

## Green Commuting

Within the U.S., approximately 77% of us insist on driving alone to work, burning up 34% of the energy used in getting around. Yet we still want to do the right thing. Luckily, the following considerations can help.



- Avoid high speeds. Calculations demonstrate a decrease of 3 miles per gallon between 55-65 mph, which rises to 4.3 mpg between 55-70 because of wind resistance.
- Avoid jackrabbit starts. Gentle acceleration definitely cuts down on gas usage.
- Avoid unnecessary sudden braking. Coast to a stop to save gas and lower the amount of asbestos fibers in the air.
- Only use "cruise control" on the open highway. In heavy traffic, it simply wastes gas.
- Practice optimized shifting techniques. Get into higher gears as quickly as possible.
- Switch off the air conditioner to save 5% to 15% of the energy your car uses.
- If idling is anticipated for over 60 seconds, shut the engine off.
- Lighten the load: 1% of fuel efficiency is lost for every 50 pounds of extra weight in your trunk.
- Remove bike, luggage, or ski racks from the top of your SUV or truck for less wind resistance.
- Keep tires fully inflated to manufacturer's specifications for a 3% gas savings.
- Use a multi-grade (versus "straight") motor oil to improve mileage by 1.5% to 2.7%.
- Keep your vehicle in good state of tune.
- Lastly, practice combining errands. This reduces "cold starts," which account for a disproportionate amount of air pollution.