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# ENVIRONMENTAL Fact Sheet

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## **Tips to Increase Fuel Efficiency** *Save Gas, Save Money and Protect Energy Resources*

There are many techniques drivers can use to reduce gasoline consumption, improve gas mileage and save money. Increasing fuel efficiency also reduces our dependence on foreign oil and protects the US economy. About 45 percent of the petroleum used in the United States is imported. Petroleum imports cost the US \$460 billion in 2011- money that could be used to fuel our own economy. Using less fuel also protects the environment. Every gallon of gas burned produces over 20 pounds of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that causes climate change.

The following steps will increase fuel efficiency and help you get the most out of your gas purchases. If you begin tracking your gas mileage with each fill-up, you'll be surprised at how much you can save! Cost savings and benefits cited below are from [www.fueleconomy.gov](http://www.fueleconomy.gov) and are based on a fuel price of \$3.60 per gallon.

**Avoid idling.** Idling gets zero miles per gallon. Letting your vehicle idle for more than 10 seconds uses more gas than shutting it off and restarting. Don't start your car until you are ready to go and keep winter engine warm-ups to about a minute. The engine actually warms up more quickly once the car is operating, and will stay warm after stopping. Avoid drive-up windows – park and go inside instead.

**Keep tires properly inflated.** Driving on four under-inflated tires can decrease your gas mileage by 3/10 percent for every 1 psi (pounds per square inch) drop in pressure. Plus, properly inflated tires are safer and last longer. The manufacturer's recommended pressure for your car's tires can be found in the owner's manual or on the driver's side door edge or post. Check pressure in all four tires every two weeks with an accurate, hand-held air pressure gauge.

Fuel economy benefit:	up to 3. percent
Equivalent gasoline savings:	up to \$0.11/gallon

**Keep engine properly tuned.** Fixing a car that is noticeably out of tune or has failed an emissions test can improve its gas mileage by an average of 4 percent, though results vary based on the kind of repair and how well it is done. Fixing a serious maintenance problem, such as a faulty oxygen sensor, can improve your mileage by as much as 40 percent. Replacing a clogged air filter does not improve fuel economy but it can improve acceleration and vehicle performance.

Fuel economy benefit:	4 percent
Equivalent gasoline savings:	\$0.14/gallon

**Use recommended grade of motor oil.** You can improve your gas mileage by 1-2 percent by using the manufacturer's recommended grade of motor oil (located in the owner's manual or on driver's side door). Look for motor oil that says "Energy Conserving" on the American Petroleum Institute (API) performance symbol to be sure it contains friction-reducing additives.

Fuel economy benefit:	1-2 percent
Equivalent gasoline savings:	\$0.04-\$0.07/gallon

**Drive sensibly.** Aggressive driving (speeding, rapid acceleration and braking) wastes gas. It can lower your gas mileage by 33 percent at highway speeds and by 5 percent around town.

Fuel economy benefit:	5-33 percent
Equivalent gasoline savings:	\$0.18-\$1.19/gallon

**Observe the speed limit.** While each vehicle reaches its optimal fuel economy at a different speed (or range of speeds), gas mileage usually decreases rapidly at speeds above 50 mph. Each 5 mph you drive over 50 mph is like paying \$0.25 more per gallon of gas. Using cruise control will help maintain a constant speed, and utilizing overdrive gears will reduce engine speed and wear.

Fuel economy benefit:	7-14 percent
Equivalent gasoline savings:	\$0.25-\$0.51/gallon

**Remove excess weight and drag.** Avoid keeping unnecessary items in and on your vehicle. An extra 100 pounds in your vehicle could reduce your mpg by up to 2 percent. A loaded roof rack can decrease your fuel economy by 5 percent. Place items inside the vehicle whenever possible.

Fuel economy benefit:	1-2%/100 lbs percent
Equivalent gasoline savings:	\$0.04-\$0.07/gallon

**Consolidate trips.** Combining errands into one trip saves you time and money. Several short trips taken from a cold start can use twice as much fuel as a longer multi-purpose trip covering the same distance when the engine is warm. With a little planning, you can avoid retracing your route and reduce the distance you travel.



**Purchase a fuel efficient vehicle.** Which vehicle you purchase is the most important fuel economy decision you will make. The difference between a car that gets 20 mpg and one that gets 33 mpg amounts to \$1,063 in fuel costs per year (assuming 15,000 miles of driving annually). To find fuel-efficient vehicles for sale in New Hampshire, look for the Granite State Clean Cars label in the window. Visit [www.cleancars.nh.gov](http://www.cleancars.nh.gov) for a list of the most fuel efficient vehicles available at participating dealerships..

For more tips on increasing fuel efficiency and saving money, visit [www.fueleconomy.gov](http://www.fueleconomy.gov).