



Amanda Rishworth MP's Green Hero News

2010

Greening your travel

Welcome to my 2010 Green Hero Newsletter - this edition looks at Green travel

Sustainable transport can make a positive contribution to the communities it serves. Transport provides connections and we can all agree to appreciate the increased opportunities we can access by the mobility transport provides to us.

We could argue that the advantages of this increased mobility needs to be weighed against the environmental, social and economic costs that transport can pose.

For example the social costs of transport include road crashes, air pollution, physical inactivity, time taken away from the family while travelling and vulnerability to petrol prices. Given the important role transport has on our ability to access work, education, goods and services, friends and family - there are proven strategies we can adopt to reduce the environmental and social impacts of this essential travel.

Your driving habits, the type of vehicle you drive and the conditions under which you drive will affect your impact on the environment as the tips below highlight.
suit your financial situation

Tips for greener driving

Plan to do a number of errands in one trip rather than several trips and save both time and fuel (for the first couple of minutes of a car trip the engine is cold and this results in an increase in fuel consumption per kilometre).

Patronise shops near to you whenever possible to reduce the distances you travel by car. Walk or cycle to your local shops if you can.

Avoid peak-hour traffic whenever possible.

Use alternative transport, eg. public transport (bus, train, tram or ferry), walking or cycling. These alternative methods of travel are often cheaper, and may provide other benefits including increased fitness.

Drive in high gear - The engine runs most efficiently between around 1,500 and 2,500 rpm (lower in diesels). To maintain these low revs you should change up through the gears as soon as practical and

before the revs reach 2,500 rpm. Automatic transmissions will shift up more quickly and smoothly if you ease back slightly on the accelerator once the car gathers momentum.

Drive smoothly and avoid unnecessary acceleration. Drive at a good distance from the car in front so you can anticipate and travel with the flow of traffic. You will be able to see such things as traffic lights changing or cars turning and minimise your fuel use through braking and accelerating back up to full speed.

Minimise fuel wasted in idling by stopping the engine whenever your car is stopped or held up for an extended period of time. By having the engine switched off, even for a short period, you will save more fuel than is lost from the burst of fuel involved in restarting the engine. The net increased wear and tear from this practice is negligible.

Speed kills economy - high speeds result in high fuel consumption. At 110 km/h your car can use up to 25% more fuel than it would cruising at 90 km/h.

Minimize aerodynamic drag by eliminating additional parts on the exterior of a vehicle such as roof racks and spoilers, or having the window open – which increases air resistance and fuel consumption, in some cases by over 20%.

Look after your vehicle's tyres - Inflate your vehicle's tyres to the highest pressure recommended by the tyre manufacturer and make sure your wheels are properly aligned (remember to keep your spare tire inflated as well). Looking after your tyres will not only reduce your fuel consumption it will also extend tyre life and improve handling.

Travel light - Don't carry more people or cargo than you have to. The more a vehicle carries the more fuel it uses.

Service your vehicle regularly - Keeping your vehicle well tuned will minimise its environmental impact.

Some important facts

Carbon dioxide (CO₂) is the major greenhouse gas from transport, and thus the Greenhouse Rating is based on the rate of CO₂ emissions from the vehicle, not the litres of fuel consumed. The amount of CO₂ emitted when a litre of fuel is burned differs depending on the type of fuel.

A vehicle using LPG, will have a higher fuel consumption (in L/100km) than the same vehicle using petrol. This is due to the difference in energy content between LPG and petrol. However, when a litre of LPG is used by a vehicle, the level of CO₂ emissions from the exhaust is significantly lower than that for a litre of petrol, because of the lower proportion of carbon in LPG relative to petrol.

While diesel vehicles perform comparatively well on fuel consumption and produce lower levels of greenhouse emissions, their contribution to air pollution is generally higher than that of comparative petrol or LPG vehicles. Of most concern are particulate matter and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) emissions which can cause a range of adverse health effects. These emissions are generally higher in diesel vehicles compared to petrol or gas vehicles.

By choosing a greener vehicle you can make a real difference. The hybrid-electric vehicle did not become widely available until the release of the Toyota Prius in Japan in 1997, followed by the Honda Insight in 1999. An increase in the price of petroleum across the world has caused many automakers to release hybrids - these are now perceived as a core segment of the automotive market of the future.

Green vehicle guide

The Green Vehicle Guide helps you by rating new Australian vehicles based on greenhouse and air pollution emissions. The rating is calculated using data provided by manufacturers from testing the vehicle against Australian standards. I refer you to the following website for further information.

<http://www.greenvehicleguide.gov.au/GVGPublicUI/Home.aspx>

The Rudd Government's support for Green travel

The Australian Government has continued the LPG Vehicle Scheme grant to assist with the cost of a purchase of a new dual-fuel (petrol/LP) or dedicated LPG vehicle or an approved and fitted LPG system. The Scheme is designed to encourage the uptake and use of LPG as an alternate fuel. The rebate will continue at the amounts indicated below;

\$1,750 between 1 July 2009 and 30 June 2010

\$1,500 between 1 July 2010 and 30 June 2011

\$1,250 between 1 July 2011 and 30 June 2012

\$1,000 between 1 July 2012 and 30 June 2013

\$1,000 between 1 July 2013 and 30 June 2014

Grants for the purchase of new vehicles fitted with LPG before first registration:

\$2,000 Between 1 July 2009 and 30 June 2014

For more information about this initiative I refer you to the following website:

<http://www.ausindustry.gov.au/Energyandfuels/LPGVehicleScheme/Pages/home.asp>

The Australian Government does not support the mandating of the use of particular levels of biofuels in the fuel mix. Instead, it believes in allowing individual consumers to make a choice regarding the fuel mix which best meets their individual preferences and needs.

The Government is committed to the development of a range of alternative liquid fuel sources, including ethanol and biodiesel. This will assist in minimising our reliance on imported oil and contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the transport sector.

In relation to the quality of fuels sold in Australia, the Australian Government has fuel quality standards in place to reduce pollution and improve engine and emission control and to provide confidence to the market that the product is reliable. This is particularly important for emerging fuels such as ethanol and biodiesel.

Thanking you for taking the time to read this edition of my Green Hero Newsletter and wishing you all safe and greener travel!

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