

Insights and Updates



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Old is good in the realm of antique cars

Whether it's a 1929 Duesenberg Model J, a 1957 Custom Ranchero or a 1942 Willys MB Jeep, there's nothing like a restored antique auto or motorcycle. The historical fascination with these vehicles just increases with time. You might even say it rises to the level of a love relationship for some people.

To be considered an historic vehicle in New Jersey, the Motor Vehicle Commission requires the vehicle to be at least 25 years old and only used for exhibition and educational purposes by the owner. Given its limited use, liability insurance premium for an antique vehicle is significantly lower than regular vehicles. The owner must agree to a mileage limitation and/or a use restriction to specific activities in order to obtain the lower premium. Also, insurers will expect the owner to have at least one other vehicle for regular use.

Coverage for physical damage to an antique vehicle is treated differently than regular vehicles. Since the value of an antique generally increases with time, it is rated based upon an appraised value and must periodically be reappraised to sufficiently protect the owner. The appraisal will determine the policy limit for that vehicle. From the owner's perspective, one of two bad things are going to happen if the stated value or limit on the policy does not exactly

equal the actual cash value of the antique vehicle at the time of loss.

The first bad thing is if the actual cash value is less than the stated limit, the owner will collect only the actual cash value in the event of a total loss. The owner may expect to collect the stated policy limit and while this may seem unfair, insurance is meant to make the owner whole again, not yield a profit. The owner will, of course, suffer a loss of the excess premium paid for an overestimated policy limit that can never be utilized. The best solution for this problem is to purchase coverage on an "agreed value" basis. When the owner and the insurer agree on the value, which usually is based on the appraisal, that value will become the limit. When a total loss occurs, that limit will be paid, regardless of the actual value of the vehicle at the time of loss.



Index

Travel insurance	2
Moving? Don't forget to move your insurance	3
Bounce house of horror	4
News from our agency	4

The other bad thing that can happen is that the actual cash value can exceed the stated limit (or the "agreed value" limit), and the owner will collect only the stated limit. This usually occurs when the appraisal is out of date, so it is important to get regular appraisals or make annual percentage adjustments. Insurers typically require the antique vehicle to be garaged when it is not in use in order to protect it from theft and the outdoor elements.

Bottom line: If you love your antique vehicle, come visit our agency and we will give it some loving care.

Travel Insurance

Vacations are a great way to relax, unwind and forget about the stressors at home. But, what if your perfectly planned vacation does not go according to plan? What if a freak storm cancels your flights or you are injured in an accident while away from home? Travel insurance is designed specifically to ease the burden of some of these unexpected costs.

Travel insurance is not something that should be bought for every vacation, as it usually costs between 4 and 8 percent of the trips prepaid, nonrefundable cost. However, there are some situations in which a policy is a good idea. You should purchase travel insurance if:

- **You're an anxious traveler.** If you need peace of mind to enjoy your vacation stress free, then having a policy in place will help make your vacation more relaxing.

- **You're taking a cruise or a packaged tour.** Cruise lines and tour companies that offer packages usually are not flexible with their dates. Therefore, if you miss your departure date for the cruise or tour, you could end up paying more than what you've already paid to reschedule your vacation.
- **Your itinerary is complex or extensive.** Imagine you are touring Europe, and your train from France to Italy is delayed, causing you to miss your river-cruise departure. This could cause you to miss other events you've scheduled and paid for ahead of time. A policy could help protect you from that single event causing a ripple effect, and get you back on schedule quickly.
- **You're on Medicare, and you are traveling internationally.** Medicare usually doesn't cover incidents that

occur outside of the U.S., so having a policy would ensure you are covered while you're traveling.

- **You are leaving the country.** Any time you leave the country, you should have a policy in place. Medical providers outside of the U.S. often ask for payments for treatment up-front, regardless of your domestic health insurance. A travel insurance policy that provides for medical coverage can guarantee these payments.

Before purchasing a travel insurance policy, review your current policies to see what coverages they offer for traveling. They may offer some protection, which allows you to choose a travel policy that does not have redundant coverage for your trip. If you want to review your coverages, give us a call. We're here for you.





