



# Fuel Efficiency Factsheet

## **Good Driving Habits**

Watching how you drive can improve your car's mileage per gallon, cutting global warming pollution and saving you anywhere from \$200 to \$500 each year.

**Don't idle.** If you are stopping for more than ten seconds—except in traffic—turn off your engine. Idling for more than ten seconds uses more gas and creates more global warming pollution than simply restarting your engine.

**Travel light and pack smart.** Extra weight decreases fuel economy. Hauling an extra 100 pounds in your vehicle reduces fuel economy by up to 2 percent. Place luggage inside rather than on the roof or trunk to minimize drag and increase mileage.

**Drive less aggressively.** Aggressive driving—rapid acceleration and braking—can lower gas mileage by as much as 33 percent on the highway and 5 percent in town. Aggressive drivers use an extra 125 gallons of gas and spend over \$250 more than average drivers each year.

**Slow down.** In highway travel, exceeding the speed limit by a mere 5 m.p.h. results in an average fuel economy loss of 6 percent.

**Know when to use the air.** Air conditioning can decrease your fuel efficiency by as much as 12 percent in stop-and-go traffic, so consider cracking the windows. But at high speeds, driving with the windows open can decrease the overall efficiency of the vehicle.

## **Vehicle Maintenance**

Keep your vehicle operating in peak performance by following these recommendations:

**Keep your engine tuned properly.** Checking spark plugs, oxygen sensors, air filters, hoses and belts are a few examples of maintenance that can save a vehicle owner up to 165 gallons of gas per year, resulting in potential savings of \$380.

**Check the tires.** Have your wheels aligned and keep your tires properly inflated. Low tire pressure wastes over two million gallons of gasoline in the United States—every day. For every pound of pressure below recommended levels, fuel economy drops 1 percent. Keeping your tires properly inflated means saving about a tank of gas a year.

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## **Drive less**

No matter how smart you drive, leaving the car parked always saves more gas and pollution.

**Combine trips.** Consider running all your errands in the same area at once, rather than making separate trips. Cutting a 20 mile trip out of your schedule each week can reduce your global warming pollution by more than 1,200 pounds a year and save you over \$100 in gas expenses.

**Telecommute once a week.** Americans traveled 614.5 billion miles to and from work in 2001. If all commuters worked from home just one day a week, we could save 5.85 billion gallons of oil and cut over 65 million metric tons (roughly 143 billion pounds) of carbon dioxide each year.

**Carpool and use public transportation when possible.** An average 2005 passenger car costs about 31 cents per mile in fuel, maintenance and depreciation to drive. If you share rides and use other means to get to work, you'll save yourself money, reduce congestion on the roads and cut your global warming pollution.

## **Global Warming Facts**

**8** = Millions of barrels of oil a day used by American cars and light trucks.

**21** = Percent of America's global warming pollution produced by individual households.

**42** = Number of states where electricity customers have the option to buy green power through their utility or an alternative power supplier. In North Carolina you can sign up for tax-deductible donations for green power at [www.ncgreenpower.org](http://www.ncgreenpower.org).

**200,000** = Number of American households that use solar energy.

**25** = Pounds of global warming pollution emitted per gallon of gas used in cars.

**10** = Percent that Americans could reduce their global warming pollution if all car buyers chose a model that gets 5 more gallons/mile than their current vehicle.

**350** = Pounds of global warming pollution reduced by lowering the thermostat 2 degrees in winter.

**38** = Number of watts needed to replace a standard 150 watt lightbulb with a compact florescent lightbulb.

**25** = Percent reduction in home heating bills by insulating attics, pipes, ductwork and flooring.

Source: [www.fightglobalwarming.com](http://www.fightglobalwarming.com)