

Summer driving tips

It's that time of year again. The hustle and bustle of summer usually means spending more time behind the wheel. With the price of gasoline still hovering near \$3 per gallon, the cost of going mobile can quickly add up. Whether you're running around town, going on a road trip or commuting to work, the following tips can help make your travels less costly and more eco-friendly.

Keep your vehicle well. Regular engine fluid level checks and routine service such as oil changes, tune ups and changing the air filter according to the vehicle manufacturer's specifications can help boost fuel efficiency and reduce excessive air pollution. If the "check engine" or "service engine soon" warning light comes on, have it checked out right away as any problems could quickly lead to poor fuel economy and expensive repairs.

Tip-top tires. Properly inflated tires can improve fuel economy and safety. Regularly checking tire pressure, rotating tires and replacing worn tires according to the manufacturer's specs will help keep your ride rolling smoothly. When you're in the market for a new set of tires, consider low rolling resistance replacement tires for even greater fuel economy.

Zen driving. Yes, enlightenment can be attained on any trip. Applying Zen principles to driving can help you arrive at your destination safer, less stressed and more economically. Simple things such as slowing down, going with the flow of traffic, relaxing to your favorite tunes and being more conscious of your surroundings will make driving more enjoyable without adding much extra time, if any at all, to your trip. To maximize your gas mileage, try to drive the speed limit, avoid quick starts and aggressive driving, coast to a stop, and use cruise control on highways to maintain a steady speed.

Stop excessive idling. When your vehicle is idling, you're getting 0 miles per gallon. Idling for more than 30 seconds wastes more gas than re-starting your engine. So turn off the engine when stopping for more than half a minute to pick up a passenger, wait for a train to pass, etc.

Travel differently. Consider carpooling, biking, walking or taking public transportation whenever practical. If you're in the market for a new car, consider a hybrid that consumes less fuel and reduces your carbon footprint. And check out Parking and Transit Services' sustainable transportation options such as carpooling, rideshare, Centro Fare Deal Program and Centro One-Seat Rides Program.

Incorporating the above practices into your travels this summer will go a long way in making your ride and your wallet greener all year-round.

To learn about the sustainability efforts and activities across the SU campus and in our community, please visit the other areas of our website.