Moving? Don't forget to move your insurance

Whether you are moving across town or across the country; upsizing or downsizing; don't forget to move your insurance policies. Be aware: Any move can affect your insurance. Before you move, give our agency a call. If you are staying in the area, we are happy to continue to be your professional, independent insurance agent. If you are moving to a state in which we don't do business, we are happy to advise you on your insurance coverages.

Remember, your personal insurance coverages aren't the only ones you need to consider when you move. If you are hiring movers, your homeowners or renters insurance most likely will provide coverage to possessions in transit. A standard homeowners or renters policy will cover your possessions for the full limit for 30 days, after which it drops to 10 percent of the amount, unless another insurance policy (in your new home) is in force. Check with us to determine how your policy will react if your belongings are lost or stolen along the way and to check your deductible before your policy will be activated.

Generally, moving companies offer basic insurance coverage (per weight or lump-sum value). However, settling with a moving company can take time. To help facilitate the settlement, inspect

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your property for damage as it is moved into your new home and get the movers to sign off on any damage before they drive away. Additionally, if the movers are transporting your car, your personal auto policy should cover it while it's in transit. Review your policy to make sure you have coverage for towing.

If you are lucky enough to have friends and family willing to lend a hand with your move, but not lucky

enough to have a friend with a truck; you may need to rent one. Some personal auto policies provide coverage for a driver's liability in a rented truck. Check your insurance policy for limits (e.g., the size of the truck). Rental truck companies also may offer to insure your possessions (similar to a moving company—per weight or lump-sum value).

Moving time is the perfect time to update your home inventory, which is a valuable resource should you need to file an insurance claim. As you are packing or unpacking, make a note of your possessions; take photos; record any serial numbers; and organize any receipts.

There are a lot of things to consider before you move. Let us take some of the worry out of the process by reviewing and updating your insurance coverages with you. Give us a call or stop in to see us. We may not help with the heavy lifting, but we can offer you peace of mind.



Bounce house of horror



Summer is upon us and with it, warm weather, baseball and summer picnics. But those summer picnics can bring unexpected perils. We're talking about that summertime staple: the bounce house. Bounce houses can be great fun and a great workout for children and adults. Don't believe us? Try jumping in one for a minute straight. As fun as bounce houses are, they also present the real possibility of danger. In order to ensure everyone's safety it is important to follow the proper safety precautions.

When setting up a bounce house, make sure the structure is away from powerlines, fences and, if possible, pavement. Once the structure is set up, it should be properly secured to the ground. The structures should be anchored to the ground according to the manufacturer's instructions. This typically involves stakes corkscrewed or driven into the ground or the use of sandbags. Depending on the size of the bounce house, industry experts recommend using 30- to 40-inch heavy-

duty metal stakes. As bounce houses are meant for bouncing, it is always wise to cover the ground by the entrance/exit with soft material to prevent injury if an overenthusiastic jumper accidentally falls out of the structure. It also is important to watch the weather. You might recall several news stories about children being injured after bounce houses were picked up by strong winds and propelled high into the air. While proper anchoring of the bounce house should diminish the risk of such an incident, it is better to be safe than sorry in case wind gusts exceed the manufacturers recommendations. And, everyone should be removed from the structure.

As always, contact our agency to review your policy and ensure you have the proper coverage. If you remember these simple rules you can prevent your bounce house of fun from being transformed into a bounce house of horror.

News from our agency

Staying informed and up-to-date on your insurance policies isn't just a wise precaution, it can save you money and give you peace of mind. If you haven't reviewed your coverage in a while, you might be paying for things you no longer own; unnecessarily covering additional drivers, such as children who have since graduated and moved out or bought their own car. Or, perhaps you do not have the appropriate coverage for other items you own. Other insurance carriers might be offering better, cheaper options that meet your coverage needs. If you've simply been renewing your policy over and over for a while, sitting down with your agent for a review might leave you with better protection and a little more money in the bank.

Give us a call and we can go over your policy together to make sure you're properly covered and not paying for something unnecessary. We're here to help.

