

A Nurtured World Fact Sheet Conservation Tips for Transportation in Texas



A large portion of air pollution is caused by our choices regarding driving and flying. Burning fuel releases pollution that we breathe and carbon dioxide, which contributes to global warming. Changes in your transportation habits can improve air quality, save money and time, and improve your health. The important thing is to take action!

Drive sensibly, drive less, and don't idle

Tip 1 – Drive moderately. Edmunds.com tested the fuel efficiency of gradual acceleration & moderate driving versus accelerating quickly & aggressive driving. **Average fuel savings per tank is a whopping 31 percent! That's more than \$600 a year in fuel for a car and can be over \$1000 per year for a truck or large SUV.** The study is at: <http://www.edmunds.com/advice/fueleconomy/articles/106842/article.html#test1>

Tip 2 – Slow down. Each 5 mph over 60 mph is the same as paying an extra 10 cents per gallon. Driving the speed limit will save 12-14% of fuel costs. That's about \$250 per year for a car and even more for an SUV or truck!

Tip 3 – Don't idle more than 10 seconds. You will use more gas than it takes to re-start. Even in winter months, vehicles only need 30 seconds to warm up. The Canadian Office of Energy Efficiency verified idling more than 10 seconds uses more gas than a re-start.

Tip 4 – Attack your trunk junk. For every 100 lbs you keep in your trunk you will burn 1-2% more gas.

Tip 5 – Use that cruise control. Cruise control on level roads can save you \$150-\$175 per year in fuel!

Tip 6 – Buy a vehicle for fuel efficiency. When buying a new car, review buyers guides on fuel efficiency and hybrids: www.epa.gov/greenvehicles, www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/FEG2000.htm, and www.greencars.com.

Tip 7 - Eat out less and combine errands. You will save money on gas and food and reduce emissions. Just 20 miles less a week can save you \$100 or more in fuel each year, and when you count maintenance and other costs, total savings in your pocket is more than \$500 per year.

Tip 8 - Carpool, vanpool, or take public transportation. Sharing a ride just one day per week could save you more than \$250 a year in gas. Every day you add, adds \$250 more per year of gas! Total savings including gas, oil, maintenance, and tires will save you \$800 to \$4,000 per year depending on how many days you share a ride.

Tip 9 - Alternative work schedules. Work a different work schedule so you don't have to drive during rush hour. Negotiate to work from home at least one to two days per week and consider conference calls instead of driving to meetings. You can save thousands of dollars in clothing, fuel costs, and vehicle maintenance.

Tip 10 - Bicycle or walk. Doctors recommend 30-90 minutes of exercise each day, so skip the car!



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Maintain your vehicle

- *Keep tires inflated* - Keep your engine maintained and your tires properly inflated - properly inflated tires can improve fuel economy by up to one mile per gallon or up to 3 percent.
- *Change your air filters* - Regularly change filters since replacing a clogged air filter can improve your vehicle's gas mileage by as much as 10 percent.
- *Low Rolling Resistance Tires* - The type of tires you use can improve your fuel efficiency – “low rolling resistance” tires can increase gas mileage by 20-30%. Some top picks by Green Seal were: Bridgestone B381, Nokian NRT2 and Sumitomo HTR 200 (www.greenseal.org/resources/reports/CGR_tire_rollingresistance.pdf)

Flying

- Reduce the amount of weight you carry - both you and your luggage. The less weight the airplane has to lift, the less fuel it uses (based on one estimate, airlines burned 350 million gallons of extra fuel in the year 2000 because Americans, on average, weighed 10 pounds more).
- Teleconference instead of flying.
- Flying is sometimes more efficient than driving. It depends on how far you go, your car's fuel efficiency, and how many people are in your group. The federal aviation administration estimates the average fuel efficiency for flying is 48 miles per gallon per seat. Since take-off and landing uses the most fuel, longer trips are more efficient than shorter trips.

Consider biofuels or offsetting emissions

- Plant material used to make biofuels consumes carbon dioxide and releases oxygen, thus reducing the overall environmental impact, especially in terms of global warming. *You still need to conserve even if you use biofuels.* The corn used to make a tank of ethanol for an SUV can feed a person for a year.
- You can make your own biodiesel from restaurant grease waste or purchase it from several sources in Texas including San Antonio based Alamo Biodiesel (<http://www.alamobiodiesel.com/>), Eco-wise (www.ecowise.com), and the Willie Nelson Biodiesel Company (www.wnbiodiesel.com). Ethanol is now available at many HEB stores in Texas.
- Carbon offsets allow individuals to reduce their carbon footprint by supporting renewable energy, energy efficiency or tree planting. For the average driver, offsets can cost about \$40 for a full year. Go to www.ecobusinesslinks.com/carbon_offset_wind_credits_carbon_reduction.htm for options.

For more ideas go to www.drivecleanacrosstexas.org.

