



Nebraska Autobody Association

News Capsule



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Nebraska Autobody Association News Summary April 7, 2008

The Nebraska Autobody Association continues to receive grievances about insurer steering practices. To educate claimants of their right to choose, NABA has developed and adopted new consumer-awareness material. First, visitors to NABA's web site will see a brief commercial that underscores the consumer's right to select a shop. NABA has also adopted several steering circulars that shops can print out to educate consumers. The first of these circulars is available under the 'What's New' section of the NABA web site at <http://www.nebraskaautobody.com>. In addition, NABA has print-media material on steering issues. Nebraska steering laws are available on NABA's web site at <http://nebraskaautobody.com/filedownloads/steering/doistatement.pdf>

To help consumer find collision services, the Nebraska Autobody Association updated its online listing of collision repair shops. Shop members should log on to the NABA web site and search for and review their listings, which can be found in the 'Shop Locator' sections. Your shop can be found by entering search parameter such as shop name, city, phone number, address, zip code or special services offered. Shops that offer special services are encouraged to submit detailed descriptions of specialty services so that consumers can locate your shop by the services you offer. To update or revise your listing, email NABA at nz41254@alltel.net

The Nebraska Autobody Association will be evaluating an online meeting forum later this week. If adopted, members of the association will be able to conduct online meetings that include the ability to review presentations, demonstrations, and collaborations of working papers and projects. NABA hopes that the online meeting forum will encourage and increase participation from its members.

Property/casualty insurers have systematically overcharged insureds and reduced the value of home and automobile insurance policies over the last five years, according to the Consumer Federation of America (CFA), Consumers Union, and the New York Public Interest Research Group. The groups found that overcharges for home and auto were worse than in most other states. CFA estimates that insurers have overcharged each household by at least \$870 since 2004. A CFA study released earlier this year found that property/casualty insurance companies are paying out lower claims in relationship to the premiums they charge Americans ("loss ratios") than at any time in decades.

With fuel pricing continuing on an upward trend, consumers are favoring smaller vehicles and green technology including hybrids, electric plug-ins, diesel hybrids, fuel cells, lithium batteries, and E85 fuels from corn, sugar cane. Automakers are also focusing on lightweight materials that will reduce overall vehicle weight. But where does all of this technology leave collision repairers facing ever-shrinking margins and tighter insurer mandates for faster, cheaper fixes? The collision industry faces long-term uncertainties that can only be addressed by ensuring adequate financial reserves to allow for retooling and retraining.

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