

CORONAVIRUS:

VEHICLE CARE DURING COVID 19

- a guide by Wilcox Limousines

With the introduction of strict social distancing measures by the Government during the COVID-19 outbreak, Wilcox Limousines is offering the following guidance to funeral firms for the storage of limousines.

LEAVING YOUR VEHICLE PARKED FOR UP TO A MONTH

FUEL

Before parking your car up for a long period, it's a good idea to top up with fuel. Not only will this help with other measures, but a full tank doesn't attract condensation - which could cause issues, if allowed to build up over time.

BATTERY MAINTENANCE

If you can, connect your car's battery to a mains-powered battery maintainer. If you can't, start the engine once a week and allow it to run for about 15 minutes. This will re-charge the battery and help keep the engine in good condition. It's important to allow the engine to run for this long so the battery can charge properly. In the case of petrol engine cars, it also helps to prevent engines from flooding with fuel. Never leave your car unattended with the engine running.

BATTERY DISCONNECTING

You can also consider disconnecting the battery in-between the weekly running of the car, as this will keep the battery at the same level of power until it is next needed. If you are going to do this please remember to

disconnect the negative (black) first and the positive (red) second. When you reconnect the battery it is in reverse, so connect the positive first then the negative second.

BRAKES

Sometimes when a car's parked up for a long period with the parking brake on, the brakes can seize. To prevent this it's good practice to release the parking brake and move the vehicle a short distance back and forth, at the same time as running the engine. You shouldn't leave the parking brake off unless the vehicle is on private land with the wheels securely chocked.

GARAGES

Don't run a car engine inside a household garage as the exhaust fumes can be toxic. If you keep your car in a garage, pull it out onto the drive to run the engine to charge the battery.

TYRES

Before driving the car after a long period parked up, check all the tyre pressures and inflate if needed.

LEAVING YOUR VEHICLE PARKED FOR THREE MONTHS

In addition to the points above:-

1. clean and polish the car;
2. make sure the car is dry if you're storing in a garage;
3. consider a refund on your car tax by making a Statutory Off Road Notification (SORN);
4. you may also be able to reduce your insurance cover to fire and theft only;
5. if the car is in a garage, make sure there's plenty of ventilation.

LEAVING YOUR VEHICLE PARKED FOR LONGER

In addition to the points above:-

1. check your oil level and change if needed;
2. arrange for an 'oil and filter' service;
3. lubricate locks.

STORING PETROL AND DIESEL

Petrol stays fresh in a sealed container for about a year, but starts to degrade in as little as a month when exposed to the air. Stored diesel should be okay for up to a year.

Diesel fuel specs change through the year - summer diesel will be much more susceptible to waxing in cold weather than winter diesel.

Condensation in the fuel tank is bad news and can lead to corrosion, water in the fuel and, in diesels, bacterial and fungal growth. Unless you can ensure a dry stable environment, it's best to store your car with a full tank of fuel to reduce the space for water to condense.

GETTING BACK ON THE ROAD

Before you start a car you haven't used for a long time:-

1. check that the MOT and car tax are still current;

2. if your MOT has expired there is a six months' extension;
3. taxing the car will cancel any SORN;
4. if you need an MOT, you can only drive the car if it's to a garage for a pre-booked MOT;
5. check tyre pressures;
6. check nothing's nesting under the bonnet or has chewed through the pipes/hoses;
7. check all fluid levels before starting the engine;
8. check the brakes, including the handbrake, as they may have seized up if the car was left with the handbrake on. Try putting into gear and driving gently.

If your car has been standing for a long time arrange a full service once it's running again.



If any Wilcox Limousines customers require any extra technical information regarding the storage of vehicles that is not listed in the guidance above, please contact Geraint Rogers at Wilcox Limousines on 07899 847510 or by email to geraint@wilcox.uk.

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