

# How to fix your fuel economy

Gas prices have become a key concern for today's motorists. In fact, a study conducted by Corporate Research Associates Inc. says that the price of gasoline is now the single most important issue facing most Canadians. So, besides taking public transportation when appropriate, Jay Buckley technical training manager for Honeywell CPG, has a list of maintenance tips to help combat the \$1.30-plus per litre price tag.



1. Don't use a high octane fuel if your vehicle doesn't require it. Using a lower octane fuel is not harmful to your engine, and using a higher octane fuel doesn't always lead to higher fuel economy.

2. Combine errands when it makes sense. Try to forecast what trips you need to make during the week and pool together any that are in the same area. This will help eliminate unnecessary trips.

3. Have your worn and dirty spark plugs changed. Despite popular belief, there are several vehicles that require a tune up before 160,000 kilometers. According to the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence, old, worn and dirty spark plugs are prone to misfires, reducing fuel efficiency as much as 30 percent.

"When changing spark plugs, consider upgrading to ones that provide a faster, more efficient burn," said Buckley. "Autolite XP Xtreme Performance spark plugs ignite the gas and air mixture inside the cylinders more efficiently, resulting in improved throttle response and acceleration for top fuel efficiency over the life of the plug."

4. Replace your clogged air filter about once per year or every 20,000 kilometers depending on driving conditions.

According to the Be Car Care Aware Canada website, and Natural Resources Canada, replacing a clogged air filter can actually improve fuel economy by as much as 10 percent.

"That means if you typically spend \$200 per month in fueling your vehicle, you could save up to \$20," said Buckley, who recommends trying a Fram air filter since most of them feature bright white fibers that make it easy to spot when a replacement is necessary. They are available at major automotive retailers.

5. Finally, if a vehicle has intake valve and fuel injector deposits, the engine has to work harder to run. Using a fuel additive like Prestone Complete Fuel System Cleaner every 6,400 kilometers helps improve acceleration and fuel economy by helping to unclog fuel injectors and clean intake valves and combustion chambers.

"Maintaining vehicles with good quality spark plugs and air filters, in addition to utilizing a fuel additive and using the right fuel, can help consumers save money at the pump. For more information and gas-saving tips, motorists can log on to [www.fram.com](http://www.fram.com).

—News Canada

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