



Georgia's Clean Air Force Presents National Car Care Month, An Opportunity for Vehicle Maintenance Education

ATLANTA – March 29, 2011 – April is National Car Care Month. Along with Earth Day (April 22), National Car Care Month presents motorists with an opportunity to help improve air quality in metro Atlanta. Georgia's Clean Air Force (GCAF), which in conjunction with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) administers the state's vehicle emission testing program, reminds motorists that keeping a vehicle in top operating condition will save fuel, reduce long-term maintenance costs, minimize harmful exhaust emissions, and help us all breathe a little easier.

To help combat air pollution, GCAF tests an average of 2.5 million vehicles each year in metro Atlanta, and as a result, expects to prevent more than 4,700 tons of pollutants from entering our air in 2011. GCAF encourages metro Atlanta motorists to follow these tips to help ensure a passing annual emission test and reduce vehicle pollutants:

1. **Drive less.** Vehicle travel is doubling every 20 years. Reduce the amount you drive by consolidating trips, telecommuting, carpooling, using public transit, and using commute alternatives such as biking or walking. [Click here](#) for information from the Clean Air Campaign on alternate commute options.
2. **Follow the leader.** By following your manufacturer's recommended maintenance schedule, you will extend the vehicle's life, increase its resale value and optimize gas mileage.
3. **Care for your car.** Check the following items on a regular basis and replace as recommended by a qualified technician: air filter, vacuum and coolant hoses, oil, oil filter, fuses, fluids and belts. Keep your tires properly inflated to minimize tire wear and receive the best possible gas mileage. Also, remember after refueling, to tighten your fuel cap until it clicks to prevent the "Check Engine" light from illuminating.
4. **Take it to an expert.** Have your vehicle serviced by a skilled repair technician who understands emission control systems. A failing emission inspection in newer cars is usually caused by a defined malfunction as indicated by the vehicle's on-board diagnostic (OBD) computer and the "Check Engine" light. For a list of qualified emission repair shops in your area based on the percentage of successful repairs, view the GCAF *Repair Watch* Public Report located at all emission inspection stations or at www.cleanairforce.com.
5. **Understand the rules of the road.** Follow the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) "Drive Smart Tips:"
 - Be aware of your speed. Obeying highway speed limits can save fuel, as well as prevent air pollution.
 - Avoid rapid accelerations and braking, which burn more fuel.
 - Use cruise control and overdrive gears.
 - When you are not in traffic, turn off the engine rather than idle for more than 30 seconds.
 - Remove excess weight from your trunk, and if you have a removable roof rack and are not using it, take it off.

For additional maintenance tips, please review GCAF's "[Vehicle Emission Testing and Your Health](#)" resource, which is available at www.cleanairforce.com.

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 2 million heavy-polluting vehicles. For more information, please visit www.cleanairforce.com.

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For more information, contact: Alex Ritchey, communications 21, 404.814.1330, aritchey@c21pr.com.