

Take Care of Texas During Summer Road Trips

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, June 17, 2014 - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality offers tips on saving money and conserving natural resources

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Now that summer is here, many Texans look forward to enjoying the warm weather and spending time traveling with family and friends. [Take Care of Texas](#), a program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, is offering some simple steps that will allow summer travelers to enjoy their road trips, do their part to help conserve our state's natural resources, and save money.

"With more than 79,000 miles of highway in Texas, getting to your summer destination by car is more accessible than ever. With average gas prices around \$3.50 a gallon, it's important to be aware of the ways to save money while enjoying those road trips," says TCEQ Commissioner Zak Covar. "The Take Care of Texas program offers easy how-to tips that can make a huge impact on your travel budget."

"When you are traveling this summer remember to maintain the speed limit. Even going 10 mph over the limit can drastically alter your gas mileage," says TCEQ Chairman Bryan W. Shaw, Ph.D., P.E.

"Every five miles you drive above 60 mph is like paying an extra 20 cents per gallon for gas."

"Staying on top of your car's maintenance will help improve your car's engine efficiency, while also maintaining the air quality," says TCEQ Commissioner Toby Baker. "Nothing can ruin a family's summer vacation more than being stranded on a road with car trouble."

How you drive can make the biggest difference in how far a gallon will take you this summer. We all

know that driving 75 mph burns fuel faster than going 55 mph, but what also matters is how you push the gas pedal, how you pack your car, and how well the car has been maintained. During these summer months there are ways you can save more than 30 percent at the gas pump and help Texas as well.

- Don't over pack. Extra weight cuts the fuel economy. So while packing make sure you remember that every pound you pack will directly affect your gas mileage. An extra 100 pounds of luggage means you are spending 8 cents a gallon more on gas. If you don't need it, don't bring it! Tip: if your vehicle has a roof rack, don't use it. Rear-mount cargo boxes or trays reduce fuel economy by much less.
- Aggressive driving like speeding, rapid acceleration and braking wastes gas and lowers your gas mileage by 33 percent at highway speeds and by five percent around town. If you pay attention to your driving style, avoid tailgating, and anticipate a stoplight when traveling through towns, you could save up to \$1.15 per gallon at the pump.
- Use your cruise control. Using cruise control cuts down on unnecessary speed changes, which can eat up gas.
- Stay on top of maintenance by making sure that your tires are at the right pressure, filters are clear, your fluids are fresh, and the engine is running well. A poorly maintained vehicle can release as much as ten times the emissions of a well-maintained one. Replacing a clogged air filter can improve your vehicle's fuel economy by ten percent. Repairing even a minor problem can improve a vehicle's gas mileage by as much as four percent.
- Refuel in the late afternoon and evening, which reduces the likelihood of ground-level ozone formation. When filling your vehicle's gas tank, don't top it off, which can allow fuel to escape as vapor and also increases the chance for spilling gas. After you finish filling up, make sure you properly tighten the gas cap; otherwise, gas will evaporate from your car's tank.

For many more tips to keep our air and water clean, conserve water and energy, and reduce waste,

visit [TakeCareOfTexas.org](https://www.TakeCareOfTexas.org). While you're there, [pledge](#) to Take Care of Texas, and we'll say thanks by mailing you a free Texas State Park guide.