

6 Ways Your Fleet Can Save Gas and Money

Gas prices. Two words your local news will never miss--and with good reason. Fuel prices have jumped over the \$4.00 per gallon mark in many cities of the United States, bringing the cost of everything moved by fuel up as well.

The only real solution for those who must use vehicles for business: use less fuel and learn how to conserve as much as possible.

Here are six great gas saving tips that lead to big savings:

1. Plan your routes--Determine the quickest and most direct route. If an employee drives an additional ten miles per day, that's 50 miles a week and 2600 miles a year. If your vehicles get 14MPG with gas at \$3.85 per gallon, that adds up to \$715.00 of unnecessary cost. Now imagine if every driver saved that much for you?

2. Avoid left turns-- Bet you never thought of this one! Idling as you wait to turn left wastes gas and is unsafe (with oncoming traffic). Pollution Probe, a Canadian environmental watchdog group, reports you lose 50 cents for every 10 minutes of idling(@ 3.23 p/gallon)—and the larger the vehicle, the more you consume.

3. Schedule regular car maintenance--A clean-running car with properly inflated tires saves gas. You've heard it a million times, and it's true. Fueleconomy.gov reports that 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, that's 15 cents per gallon (@3.85 p/gallon).

- Replacing a clogged air filter can improve your car's gas mileage by as much as 10 percent.
- Equivalent Gasoline Savings: up to \$0.39/gallon
- You can improve your gas mileage by around 3.3 percent by keeping your tires inflated to the proper pressure.
- Equivalent Gasoline Savings: up to \$0.13/gallon
- You can improve your gas mileage by 1-2 percent by using the manufacturer's recommended grade of motor oil.
- Fuel Economy Benefit: 1-2%
- Equivalent Gasoline Savings: \$0.06/gallon

4. Drive responsibly--Avoid fast starts, speeding and excessive idling. Hard cornering and braking also put excessive wear and tear on vehicles. It can lower your gas mileage by 33% at highway speeds and by 5% around town.

6. Select vehicles with the best gas mileage--Have a longer route or one with more stops/starts all day? Dispatch your best MPG vehicle to it, and always try to use cruise control and overdrive to stay at a steady speed. The difference between a car that gets 20 MPG and one that gets 30 MPG amounts to \$963 per year (assuming 15,000 miles of driving annually and a fuel cost of \$3.23). That's \$4,812 extra in fuel costs over five years!

A little common sense can go a long way toward saving fuel and a significant chunk of money in the long term. How many of the above tips are you currently practicing?