correspond with the theme of the month, on our [Outreach Events Calendar](#).

### **Earth Day**

Earth Day is the first holiday which transcends all national borders, spans mountains and oceans and time belts, and brings people all over the world into one resonating accord. It inspires awareness of and appreciation for the Earth's environment.

Earth Day is celebrated on April 22nd every year, and began in 1970, when rising concern about our fragile eco-system sparked a nationwide demonstration. Groups that had been fighting against oil spills, polluting factories and power plants, raw sewage, toxic dumps, pesticides, freeways, the loss of wilderness, and the extinction of wildlife suddenly realized they shared common values.

By 1990, Nations across the globe responded by adopting Earth Day. 200 million people in 141 countries celebrated together and elevated the holiday onto the world stage. To this day, the celebration continues to grow. More nations and more people participate every year. Some march, some plant, some sing. However people decided to celebrate, they all have one goal in mind: to preserve the health of this planet we all share.

[The Department of Consumer Affairs](#) is a staunch defender of California's environment. As such, DCA will participate in a variety of events in April to further inform consumers about our important environmental programs. Join us at any of the following events, where we will be showcasing our clean air programs.

Green California Summit and Expo – April 7-9 – Sacramento

Earth Day on the Promenade – April 12 – Los Angeles

Car Care for Clean Air – April 12 – Perris

Green Living Expo – April 12-13 – Los Angeles

Car Care for Clean Air – April 19 – Moreno Valley

Earth Day in the Park Festival – April 19 – Modesto

Wilshire Center Earth Day – April 22 - Los Angeles

Alternative Building Materials & Design Expo – April 25-26 – Santa Monica

## National Car Care Month

Each April, motorists across the United States observe National Car Care Month. The goal of Car Care Month is to advance the benefits of cleaner air, energy conservation, safer roads, and consumer savings through proper car maintenance. Better car maintenance can save money, improve safety, and reduce pollution.

Cleaner air and a cleaner environment are among Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's top priorities. DCA's [Bureau of Automotive Repair \(BAR\)](#) oversees California's Smog Check program, which helps remove nearly 400 tons of pollution from California's air every day.

One way to help clean up California's air is to retire or repair high-polluting vehicles that have failed Smog Check. Qualified vehicle owners can receive \$1,000 to retire their high-polluting vehicles or up to \$500 toward the cost of repairs to pass a Smog Check. [See if you qualify](#), or [obtain an application](#) to repair or retire your vehicle at the [Bureau of Automotive Repair Web site](#).

The Bureau of Automotive Repair's "Black Balloon" campaign is scheduled to begin April 2008. It is designed to increase consumer awareness about properly maintaining their vehicles. Black balloons are iconic of air pollution produced by cars. To learn more about the campaign go to [www.DriveHealthy.com](http://www.DriveHealthy.com)

The following car care tips from the Bureau of Automotive Repair can help keep you safe on the road and can also help keep smog in check.

- ✚ Check Your Air Filter: A clean filter can improve gas mileage by as much as 10 percent.
- ✚ Straighten Out: Poor alignment not only causes tires to wear out more quickly, but also forces your engine to work harder.
- ✚ Pump 'em Up: More than one-quarter of vehicles have improperly inflated tires.
- ✚ See the Light: Service your vehicle immediately when a warning light appears.
- ✚ Watch Your Speed: For every 5 mph you reduce highway speed, you can reduce fuel consumption by 7 percent.

## National Occupational Therapy Month

April has been designated as National Occupational Therapy Month by the [American Occupational Therapy Association](#).

Occupational therapy is a health profession that helps persons whose lives have been affected by illness or injury. People who can benefit from occupational therapy range from the tiniest of newborn infants to senior citizens.

Occupational therapists help people surmount their disabilities or medical conditions to do everyday things. The nature of the therapy depends on the individual and their environment; occupational therapists consider the whole person when developing a therapy plan.

The field can trace its roots back a century or more, when it was derived to help veterans return home from war. These days, occupational therapists work in rehabilitation hospitals and on the front lines of combat. Some occupational therapy programs help soldiers recognize and relieve stress. In addition, occupational therapy helps soldiers learn to care for themselves after an injury, including helping them use artificial limbs.

Today, there are more than 100,000 occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants practicing in the United States.

DCA is proud to oversee [the Board of Occupational Therapy](#), which regulates and licenses Occupational Therapists in California.