



Ruth Brock
Regional Extension Agent
News Release

Ways to Save at the Gas Pump

If you are like most people, you are looking for ways to cut expenses at the gas pump. Read the following for suggestions on saving from the Federal Trade Commission.

Vehicle Maintenance

- **Keep your engine tuned.** Tuning your engine according to your owner's manual can increase gas mileage by an average of four percent.
- **Change your oil.** Clean oil reduces wear caused by friction between moving parts and removes harmful substances from the engine. You can improve your gas mileage by using the grade of motor oil in your owner's manual and changing it according to the schedule recommended by your car manufacturer.
- **Check and replace air filters regularly.** Replacing clogged filters can increase gas mileage up to 10 percent.

Drive More Efficiently

- **Stay within posted speed limits.** Gas mileage decreases rapidly at speeds above 60 miles per hour.
- **Stop aggressive driving.** You can improve your gas mileage up to five percent around town by being aware of traffic conditions and driving calmly. Remember that impulsive starts and stops result in gas mileage reduction.
- **Avoid unnecessary idling.** This bad habit wastes fuel, costs you money, and pollutes the air. Turn off the engine if you expect a wait.
- **Combine errands.** Several short trips taken from a cold start can use twice as much fuel as one trip covering the same distance when the engine is warm.
- **Use overdrive gears and cruise control when appropriate.** They improve the fuel economy of your car when you're driving on a highway.
- **Remove excess weight from the trunk.** An extra 100 pounds in the trunk can reduce a typical car's fuel economy by up to two percent.
- **Avoid packing items on top of your car.** A loaded roof rack or carrier creates wind resistance and can decrease fuel economy by five percent.

Remember that driving fewer miles can pay off in more ways than just fuel costs. You may realize a savings on your automobile insurance due to lower mileage. For more information on saving, as well as other consumer issues, visit the Federal Trade Commission's website at <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/consumer.shtm>

For more on this topic, as well as other financial topics, please call Regional Extension Agent Ruth Brock at the St. Clair County Extension office at (205) 338-9416 or email brockru@aces.edu.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work in agriculture and home economics, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, and other related acts, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University) offers educational programs, materials, and equal opportunity employment to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, or disability. Visit our website at www.aces.edu/StClair.

Source: <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/alerts/alt064.shtm>

Retrieved June 10, 2008