



Georgia's Clean Air Force Encourages Motorists to Drive Smart During National Car Care Month

ATLANTA – March 11, 2010 – April is National Car Care Month, and along with Earth Day (April 22) presents an opportunity for motorists to help improve metro Atlanta's air quality. 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 and minimize harmful exhaust emissions – helping 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 2010. GCAF encourages metro Atlanta motorists to follow these drive smart tips provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 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.** Driving situations likely to increase air pollution and decrease fuel economy include: idling for more than 30 seconds; stop-and-go driving – plan trips outside peak traffic periods and smooth your driving by accelerating and decelerating gradually; air conditioning – open your windows or use the fresh air vent to cool your vehicle; high engine loads such as running the air conditioner, quick accelerations, high-speed driving, climbing grades, revving the engine and carrying extra weight; cold temperatures – newer vehicles need little time to warm-up; and topping off when refueling – it's best to avoid "topping off" in warm weather as spilled gasoline pollutes the air when it evaporates.

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

Since 1996 Georgia's Clean Air Force, the state's Enhanced Vehicle Emission Inspection and Maintenance Program, has worked with Georgia's Environmental Protection Division to reduce harmful vehicle emissions. Georgia's Inspection and Maintenance Program has prevented thousands

of tons of ozone-forming pollutants from entering the air we breathe by identifying and repairing nearly 2 million heavy-polluting vehicles. For more information, please visit www.cleanairforce.com or call 800.449.2471.

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