

What can I do to keep our air healthy?

Be a Diligent Driver

- **Keep your car tuned and tires inflated**

By keeping tires inflated to the correct pressure, you can improve your gas mileage by up to 3 percent. Using the manufacturer's recommended grade of motor oil can improve mileage by up to 2 percent. A properly tuned vehicle averages 4 percent better gas mileage. Removing excess weight from the trunk can improve gas mileage.

- **Refuel when it's cooler**

When the summer sun sets, less solar energy is available for the chemical reaction that combines gas vapors and other chemicals to produce ozone. Also, less gas vapors escape from the tank during the summer evening hours. Stop refueling when you hear the "click" to reduce the amount of vapors and avoid "topping off" your tank. Tighten up the gas cap to prevent vapor escape.

- **Reduce idling**

Idling uses a quarter to half a gallon of fuel per hour. Turning off that engine saves money and keeps our air cleaner. Today nearly every passenger vehicle engine uses electronic ignition. So concerns about wearing out the battery and the starter or wasting gas are not an issue. If you are going to idle for more than 30 seconds, turn off the engine unless you are in traffic and it's necessary to keep the engine running. Since children are especially vulnerable to air pollution, be sure to turn off your engine when picking children up from school.

- **Combine errands**

Combining errands into one trip saves time, money and wear and tear on your vehicle. Several short trips taken when your engine is cold can use twice as much fuel as a multipurpose trip with a warmed-up engine.

- **Carpool to activities**

Sharing a ride to work, school or activities saves gas and money, keeps air pollution down and builds relationships with friends and family. PAG's Sun Rideshare program provides services that make alternative transportation, such as carpooling, vanpooling, mass transit, biking and walking more affordable, accessible and convenient. To learn more about carpooling and alternate forms of transportation: www.884ride.org

- **Make a change**

Plan your trip to avoid rush hour and congested routes. To save gas and money, avoid aggressive driving, (tailgating, jamming on the breaks) and jackrabbit starts. Observe the speed limit and use cruise control when practical.

Make Your Home More Eco-Friendly

- **Use less water**

Utility companies produce air pollutants when they generate electricity. Water delivery requires large amounts of electricity so water conservation means less air pollution. Easy actions like taking shorter showers, turning off the water when brushing your teeth or shaving, and repairing leaky faucets can all help to keep our air cleaner.

- **Reduce energy use**

You can do your part to reduce air pollution by replacing incandescent bulbs with more energy-efficient compact fluorescent or LED (light-emitting diode) bulbs, raising your thermostat in the summer and lowering it in the winter, turning off lights and unplugging appliances when not in use. Wash clothes in cold water and use a clothesline for drying. Make sure the dishwasher and clothes washer are full before running. Conserving electricity reduces emissions from power plants.

- **Make your garden green**

Collect rainwater and greywater to irrigate your plants. Plant only native trees and plants which require less water. Trees remove pollutants from the air and reduce our energy costs by shading our buildings. To reduce the amount of ozone-forming chemicals during the summer months, delay mowing until evening or opt for a push or electric mower. Use a rake instead of a gas-powered blower.

- **Environmental "honey-do's"**

To avoid ozone-forming chemicals, use water-based instead of oil-based paints and use a brush or roller to apply instead of sprayers. To cut down on fumes, choose water-based cleaners around the house. When you barbeque, avoid using lighter fluid. Use a propane grill or an electric starter or charcoal chimney for starting a charcoal grill. Reduce, reuse, recycle!

Be an Energy Whittler at Work

- **Drive less**

Teleconferencing avoids traveling and saves money and fuel. Avoid those noon-time traffic jams by bringing your lunch or walking to a nearby café. Take the bus, bike, walk or carpool to work.

- **Be an energy miser**

Turn off your computers and appliances at the end of the day or when you are away on weekends. Turn off monitors when stepping away from your desk for lunch or a long meeting. Use a portable fan/heater instead of raising the thermostat. Go to the break room for a beverage instead of having your own office appliance.

Be a Savvy Student

- **Find creative ways to go to school**

Board the bus, ride a bike, skateboard, walk or carpool to school and activities.

- **Round-up that garbage**

Start a waste reduction, reuse and recycling program at your school. It takes much more energy to make products from virgin materials than from recycled materials.

- **Plant an idea**

Start a garden at your school or in your neighborhood and develop a rainwater harvesting system to collect water for irrigation.

- **Be energy thrifty**

Unplug chargers and turn out the lights when you leave a room. Use a power strip to plug in TVs, stereos, etc., and be sure to turn off the power strip before bedtime to cut the flow of energy.