



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT: Kevin Chambers
Director of Communications
Georgia Environmental Protection Division
(404) 651-7970

Georgia's Clean Air Force Offers Six Back-to-School Tips for Atlanta Metro Commuters

ATLANTA (July 10, 2018) – As the back-to-school period begins and parents hit the roads, [Georgia's Clean Air Force](#) (GCAF) highlights six common-sense tips for saving time and money, while contributing to cleaner air in the Atlanta metro area.

“The back-to-school driving season can be stressful on metro Atlanta motorists, but some advance planning and using common-sense driving habits can minimize congestion and the impact of harmful vehicle emissions,” said Pamela Earl, Mobile & Area Sources Program Manager, Georgia Environmental Protection Division.

Download a helpful infographic on back-to-school commuting statistics at www.cleanairforce.com.

- **It's Cool to Pool.** Setting up a back-to-school carpool with your neighbors on a social media network like Facebook can keep everything running smoothly. If you have four other parents in your carpool, you will only need to make one trip to school each week instead of five. To save more money, consider carpooling to work on the days that you don't lead the kids' carpool.
- **Reroute Your Commute.** Inevitably, traffic in metro Atlanta becomes congested as the school year begins in mid to late July. Try staggering your commute to avoid getting stuck in traffic. Ask your boss if you can arrive for work later in the morning when school-related traffic is minimal. If your employer allows telecommuting, you can opt to skip your commute entirely and be more productive.
- **Avoid Idling.** For parents who are waiting to pick up their children from school, it might seem convenient to keep the vehicle running, but it is not environmentally friendly. Not only does idling waste gas and money, but it can be extremely harmful to the environment. For every 10 minutes of idling cut from your commute, you can save one pound of harmful carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere. The rule of thumb is to turn off your engine if you'll be idling for more than 30 seconds.
- **Lighten Your Load.** In Georgia, late July is a good time to evaluate what you have in your car. The heavier the vehicle, the more fuel it consumes. Studies show that removing just 100 pounds of extra weight from your vehicle can increase fuel economy from 2-5 percent. Don't store bulky items like sports equipment in your trunk and remove the roof rack unless you plan on using it.

- **Map with an App.** A good way to avoid school traffic is to use a smart phone app to explore alternate routes that bypass trouble spots. Motorists have endless options for driving and mapping apps for Apple and Android smart phones that can find the most efficient and fastest way to get to your destination. Many offer in-navigation traffic updates that can reroute drivers to a less congested route.
- **Maximize Performance.** Late summer is a good time to have your vehicle inspected by your local mechanic. He or she can check for malfunctioning oxygen sensors, underinflated tires, clogged filters, and other factors that conspire to reduce fuel economy. Regular maintenance can also spot issues that may cause a failing emissions test down the line.

For additional information, visit Georgia's Clean Air Force at www.cleanairforce.com.

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 Emission 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 3.4 million heavy-polluting vehicles. For more information, visit www.cleanairforce.com.

#