

# DEFENSIVE MAINTENANCE

The average aircraft owner is at a disadvantage when it comes to understanding and managing maintenance. For one, he or she usually lacks the training or certification to inspect or maintain the aircraft. For another, there is precious little guidance available from the FAA beyond this admonition of responsibilities from the *Pilot's Handbook of Aeronautical Knowledge* (FAA-H-8083-25A): "Maintaining the aircraft in an airworthy condition, including compliance with all applicable ADs, and assuring that maintenance is properly recorded."

Some tips:

- Spend quality time with your mechanic/shop as they work on your aircraft to enhance your understanding of how things work—or don't. If the shop mechanic won't allow your "assistance," take your business somewhere else.
- Learn to do basic tasks yourself—oil changes, brake pad replacement—as the FAA allows under preventive maintenance.
- Keep your logbooks and other maintenance records close at hand—never store them at the shop or in the aircraft.
- Consider contracting with a maintenance consulting service like Savvy Aircraft Maintenance Management, [www.savvymx.com](http://www.savvymx.com).

