



Resourceful News

Resource conservation and pollution prevention tips for home and work.

Your Car and Clean Air



Americans love their cars. And while they're necessary, cars are very harmful to the environment. The average American automobile emits its own weight in pollutants into the atmosphere each year. These vehicle emissions contribute to health and environmental problems such as smog, air toxics and global warming. Yet individual driving habits make a big difference in the amount of pollution a car produces. Below are some ideas to help you keep your car emissions as low as possible.

- Try to consolidate trips, telecommute, carpool, use public transportation, bike or walk.
- Take proper care of your car. This will extend its life, increase its resale value and optimize its "gas mileage" or fuel economy.
- Turn your car off if you plan to idle more than 30 seconds.
- Open car windows for fresh, cool air instead of using the air conditioner. Use of a vehicle air conditioner increases load on the engine. This can increase emissions and decrease fuel economy.
- Clean out your trunk! You get four percent less gas mileage for every 100 pounds of excess cargo in your automobile, and that means increased air emissions.
- Don't "top off" when refueling your car. Spilled gasoline pollutes the air when it evaporates. Watch what you do at the gas station to prevent spills and overfills.
- If you are buying a car, consider purchasing the most fuel-efficient model in its size/category.

An interesting factoid from the Sierra Club:

Switching from driving an average new car to a 13 MPG SUV for one year would waste more energy than if you...?

- A) Left your refrigerator door open for 6 years.
- B) Left your bathroom light burning for 30 years.
- C) Left your color television turned on for 28 years.
- D) All of the above.