

Windscreen and glass claims rise in one fowl swoop – AA Insurance

Auckland, 27 February 2018 – Pūkekos, ducks and hawks have all made an impact on widescreen claims this summer, but thankfully were only a small percentage of factors responsible for causing damage, according to AA Insurance.

“Our most common car insurance claims over the holiday period are for windscreens and windows, with the most damage received from projectile stones,” says Amelia Macandrew, Customer Relations Manager, AA Insurance. “One unfortunate customer received two windscreen cracks during the same road trip – the first from an oncoming vehicle that flicked up a stone, the second from a misdirected pūkeko.

“In the summer months, we see up to 20 per cent more windscreen repairs and replacements than our yearly average, and 30 per cent more than in winter,” she says. “Given the increased number of people on roads over summer, these numbers make complete sense.”

However, not all accidents are related to being on the road. One customer was loading tent poles into her car when she accidentally knocked the rear-view mirror and cracked the windscreen. An overzealous DIYer caused a 30cm fracture across his screen as he moved a plank of timber. For another customer, it was a case of backyard cricket gone wrong, when the ball took out the rear window of his car.

Toyotas take the top spot for summer claims

During the peak four week Christmas period from mid-December to mid-January AA Insurance handled almost 2,500 claims related to damaged windscreens and glass, totalling around \$900,000. Interestingly, almost a quarter of all these claims were for Toyotas (23%), followed by Nissans (12%), Mazdas (11%), and Mitsubishi and Hondas (8% each). Last summer was similar, with Toyota on 24%, Nissan 12%, Mazda 10%, Honda 8% and Ford 6%.

“AA Insurance insures more Nissans than any other make of car, followed by Toyotas, so it’s interesting that the latter experienced double the amount of damage,” says Amelia. “There could be any number of reasons behind this, such as more Toyota drivers take to the roads over summer.”

“Although no matter what type of car a customer has, it can be frustrating when this kind of damage happens, and can put a real damper on a much looked forward to road trip. So, over the summer we ensure our experienced team is at the ready to look after customers and get them back on the road again as soon as possible.”

AA Insurance’s top tips for summer windscreen care

- If your windscreen has any chips, get them repaired immediately. Many can be easily filled with a special resin to prevent them from spreading, which is much cheaper and less time consuming than having a windscreen replaced later down the track. It’s worth noting that if the chip is larger than 25mm, your car will fail its Warrant of Fitness.
- Vibrations caused by driving, hitting a pothole or even slamming your car doors will encourage a chip to expand, so take care and go easy.
- If there’s more of a crack than a chip in your windscreen, you’ll need it replaced for your own driving safety. Talk to your insurer as this may be covered under your policy.
- If there’s any rust on the surround of your windscreen or it’s looking worn or cracked, this may weaken its integrity or prevent it from remaining watertight, so get it repaired or replaced.
- If you notice arc shaped scratches on the glass, then consider cleaning or replacing your windscreen wipers. Chances are they’re either worn out, or have something trapped under them like dirt or sand that is being pulled across the glass. Don’t forget the rear wiper as well.
- For maximum visibility, clean your windscreen and windows, inside and out, with the right fluid like water and vinegar, or special car window cleaner. Avoid ammonia-based household window cleaners, especially if your windows are tinted.

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About AA Insurance

AA Insurance is an independently operated, New Zealand-based joint venture between the New Zealand Automobile Association (NZAA) and Suncorp Group. We have demonstrated trusted expertise in home, contents and car insurance in New Zealand since 1994. We underwrite our own policies and sell direct to New Zealanders. Our more than 700 staff look after over 375,000 customers with over 710,000 policies.

 **AA Insurance**

We proudly partner with Eden Park, support youth charity Blue Light, and have been consistently recognised by: Reader's Digest Most Trusted Brands (since 2011), NZ Insurance Industry Awards (since 2012), IBM Kenexa Best Workplaces Survey (since 2008), Canstar Blue Most Satisfied Customers (2011-2016), and the Colmar Brunton Corporate Reputation Index (since 2015) that recognises New Zealand's most successful companies.

AA Insurance has an A+ (Strong) Insurer Financial Strength Rating given by Standard and Poor's (Australia) Pty Ltd. For further information visit www.aainsurance.co.nz.

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