



save money save our EARTH

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“...in numerous cities across the country, the personal automobile is the single greatest polluter, as emissions from millions of vehicles on the road add up. Driving a private car is probably a typical citizen’s most ‘polluting’ daily activity.”

—U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Mobile Sources

BE AWARE OF YOUR EMISSIONS

The power to make your car move comes from the burning of gasoline in the engine. This creates a by-product of exhaust, causing pollution in the atmosphere. However, evaporation of fuel, even when the vehicle may not be running, is also a strong source of pollution.

As the temperature rises, so does the likelihood of gasoline to evaporate into the atmosphere. Refueling on hot days allows evaporation to occur quickly and more frequently.

A warm engine and exhaust system is another source of heat causing evaporation, even after the vehicle has been turned off.

Gasoline vapors leak from a gas tank during fueling. Spillage during fueling allows vapors to escape into the atmosphere quicker.

(Information provided by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency)

CRINGING AS THE NUMBERS STEADILY CLIMB HIGHER on the pump, it seems we have no choice but to submit to the four-dollar-a-gallon-plus gasoline prices. Witnessing global warming due to depletion of the ozone, it seems we have no choice because we are accustomed to a certain way of life. Although we cannot lower the price of gas ourselves or save the earth in a single swoop, there are several tricks we can initiate to help us reduce our personal pollution of the atmosphere and ease the strain on our wallets at the same time.

TIME FOR A CHECK UP

Making sure your car is running properly will keep it from burning too much gasoline. Change the oil and air filters regularly and make sure the tires are properly inflated. Check the manufacturer’s recommendations for oil grade and gasoline octane level. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, gas mileage can be improved by using the proper motor oil and higher (more expensive) octane level gasoline is not always necessary for most cars.

DON'T BE AGGRESSIVE

Maintain a steady pace when driving. Do not slam on the brakes. If possible, coast into stops and avoid quick acceleration. Avoid coming up behind a slow moving vehicle on the freeway so you won't have to brake then accelerate to pass. Watch your speed—according to the Federal Trade Commission, gas mileage decreases rapidly at speeds above 60 mph. You can improve your gas mileage approximately 15% by driving at 55 mph rather than 65 mph.

PARK IT

Leave your vehicle at home and take public transportation (visit laketrans.com), carpool (visit dividetheride.com for families or carpoolworld.com or ask around at work), ride a bike/walk or take that efficient scooter or motorcycle instead of the SUV.

COMBINE ERRANDS

Taking several short trips will end up using more gas. Do all of your errands in one trip, planning the best route to minimize drive time. When your car is going to be idling for more than 30 seconds, shut it off instead—when waiting for the bank teller or picking up your child at school.

CLEAN OUT

Clear out all excess cargo from your vehicle. Although it may not seem like much, extra weight makes for more effort from the vehicle’s engine. An extra 100 pounds lowers fuel economy up to 2%. Decrease wind resistance by not stacking cargo on the top or sides of the vehicle. Wind resistance can decrease fuel economy by 5%.

KEEP IT COOL

Don't turn on the air conditioning while making short trips at slower speeds. By using AC, fuel consumption goes up by about 10% according to carjunky.com. Open the windows or open the vehicle’s vents while running errands, etc. However, when traveling 45 mph or more, air drag from open windows causes lower fuel economy. Highway driving and longer trips at higher speeds are a good time to use air conditioning.