

Protect your pocketbook at the pump

By press release

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With gas prices certain to reach \$3 per gallon and higher across the nation, most of us are worried about the impacts on our pocketbooks.

Austin, Texas, authors Ron Hollenbeck and Kenny Joines have developed a new book, titled *The Gas Mileage Bible—How to Squeeze More Miles Out of Every Gallon and Pay Less at the Pump*, that is packed with more than 40 easy-to-use actions people can take to get better gas mileage.

“The most important thing to do is to change your attitude and believe that you can make a difference,” Hollenbeck said. “At \$3 a gallon, little improvements and some changes in driving behavior can make a substantial difference very quickly.”

Hollenbeck and Joines identified more than 40 individual actions vehicle owners and drivers can use to improve gas mileage and save money. Their “L.E.D. Method” summarizes three main categories of ideas and actions for getting better fuel economy, including the following:

► L stands for losses you can reduce that are due to friction, wind resistance and rolling resistance. Reducing the losses allows your vehicle to travel farther with each gallon of gas.

► E is for efficiency that you can improve so you get the maximum amount of energy out of each gallon of gas.

► D is for driver since your driving technique can result in improved gas mileage by up to 30 percent.

All their ideas are based on sound scientific, energy-saving principles anyone can use. Following is a typical case in point:

The owner of a typical SUV that gets 12 miles per gallon, drives 15,000 miles per year and costs \$3 per gallon, will spend \$3,750 in a year.

If the owner improves his gas efficiency by 30 percent so his car gets 15.6 miles per gallon, then his gas cost for the year will be \$2,885, and can save more than \$865 in gas.

Joines and Hollenbeck believe most people can achieve 30 percent, and it’s not that hard to do it. Among the numerous tips they suggest people take to achieve the maximum improvement in gas mileage are the following:

1. Keep your tires filled properly—if the tire pressure is low, you will increase your gas consumption significantly.
2. Don’t drive with the windows down—reduce car friction.
3. Apply synthetic bearing grease to your wheel bearings.
4. Use synthetic oil in your transmission, differential and transfer case.
5. Make sure your wheels are aligned to reduce rolling resistance.
6. Make your vehicle more aerodynamic—take off anything that increases wind resistance, such as luggage racks or car top carriers. If you have a pickup truck, drive with the tailgate up (in a closed position).
7. Lighten your vehicle weight—remove all unnecessary baggage and payload from your vehicle.
8. Keep your air conditioning turned off when it is not hot.
9. Use high-quality synthetic oil in your engine.
10. Keep your fuel filter clean and replace it regularly.

11. Ensure your power steering fluid and belts are properly maintained.
12. Make sure you are using the proper coolant in your vehicle.
- 13 Replace your factory paper air filter with a High Flow Replacement Air Filter.
14. Buy the lowest-octane grade of fuel recommended for your vehicle.
15. Check your gas cap and make sure it doesn't leak air.
16. Check your spark plugs and replace them with high-quality spark plugs and ignition cables.
17. Keep your engine tuned and well maintained. Get a tuneup and exhaust gas analysis.

Hollenbeck and Joines said the single most important thing people can do to reduce gas consumption is really simple, but it's also the hardest thing to do: slow down.

Acceleration and fast driving burns gas faster than anything. Instead of pushing the curve and going as fast as you can, slow down. Come up to cruising speed slowly, and coast to a stop. On the hills down, use gravity. On the hills up, don't accelerate, just take it easy. Instead of tailgating, slow down and leave space in front of your car so others can move into your lane. The even pace will be more relaxing and safer. You'll also be astounded at how much money you will save.

Environmental Protection Agency data shows that for each 5 mph more than 60 mph, it is like paying an additional \$0.21 per gallon for gas. Or, another way to look at it, for every 10 percent faster you go more than 50 mph requires an additional 10 to 20 percent of fuel.

Driving at 55 miles per hour can save you 20 to 25 percent of your costs for gas. Drive in the right lane, except if you have to pass.

Accelerate steadily, but not aggressively, to get to cruising speed. Anticipate stops or slow-downs, and minimize use of your brakes.

People who commute may find they can reduce their driving time if they leave earlier and avoid the traffic. Think about changing your hours so you can leave early enough you don't feel as if you need to rush to get there in time.

If you go gunning around town, your mileage will drop to 8 to 10 miles per gallon and will drive your costs way, way up.

The Gas Mileage Bible also identifies and analyzes the different types of automobile engine modifications one might consider. These include things such as air intake and exhaust systems, electric cooling fans, throttle body spacers, and other, more costly engine improvements.

For more information about the book, visit www.GasMileageBible.com.

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