



## Eco-Attitude on the Road

Did you know that fuel-efficient eco-driving practices are also safe driving techniques? Good habits such as obeying the speed limit, regular tune-ups and using a block heater in the winter can improve your vehicle's fuel efficiency, prolong the life of your vehicle, save you money—and perhaps even save a life!

### Do

- ❑ *Plan Your Route*  
Plan your trip ahead of time, combine errands and try to avoid heavy traffic areas, road construction and hilly terrain to save fuel and time.
- ❑ *Use Your Air Conditioner Sparingly*  
Using your air conditioner during city driving can increase your fuel consumption by up to 20 per cent. Try rolling down your windows, and leave air conditioning for highway travel when rolling down the windows would create an aerodynamic drag.
- ❑ *Use the Cruise Control Feature*  
When you're driving on highways, setting your cruise control will save fuel by keeping your speed constant.
- ❑ *Check Your Tires Regularly*  
Check tire pressure each month when the tires are "cold"—meaning the vehicle has not been driven for more than two hours. To verify the correct pressure for your tires, do not check the weight on the tire—this is the maximum weight. Instead, consult the owner's manual. Rotate your tires every 10,000 kilometres and have your tires aligned and balanced once a year.

Under-inflated tires cost Canadian light-duty vehicle owners almost 643 million litres of fuel annually. At \$0.85 per litre for regular unleaded gasoline, that amounts to almost \$550 million each year in wasted fuel (not to mention generating unnecessary gas emissions).





❑ *Get Regular Tune-Ups*

Proactive steps to ensure your car is in top shape will reduce the likelihood of repairs and eliminate unwanted costs, as well as saving fuel and reducing emissions. For example:

- When your tires are being rotated, ask the mechanic servicing your car to check your brakes as well. Ensure your brake callipers are not dragging—this causes decreased fuel economy.
- Regularly change your PCV valve and filter according to your owner’s manual and vehicle specifications. Letting them become plugged leads to increased emissions and fuel use.

❑ *Make the Most of Your Transmission*

When shifting gears (manual transmission), shift gently but quickly to the higher gears where the engine works more efficiently and uses less fuel.

Using your transmission’s overdrive gear (automatic transmission) at high speeds reduces your engine’s workload which saves fuel and reduces engine wear.

**Do Not...**

❑ *Speed*

Drive at posted speed limits and remember that vehicles are most fuel efficient when operating between 60–70 km/hour. When you increase your speed above 90 km/hour, your fuel efficiency decreases exponentially, wasting fuel and increasing emissions.

❑ *Drive aggressively*

Jackrabbit starts and hard braking can increase fuel consumption up to 40 per cent. Accelerate smoothly from a stop when passing other vehicles or merging on a highway, and don’t tailgate.

❑ *Let your car idle to warm it up*

Modern vehicle engines only require 30 seconds of idling in the winter to circulate oil through the engine. Allowing your vehicle to idle for more than 30 seconds wastes fuel and does nothing to heat the engine. It’s better to drive off without rapidly accelerating for the first five kilometres or until the temperature gauge begins to rise, assuming that your windows are clear. Engines that idle too often can suffer wear and stress from working below their ideal operating temperature—leading to hefty maintenance costs down the road!





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### *Automobile Extras*

- Be sure to shut off and unplug all power-consuming accessories, such as phone chargers, air conditioning, stereos, etc., before turning off the vehicle. Turning off accessories decreases the engine load for the next time you start your vehicle, and will subsequently use less gas.
- Excess weight also uses more fuel. Remove unnecessary items from inside your vehicle or trunk. An extra 45 kilograms (about 100 lb) can increase your fuel costs by two per cent. (Think about those golf clubs!)
- Carrier (ski, bike and roof) racks should be removed when not in use; they cause aerodynamic drag which increases fuel consumption.

### *In the Winter, Use a Block Heater*

In the winter when the temperature drops to  $-15^{\circ}\text{C}$  or less, use a block heater to warm the engine rather than letting your vehicle idle. Using a block heater two hours before driving makes it easier to start the vehicle by keeping the engine oil and coolant warm. This can improve your winter fuel economy by as much as 10 per cent.

