



Georgia's Clean Air Force Promotes National Car Care Month's "Green" Tips In Order to "Spare the Air and Your Wallet"

ATLANTA – April 2, 2013 - In collaboration with the National Car Council and April's [National Car Care](#) month, Georgia's Clean Air Force (GCAF) reminds motorists of important safety and economic tips to ensure a "greener" car. These simple tips will in turn reduce vehicle emissions, protect the environment by improving gas mileage, and ultimately save you money at the pump.

Emission systems - Emission systems control a vehicle's emissions, exhaust and pollutants using an array of sensors, computerized engine controls and the exhaust components. Emission systems substantially reduce harmful gases such as carbon monoxide (CO), unburned hydrocarbons (HC) and oxides of nitrogen (NOx), and prevent harmful gasoline vapors from escaping at the fuel tank. Your car's emission system keeps the engine running cleanly and efficiently in all sorts of operating conditions, and keeping it in proper working condition can save money and protect the environment.

Keep your car properly tuned for optimum performance. Regular tune-ups, maintenance and having clean air filters will help your car pollute less and burn less gas. Getting a tune-up can improve gas mileage by an average of four percent.

Drive Smart – When you drive your car, recognize that how you drive has a lot to do with fuel economy. Avoid sudden starts and stops and go the speed limit. Jerky and aggressive driving decreases your miles per gallon (MPG) and increases wear and tear on your vehicle. Minimize unnecessary miles by combining errands in one trip.

Lighten the Load – Get the stuff out of your car, with the exception of emergency items such as a spare tire, flares and a first-aid kit. Extra items weigh the vehicle down and cause an increase in gas usage.

Maintain the cooling system. A cooling system thermostat that causes the engine to run too cold will lower the fuel efficiency of a car by as much as one or two mpg.

Tire Checks – According to the Car Care Council, around two billion gallons of gas each year could be saved if the tires on every American's car were properly inflated. Optimal tire pressure for your vehicle is listed in the owner's manual.

Gas Caps and Fill-Ups – Check your vehicle's gas cap. Approximately 17 percent of vehicles on the road have loose, damaged or missing gas caps, causing 147 million gallons of gas to vaporize every year. Topping off your gas tank when filling up your car can also release harmful vapors into the environment.

Vehicle Fuel System - Properly maintain your vehicle's fuel system, such as replacing your car's fuel filter every two years or 24,000 miles and have your fuel injectors flushed out every 30,000 miles.

Maintain and repair your car as outlined in the council's Car Care Guide. The guide helps drivers understand their car, the care it needs, and when it needs it and why. Single copies of the free guide may be ordered here on the Car Care Council website.

"To 'spare the air and your wallet' has always been our program's mantra," said Pamela Earl, EPD Air Protection Branch Program Manager. "Following these simple maintenance tips can not only help you have a cleaner, 'greener' car, but also ensure optimal air quality in our area."

Questions to ask your mechanic

1. What is the most important thing I should do to my car to make sure I'm doing my part to protect the environment?
2. If my car emits a lot of exhaust, does this mean there's something wrong with it?
3. Is the refrigerant in my car environmentally friendly and if not, what should I do?
4. Where can I take my used oil, oil filter and other fluids for recycling?

For additional maintenance tips, please review GCAF's "Spare the Air and Your Wallet" resource, which is available at www.cleanairforce.com. For more information about National Car Care Month, visit the Car Care Council website at www.carcare.org.

About Georgia's Clean Air Force

Working together in a public/private partnership known as Georgia's Clean Air Force, the Environmental Protection Division (EPD) and Verizon Business are responsible for the management of the Enhanced Vehicle Emission Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) Program throughout Atlanta's 13 metro counties. Since 1996 Verizon Business has worked with the Georgia EPD to reduce harmful vehicle emissions. Georgia's Inspection and Maintenance Program has prevented tons of ozone-forming pollutants from the air we breathe by identifying and repairing nearly two million heavy-polluting vehicles. For more information, please visit www.cleanairforce.com.

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