

Tips for Older Adults to Reduce Gasoline Cost

Older adults, many strapped for cash, are among those hit the hardest, when costs spiral out of control. With gasoline prices at record high levels, the Alliance to Save Energy and the American Automobile Association has issued suggestions for saving on auto gasoline usage.

Proper Maintenance:

- **Keep your car properly tuned up** to improve gas mileage by about 4 percent.
- **Keep tires properly inflated** to improve your gas mileage by more than 3 percent and to extend the life and ensure the safety of your tires.
- **Check and replace air filters regularly.** Replacing a clogged or dirty air filter can improve your car's gas mileage by as much as 10 percent, and a clean filter keeps impurities from damaging the inside of your engine.
- **Purchase less expensive regular unleaded gas**, if your vehicle does not require premium or midgrade fuel. Check your vehicle owner's manual.
- **Spark plugs must be in good condition.** Some will last for 100,000 miles, but many need to be replaced more often.

Good Driving

- **Curtail aggressive driving.** Speeding, rapid acceleration, and rapid braking all waste gas – and curb mileage by as much as 33 percent at highway speeds, according to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). Nix jack-rabbit starts, opting instead for slow acceleration from a dead stop.
- **In addition, speeding cuts fuel economy** 7 to 23 percent, as gas mileage decreases rapidly above 60 mph. Each five mph you drive over 60 is like paying an extra 15 cents per gallon.
- **Avoid idling, which gets 0 mph.** Cars with larger engines typically waste even more gas at idling than cars with smaller engines.
- **Combine your errands into one trip** and plan your routes carefully to drive fewer miles and use less fuel. .
- **Use cruise control** to help cut fuel consumption by maintaining a steady speed during highway driving.

Source: Alliance to Save Energy www.ase.org

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