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Engine protection: Must-have in areas prone to heavy rains

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The monsoon poses significant risks to vehicles, especially in areas prone to heavy rainfall and waterlogging. It is essential to have a comprehensive motor policy, and not just a third-party cover, as the latter does not protect your own vehicle. But while a comprehensive cover will protect you against accidents, theft, and third-party liability, it may not cover you for monsoon-related damages for which you need to buy a few add-on covers.

Engine protection cover

While traversing a flooded road, water can enter the engine, causing damage. This is usually not covered by comprehensive policies, so customers need to buy the engine protection cover.

“This add-on offers financial protection for repairing or replacing the engine and its components if they are damaged

by water intrusion or hydrostatic lock,” says Subhasish Mazumder, head-motor distribution, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance.

The cost of engine repair in such circumstances can at times run into lakhs. Amit Bhandari, chief technical officer, Magma HDI General Insurance, says that

apart from the core engine, damage to ancillary parts such as the gearbox is also covered.

Gaurav Arora, chief-underwriting & claims property & casualty, ICICI Lombard says the price of the engine protect cover depends on the Insured Declared Value (IDV) of the vehicle and a few other factors.

Zero depreciation cover

Typically, when settling a comprehensive policy claim, the insurer compensates for the depreciated cost of parts. “An amount is deducted from your claim to account for the vehicle’s wear and tear,” says Mazumder.

The customer bears the difference between the depreciated cost and the replacement cost. “A zero-depreciation add-on gets you the full claim amount without any deduction for depreciation,” says Nitin Kumar, head-motor insurance, Policybazaar.com.

Roadside assistance

This add-on is especially useful if your vehicle gets stuck on a water-logged road.

“It provides on-site repair, towing, alternative travel facility, fuel procurement support, etc.,” says Arora. The customer is also entitled to an extra battery and repair of flat tyre.

M Barve, founder, MB Wealth Financial Solutions warns that arranging for towing can be difficult if it is raining heavily and you don’t have this add-on. Some insurers offer free roadside assistance to women for a year. “They should renew it without fail,” says Barve.

Tyre protection

Heavy rains often damage roads, which in turn damage the tyres. “The tyre protection cover provides coverage for repairing or replacing tyres damaged due to cuts, bursts, or bulges,” says Mazumder.

Bhandari says this cover is essential for those who travel frequently on rough terrains and poor roads.

Don’t force-start vehicle

If your car gets stuck on a water-logged road, exit it and call for help. “Customers should not start the vehicle in inundated condition,” says Arora. Doing so can damage the engine further. Barve warns that if you try starting the vehicle after the engine has got flooded, your insurer may not cover the consequent damage. Kumar suggests waiting for the water to recede and allowing the engine to dry up before starting the vehicle.

BUY RIDERS FOR ALL-ROUND PROTECTION

Cover	Premium (₹)
Own damage	9,849
Zero depreciation	7,200
24x7 roadside assistance	Free
Engine protection cover	3,000
Consumables	600
Key & lock replacement	125
Invoice price cover	3,750
No claim bonus (25%)	-2,462
Package premium	22,062
GST (18%)	3,971

Total premium 26,033

This is an illustrative example for KIA Seltos GTX Plus AT 1.5 Diesel registered in 2022 with Insured Declared Value (IDV) of ₹15 lakh. Source: Policybazaar.com