

Contact: Lucy Merino
Tel. 541-550-7246
Cell 541-410-9944
Email lucy@406bend.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INSURE & BE SURE: TRUST AUTO BODY EXPERTS, NOT CARTOON MASCOTS, WHEN PURCHASING AUTO INSURANCE, SAYS NATA

When it comes to buying car insurance, who should you trust more: a certain gecko with a charming, Aussie-tinged accent, or that charmingly retro, always-smiling Flo, whose winged eyeliner seems never to budge or fade?

The answer, according to a recently conducted survey by the Northwest Automotive Trades Association, or NATA, is, "Neither." In fact, the most trustworthy when seeking advice on the best auto insurance is, per NATA, your auto body professional.

Why? Barbara Crest, executive director of NATA, explains that consumers shouldn't take the warm & fuzzy connotations conveyed by auto insurance companies' ad campaigns at face value. "Before you purchase a policy, ask if you can get a copy beforehand, and read through the fine print. The devil is truly in the details."

The logic behind the study, according to NATA & other industry insiders, is similar to the logic some consumers use when shopping for health insurance: if you want to know about good health insurance providers, ask a healthcare professional. Ergo, if you want to know which auto insurance company is going to process your claim in the most cooperative fashion, ask an auto body repair specialist.

The survey, whose results are attached, is conducted by a survey administrator that compiles data from collision repair shops throughout the Northwest region, with 70 respondents providing data.

Local State Farm Insurance agent Fred Hornback of Bend provided the following statement when queried for his reaction on the report's results, which listed State Farm as one of the 2 highest-graded insurers: "It's not surprising, given that we are owned by our clients. After all, we have to please our owners. All of us take that seriously & work to make that happen."

Ron Reichen, chairman of the national Society of Collision Repair Specialists, also owner of Precision Body & Paint in Bend & Beaverton, concurs: "What it all boils down to is that the best insurance companies are the ones taking the long view, putting the insured's long-term interests ahead of their own short term profits." Reichen also added: "As auto body professionals looking to get a job done right, we're much more productive when we're working with adjusters who care more about their insured than they care about their corporation's quarterly earnings reports."

2013 Insurer Report Card

What grade do Oregon collision repair shops give auto insurers in terms of how their “policies, attitude and payment practices ensure quality repairs and customer service for Oregon motorists.”

| Insurer | Overall Grade* <i>(followed by grade in 2012)</i> | Non-DRP Shops** | DRP Shops** |
|--------------------------|--|--------------------|-------------|
| State Farm | B+ (B+) | B | A- |
| Oregon Mutual | B+ (B) | B | A- |
| Mutual of Enumclaw | B (B) | B | A |
| Travelers | B- (C+) | C+ | B+ |
| Kemper / Unitrin | C+ (C+) | C+ | B |
| USAA | C+ (B-) | C+ | A- |
| California Casualty | C+ (C+) | C+ | B+ |
| Progressive | C+ (C) | C+ | B+ |
| Ameriprise | C+ (C) | C | B+ |
| The Hartford | C+ (C+) | C | A- |
| Country Companies | C+ (C) | C+ | n/a |
| American Commerce Insur. | C+ (C+) | C | n/a |
| American Family | C (C+) | C | C |
| Nationwide | C (C) | C | n/a |
| Liberty Mutual | C (C+) | C | C+ |
| Esurance | C (C) | C | n/a |
| Allstate | C (C-) | C- | B |
| GEICO | C- (D+) | C- | n/a |
| Safeco / North Pacific | C- (C-) | D+ | B |
| Farmers Insurance | D+ (D+) | D+ | C |

n/a = Insufficient responses from shops in the DRP to assign a grade.

* Based on responses from all shops.

**Based only on responses from shops participating in (or not participating in) that insurer's DRP.

Sources Interviewed for this Press Release:

Crest, Barbara – NATA Executive Director. Contact: (503) 253.9898, barbara@aboutNATA.org

Hornback, Fred – State Farm Insurance Agent. Contact: (541) 382-6828

Reichen, Ron – SCRS Chairman & owner of Precision Body & Paint: (541) 977-4706