



Fuel Conservation tips from AAA Chicago

Consumers continue to see rising prices at the pump driven mainly by record-setting crude oil prices. These higher gas prices may spur motorists to conserve fuel. The benefits of fuel conservation are a healthier environment, financial savings and improved safety on roads. The following tips from AAA will help motorists save money at the gas pump:

- Slow down. Even a five-mile-per-hour decrease in speed can affect your gas mileage. Watch your tachometer to gauge engine performance.
- Keep tires properly inflated. Under-inflated tires can cut fuel economy by a half percent per pound of pressure below recommended levels.
- Give your car a full tune-up, as recommended by the manufacturer, including a regular oil and oil filter change. A poorly tuned engine can increase fuel consumption by up to 50 percent or more.
- Do not purchase mid-grade or premium gasoline unless it is considered necessary by the vehicle's manufacturer. Using self-serve regular fuel compared to premium can save an average of 17 cents per gallon.
- Don't let the vehicle idle for more than a minute. Idling consumes half a-gallon to one gallon of gas per hour and wastes more fuel than restarting the engine.
- Accelerate gently, brake gradually and avoid hard stops.
- Don't drive around shopping for cheaper gas. Instead, visit www.AAAmaps.com to find cheapest gas in your area.
- Combine errands into one trip or go to the one location to take care of as many errands as possible.
- When traveling, avoid excess weight and reduce use of car top carriers and trailers. Additional weight and vehicle add-ons have a negative effect on aerodynamics, causing engines to work harder and burn more gas.
- Car pool or use public transportation when possible.
- Travel during off-peak times, avoiding rush hour.