

## Greening Your Car: Green Driving Tips for Wilmington

Let's face the facts, we are driving more. Most of us rely on our cars as our primary means of transportation. We use automobiles to commute to and from work, get to doctor appointments, take the kids to their activities, and do our shopping.

Wilmington is making the commitment to reduce our energy and environmental footprint. It will take all of us to make a difference. So, how can we protect the environment when we drive our cars?

The tips that follow are simple, many are common sense – and – they may even save you some money.

Thanks to the folks at [www.tripnet.org](http://www.tripnet.org)  
for some of the tips used.



**Wilmington**  
In the middle of it all

**James M. Baker, Mayor**

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City Treasurer

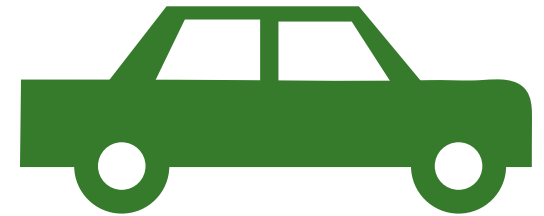
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*For more information on Wilmington's efforts to reduce its carbon footprint, see the City's climate website at [www.WilmingtonDE.gov/greencity](http://www.WilmingtonDE.gov/greencity) or contact [GreenCity@WilmingtonDE.gov](mailto:GreenCity@WilmingtonDE.gov)*

# GREEN your car



# Green Driving Tips for Wilmington

### Tip #1 – Before You Get into the Car... Plan, consolidate and coordinate your trips.

How does this help? You can reduce the number of miles you drive if you stop at the pharmacy before you pick up your child from school, or if you do your grocery shopping on the way home from work. You can plan to avoid congested areas.

Whenever feasible, carpool or share a ride...you'll not only reduce the number of miles driven that day, you'll get the added benefit of time spent with other people.

### Tip #2 – Don't "top-off" the tank!

Don't continue to fill the gas tank after it has automatically stopped. Spilled gas evaporates and adds to air pollution.

### Tip #3 – Car Maintenance

#### 1. *Keep it well-tuned*

When a car is not well-tuned, it will use more gas per mile and emit more pollutants.

#### 2. *Keep the tires properly inflated*

Properly inflated tires increase fuel efficiency and reduce tread wear (perhaps extending the life of your tires).

#### 3. *Use Radial Tires*

Radials have less rolling resistance, which improves fuel efficiency as well as provides a smoother ride.

#### 4. *Change your Air Filter*

Check your car's air filter monthly.

#### 5. *Repair any air-conditioner leaks immediately*

Leaks may contain chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) which contribute to ozone depletion.

### Tip #4 - Starting Your Car

#### 1. *Don't pump the accelerator*

A properly tuned car should start right away, even in cold weather.

#### 2. *Newer model cars don't need to be warmed up by idling*

In fact, prolonged idling creates excess pollutant emissions and may damage the catalytic converter.

### Tip #5 – Drive Gently

#### 1. *Accelerate smoothly*

No need to race when the light turns green; quick starts or gunning the engine wastes fuel and may cause unburned gas to be released from the tail pipe - adding unnecessary air pollution.

#### 2. *Maintain a steady speed.*

Using cruise control on the highway increases fuel efficiency by decreasing gas pedal activity (but don't use it in hilly terrain).

#### 3. *Obey the Speed Limit*

Speeding reduces fuel efficiency, so if you speed, it will cost you more money at the pump, not to mention the cost of the speeding ticket.

### Tip #6 - Avoid excess idling in non-traffic situations.

Idling for more than thirty seconds consumes more fuel than re-starting the engine.

### Tip #7 – Know what's in the trunk - remove excess weight.

Unnecessary weight makes the engine work harder and will increase fuel consumption.

*For additional information on operating your car efficiently, consult your owner's manual. Most manuals contain hints and suggestions for maintenance and more efficient driving.*

*Finally, when you are ready to purchase a new car, consider buying a hybrid or the most fuel efficient car that will meet your needs.*