
ENVIRONMENTAL Fact Sheet



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Tips to Increase Fuel Efficiency

Save Gas, Save Money and Protect Energy Resources

With gas prices fluctuating and demand for petroleum increasing worldwide, drivers should know that there are many actions they can take to reduce gas consumption, improve gas mileage and save money. Whether you are shopping for a new car or just trying to maintain the one you have, you can take some steps to increase fuel efficiency and get the best mileage out of your gas purchases. Plus, you can help protect the environment by using less fuel. Every gallon of gas burned produces over 20 pounds of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that causes global climate change. Increasing fuel efficiency also reduces our dependence on foreign oil and protects the US economy. Over half of the petroleum used in the United States is imported, sending over \$2 billion a week out of the US economy.

Here are a few tips to help you reduce the amount of gas you use and get the most out of each gallon. 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 and are based on a fuel price of \$2.91 per gallon; imagine the savings with higher gas prices.

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. Under-inflated tires can decrease your gas mileage by around 3 percent. Plus, properly inflated tires are safer and last longer. 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 \$0.09/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 4.1 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.

Fuel economy benefit:	4 percent
Equivalent gasoline savings:	\$0.12/gallon

Check and replace air filters. Replacing a clogged air filter can improve your car's gas mileage by as much as 10 percent. Your car's air filter keeps impurities from damaging the inside of your engine. Not only will replacing a dirty air filter save gas, it will protect your engine.

Fuel economy benefit:	up to 10 percent
Equivalent gasoline savings:	up to \$0.29/gallon

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

Fuel economy benefit:	1-2 percent
Equivalent gasoline savings:	\$0.03-\$0.06/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:	\$0.15-\$0.96/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 60 mph. Each 5 mph you drive over 60 mph reduces fuel economy by about 5 percent. Using cruise control on the highway helps you maintain a constant speed and, in most cases, will save gas.

Fuel economy benefit:	7-23 percent
Equivalent gasoline savings:	\$0.20-\$0.67/gallon

Minimize drag and remove excess weight. Drag and weight reduce fuel efficiency. Using roof- or rear-mounted racks, driving with the windows open at higher speeds, and carrying heavy loads increase vehicle drag. Reduce aerodynamic drag and improve your fuel economy by using a removable rack and placing items inside the trunk whenever possible. Avoid carrying unneeded items, especially heavy ones. An extra 100 pounds in the trunk reduces a typical car's fuel economy by 1 percent to 2 percent.

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 as well. You'll not only save fuel, but also reduce wear and tear on your car.



Purchase a fuel efficient vehicle. Selecting which vehicle to purchase is the most important fuel economy decision you will make. The difference between a car that gets 20 mpg and one that gets 30 mpg amounts to \$728 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 of new vehicles. To learn about this program, visit www.cleancars.nh.gov. If you're not in the market for a new car, and are a multiple car family, the simplest way to get better fuel economy might be to drive your most fuel-efficient vehicle more of the time.

For more tips on increasing fuel efficiency and saving money, visit www.fueleconomy.gov.