

GREENWorks

Ideas for a Cleaner Environment

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Don't Be Fuelish With Your Vehicle!

Outside temps are rising and so are the impact of tailpipe emissions from your car. Cars and trucks on New Hampshire roads are responsible for nearly 50% of the emissions that cause our summertime haze and smog. There are many ways you can improve the fuel economy of your vehicle to save you money and reduce emissions.

Your vehicle's fuel economy improves as the weather gets warmer, for two reasons: 1) engines and transmissions take less time to warm up, and 2) summer gasoline blends contain more energy per gallon than winter blends (1.7% more according to the Environmental Protection Agency). But, if you don't pay attention those summertime (and year-round) fuel savings may go up in smoke!

Cool it first - Running your vehicle's air conditioning can reduce your fuel economy by as much as 25%. Keeping your vehicle out of the hot sun, avoiding using the AC "Max" setting and using the AC only when driving (*not* idling) are small, smart ways to keep your fuel economy up without sacrificing comfort.

Turn it off – Idling gets zero miles-per-gallon and can use up to one-half gallon of fuel per hour! Carbon deposits build up in your engine and unburned fuel is released into the environment – bad for your wallet, your car and your lungs.

Garage it – Keeping your car inside and out of extreme temperatures (whether hot or cold) keeps the engine from working hard to warm up or cool down.

Pare it down - Empty your vehicle of unnecessary items. An additional 100 pounds in or on your vehicle can reduce fuel economy by 1%. Remove detachable roof racks and rooftop storage boxes when not in use.

Keep it up – Car maintenance, that is - maintaining your car or truck can improve fuel economy up to 40%. Tires that are not inflated to the proper pressure can reduce fuel economy by 0.3% for every one pound per square inch (PSI) drop in pressure in all of the tires. Having your tires inflated to the proper pressure is also safer and can help them last longer.

Lighten up on the gas pedal! - Aggressive driving such as speeding, quick acceleration and heavy braking can reduce fuel economy by as much as 33% at highway speeds and 5% at city speeds. Obey the speed limit and use cruise control to maintain a consistent speed and fuel economy.

On average, New Hampshire residents travel about 10,000 miles a year. Reducing the miles you drive is the best way to reduce fuel and repair costs. Combining trips and errands, carpooling, telecommuting and participating in conference calls can dramatically reduce those miles, fuel costs and the wear and tear on your car.

This summer, vow to improve your gas-sipping habits!

For more tips on fuel economy, visit www.fueleconomy.gov.

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