

Saving Gasoline – January 2007



Well gasoline may have come down some but it is still expensive. Ellie Ciancimino of Sunrise Ct. gave me an article from the Parade and asked me to write something about cutting auto fuel costs. First of all, **do not** buy any gas saving device without checking on the government web sites (I have never heard of *one* that actually worked). Some of the common sense tips in the Parade article written by Paul A. Eisenstein are listed

below.

Don't idle, if you are going to be stopped more than a minute, shut the engine off.

Do not take off fast and don't brake hard. (*Gail says I always do this but I didn't notice.*)

On the highway, air conditioning is more efficient than opening the windows because of wind resistance.

Around town it is more efficient to open the windows and shut off the AC.

If you don't need the roof racks, ski racks and luggage racks, and they are portable, take them off, also because of wind resistance.

Tire pressure is very important. Low tire pressure can increase friction. Eisenstein recommended having your tires filled with nitrogen, he says it runs cooler and stays in the tire longer. (*If you do this let me know how it worked out and where you got it. We get a lot of methane around my house but no nitrogen.*)

Do not buy a higher grade of gasoline than your car requires. It is a waste and does nothing for power or speed. (*You shouldn't be speeding anyway, it wastes gas.*)

According to the article gas is usually cheaper Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning. Don't try to "top off" and end up spilling this precious stuff on the ground.

Regular tune-ups ensure best economy; check owner's manual for recommended maintenance intervals.

Special attention should be given to maintaining clean air filters... diminished air flow increases gas waste.

Replacing a clogged air filter can improve your car's gas mileage by as much as 10 percent. Your car's air filter keeps impurities from damaging the inside of your engine. Not only will replacing a dirty air filter save gas, it will protect your engine.

Many stoplights are timed for your driving advantage. Watch them and you may be able to pace your driving at a constant steady speed and make green lights the whole way, improving your gas mileage.

Buy gas during the early morning hours or evening when the air temperature is coolest. Gas is densest during the cooler hours. Gas pumps measure volumes of gas not the concentration of gas density. You will get more for your money during the cooler hours. *(I don't think this makes much difference, the theory is correct but the tanks are in the ground where the temperature doesn't really change much from day to day.* Check your owner's manual for the recommended grade of motor oil. You can improve your gas mileage by 1-2 percent by using the recommended grade of motor oil. Look for the API performance symbol on the motor oil container and make sure it says, "Energy Conserving." This guarantees that the oil contains friction reducing additives to improve your engine's performance and gas mileage.

Plan your errands so that you make one trip instead of driving the same route on several occasions. Pick up your dry cleaning on your way home. Your engine will be warm and running more efficiently than a cold engine and you will save time and gas money.

Remove all unnecessary items from your car. Don't leave your bowling ball and/or golf clubs or other sports equipment in the car. Leaving extra unneeded items in the car will decrease your gas mileage. For every 100 lbs extra you leave in your trunk it will lower your gas mileage 1-2 percent.

If you do not have a local mechanic you may want to try Grone's, opposite Stop & Shop on Route 9. Gary Friedman has work done there and always gets a job well done for a fair price according to him. He has sent mutual friends and they report back that they were pleased. I myself have never had anything done there because so far I haven't had any problems. I hope I haven't jinxed myself!

This and previous around the house articles can be retrieved on the web at [http://www.umc-1.com/fairways legend maintenance arti.htm](http://www.umc-1.com/fairways_legend_maintenance_arti.htm)