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Seven Expert Tips from Georgia's Clean Air Force for National Car Care Month *Minimize Vehicle Maintenance Costs, Increase Performance with Seven Simple Tips*

ATLANTA (April 17, 2017) – In honor of National Car Care Month, [Georgia's Clean Air Force](#) is urging Georgia motorists to practice seven simple tips to reduce long-term maintenance costs, increase fuel efficiency, and minimize harmful vehicle emissions.

With sections of I-85 projected to be down until mid-June, experts are forecasting longer commutes for thousands of motorists. Hence, it is more important than ever to make sure that your vehicle is running as efficiently as it can.

Proper vehicle maintenance is the most effective way to increase both performance and efficiency, while making it easier to recognize issues that may arise down the line, according to Pamela T. Earl, Mobile & Area Source Program Manager, Environmental Protection Division.

“It is important to follow your vehicle’s regular maintenance schedule, and make sure that you’re doing the little things to maximize fuel economy,” said Earl. “Not only will this help keep your vehicle performing at a high level, it can also help you spot small problems before they become a larger issue.”

Georgia’s Clean Air Force offers seven tips to minimize vehicle maintenance costs while increasing performance. To make it easier to remember, the tips spell P-R-E-P-A-R-E.

- **Pay Attention to Regular Maintenance.** Nearly all of a vehicle's sensitive systems can negatively impact fuel efficiency. Keep your vehicle properly maintained, and carefully read your owner's manual to familiarize yourself with recommended upkeep. This can help prevent costly maintenance issues down the road.
- **Review What's in Your Trunk.** With the exception of emergency items (e.g. flares, first-aid kit, spare tire), drivers should remove unnecessary items from their vehicles. These items can weigh the vehicle down and negatively impact fuel economy.
- **Efficient Tires Save Money.** Keeping tires properly inflated can save approximately two billion gallons of gas each year, according to the Car Care Council. One under-inflated tire can decrease fuel efficiency and reduce the lifespan of a tire by 6,000 miles or more.

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- **Put a Cap on Your Gas Costs.** Loose, damaged, or missing gasoline caps contribute to nearly 150 million gallons of gasoline vaporizing annually. Be sure to securely tighten your vehicle's gasoline cap after each fill up. Also, avoid topping off your gas tank, which can release harmful vapors into the atmosphere.
- **Avoid Aggressive Driving.** Not only is aggressive driving unsafe, it causes unnecessary wear and tear, and can negatively impact your vehicle's fuel economy. Aggressive driving can decrease gas mileage by a third on the highway and five percent on city streets. Avoid quick acceleration, observe posted speed limits, and avoid sudden starts and stops.
- **Rely on Professionals for Vehicle Servicing.** It is best to leave the servicing of your vehicle in the hands of highly trained automotive professionals. For a list of qualified emissions repair shops in your area based on a high percentage of successful repairs, refer to the *RepairWatch* Public Report at www.cleanairforce.com or at any emissions inspection station.
- **Efficiency Starts with Oil.** When it's time for an oil change, look for "energy conserving" brands of motor oil. Using even the lowest multi-grade oil recommended in your owner's manual could improve the fuel efficiency of the engine.

For additional information, visit www.cleanairforce.com.

About Georgia's Clean Air Force

Georgia's Clean Air Force (GCAF), in partnership with the Environmental Protection Division (EPD), is responsible for the management of the Enhanced Vehicle Emission Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) Program throughout Atlanta's 13 metro counties. Since 1996, Georgia's Inspection and Maintenance Program has prevented more than 1.6 million tons of harmful ozone-forming pollutants from entering the air we breathe, the equivalent of removing 13,400 vehicles from the road, or planting more than 400 million trees. It is also estimated that Georgia residents have saved \$311 million in utility bills since 1996 due to cleaner air. The program has also identified and repaired more than three million heavy-polluting vehicles. For more information, please visit www.cleanairforce.com.

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