



GREEN DRIVING TIPS

Information About Environmentally Friendly Driving

Throughout most of the 20th century, motor vehicles have played a key role in our lives. The mobility provided by cars, vans, trucks and buses is essential to the quality of life we enjoy today.

Everyday activities such as getting to and from work, taking the kids to school, visiting the doctor, shopping and attending community functions often involve an automobile. So, too, do leisure activities such as visiting family and friends, going to sporting events, dining out and seeing a movie, vacationing and sightseeing.

Americans are driving more, and we continue to rely on our cars as our primary means of transportation. At the same time, we are increasingly aware of the need to preserve our environment, conserve energy and improve air quality.

That's why it is important for all of us to understand what we can do to help protect the environment when we drive.

Motorists can help create a greener future by following these green driving tips. For example, keep your engine tuned and make sure your vehicle's emissions equipment is working properly.

Air quality is improving nationwide primarily because of cleaner burning fuels and more fuel efficient vehicles.

Clearing the Air about Car Emissions

Because clean air is important to everyone, significant progress has been made by the automotive industry and public policy-makers to improve air quality. Air quality is better today than it was in the 1970s.

In fact, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reports that harmful emissions from automobiles have declined significantly. Nationwide, air quality improved considerably from 1970 to 1999 because emissions from highway vehicles decreased substantially.

During that time overall highway vehicle emissions of volatile organic compounds, nitrogen oxides and carbon monoxide were reduced by 59, 5 and 43 percent, respectively.

These air quality improvements have occurred while vehicle travel on American highways increased by 148 percent from 1970 to 2000.

Well-maintained roads can reduce fuel consumption, improve traffic flow and help reduce traffic congestion.

In addition, EPA has projected that vehicle emissions of volatile organic compounds, nitrogen oxides and carbon monoxide will continue to decrease, by 31, 31 and 20 percent respectively, by the year 2010.

The primary reasons for this dramatic decline are major improvements in automotive and fuel technology. For example:

- Cleaner burning fuels
- More fuel efficient engines
- Improved exhaust emission controls

Today's advanced automotive and fuel technology has led to significant improvements in air quality and will continue to do so in the future. This, combined with steps drivers can take to protect the environment, puts us on the road to a greener future.

The Green Driver: What You Can Do To Protect the Environment

GREEN DRIVING TIPS

While improvements in automotive technology are helping clear the air, the following tips will help you protect the environment. These green driving tips are simple and easy to remember, and may even save you money.

Always consult your owner's manual, as most contain hints and suggestions for maintenance and more efficient driving.

Before Turning the Key

- **Plan and consolidate your trips.** This will enable you to bypass congested routes, and lead to less idling, fewer start-ups and less stop-and-go traffic. Whenever feasible, share a ride, carpool and use the most fuel efficient car possible.
- **Keep your car well-tuned.** Cars that are not properly tuned emit more pollutants. A well-tuned car also improves gas mileage.
- **Avoid “topping-off” the gas tank when refueling.** Do not overfill your gas tank because spilled gasoline evaporates and contributes to air pollution.

- **Keep tires properly inflated.** This reduces tread wear and conserves fuel.
- **Repair air-conditioner leaks immediately.** Some air conditioners may contain chlorofluorocarbons.
- **Use an engine heater in cold climates.** The warmer the engine upon starting, the quicker it and the catalytic converter — an important emission control device — achieve maximum efficiency.

Starting the Car

- **Don't pump the accelerator, if your car has fuel injection.** A properly tuned, fuel-injected car should start right away, even in cold weather.
- **Newer model cars don't need to be warmed up by idling.** Prolonged idling creates excess emissions and may damage the catalytic converter.

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The Road Information Program (TRIP)

The Right Stuff: Emission-Reducing Equipment

Catalytic converters. Newer cars equipped with catalytic converters eliminate more than 95 percent of carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides.

Cruise control. Cruise control saves fuel at highway speeds by reducing excess gas pedal activity.

Fuel injection. Fuel injection helps efficiently regulate the amount of fuel delivered to the engine.

Overdrive transmissions. Overdrive transmissions decrease the number of engine revolutions at higher speeds under cruise conditions, thus saving fuel.

Radial tires. Radial tires have less rolling resistance which makes for smoother rides and improves gas mileage.

Green Driving Tips Continued

Behind the Wheel

- **Accelerate smoothly; avoid putting the “pedal to the metal.”** Quick starts or gunning the engine wastes fuel and may cause unburned gas to escape from the exhaust pipe into the atmosphere.
- **Avoid excess idling in non-traffic situations.** Idling for more than thirty seconds consumes more fuel than re-starting the engine.
- **Obey speed limits.** Besides being unlawful, speeding increases gasoline consumption and may increase exhaust emissions under certain conditions.
- **Maintain a steady speed.** Using cruise control on the highway is ideal, except in hilly terrain, because it decreases gas pedal activity.
- **Remove excess weight.** Unnecessary weight (unneeded items in the trunk, for example) makes the engine work harder and consume more fuel.