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Save the Air and Your Money for National Car Care Month with Eight Expert Tips from Georgia's Clean Air Force

Increase Automobile Performance, Minimize Maintenance Costs With These Simple Tips

ATLANTA (April 15, 2015) – April is National Car Care Month and [Georgia's Clean Air Force](#) (GCAF), in partnership with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD), is encouraging motorists to practice eight key tips to increase fuel efficiency, reduce long-term maintenance costs and minimize harmful vehicle emissions.

For National Car Care Month, GCAF is encouraging motorists across the state to do their part to reduce emissions and improve air quality by following these eight useful car care tips.

"Gasoline and maintenance costs come with owning a car, but they need not drain your wallet," explains Pamela T. Earl, Air Protection Branch Program Manager, Environmental Protection Division. "By following these eight expert vehicle maintenance tips, motorists can extend the life of their car, increase fuel efficiency and help protect the environment. Plus, when a vehicle is running at optimum performance, it bodes well for passing the state's annual emissions test," she added.

1. **'Manual' Labor Can Save You Money.** If not properly maintained, virtually all of your vehicle's sensitive systems can negatively impact fuel efficiency. Carefully read your vehicle owner's manual and familiarize yourself with your vehicle's recommended upkeep. This can help prevent costly maintenance issues.
2. **Oil Well That Ends Well.** When it's time for an oil change, look for "energy conserving" brands of motor oil. Using even the lowest multi-grade of oil recommended in your owner's manual could improve the fuel efficiency of the engine, which is particularly important when starting your engine in cold temperatures.
3. **Lose the Junk in Your Trunk.** With the exception of emergency items (e.g. first-aid kit, flares, spare tire), drivers should remove any unnecessary items from their cars. These items weigh the vehicle down and can negatively impact fuel economy.
4. **Keep Your Car in Tune.** Keep your car properly tuned for optimum performance. Regular tune-ups, maintenance and installing clean air filters will help your car operate more efficiently, while emitting fewer pollutants into the air. Regular tune-ups can improve gas mileage by an average of four percent.

5. **Treat Your Tires Well.** According to the Car Care Council, approximately two billion gallons of gas each year could be saved if the tires on every American's car were properly inflated. Just one under-inflated tire can decrease fuel efficiency and reduce the lifespan of the tire by more than 6,000 miles. Refer to your vehicle's owner's manual for information on the proper tire pressure.
6. **Be a Defensive Driver.** Aggressive driving is not only unsafe, it causes unnecessary wear and tear and can negatively impact your car's fuel economy, lowering gas mileage by as much as 33 percent on the highway and five percent on city streets. Avoid quick acceleration, observe posted speed limits, and avoid sudden starts and stops. Minimize unnecessary miles by combining errands in one trip.
7. **Put a Cap on Your Gas Costs.** It may seem like a small thing, but loose, damaged, or missing gasoline caps contribute to more than 147 million gallons of gasoline vaporizing each year. Hence, it is important to securely tighten your vehicle's gasoline cap after each fill up. Be careful to avoid topping off your gas tank, as it releases harmful vapors into the atmosphere.
8. **Ask the Pros.** In most situations, it is best to leave the servicing of your vehicle in the hands of highly trained automotive professionals. They possess the skills and tools required to properly diagnose and correct issues with your car and to put you on the road to safe, fuel-efficient driving. For a list of qualified emissions repair shops in your area based on the percentage of successful repairs, view the GCAF *RepairWatch* Public Report at www.cleanairforce.com or at any emissions inspection station.

For additional information, motorists are encouraged to visit the GCAF website at <http://www.cleanairforce.com> or contact the GCAF Call Center at 800.449.2471.

About Georgia's Clean Air Force

Georgia's Clean Air Force, in partnership with the Environmental Protection Division (EPD), is responsible for the management of the Enhanced Vehicle Emissions Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) Program throughout Atlanta's 13 metro counties. Since 1996, the Georgia EPD has worked to reduce harmful vehicle emissions. Georgia's Inspection and Maintenance Program has prevented tons of ozone-forming pollutants from entering the air we breathe, by identifying and repairing more than 2.8 million heavy-polluting vehicles. For more information, please visit www.cleanairforce.com.

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