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Environmental
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Your Vehicle and Pollution Prevention: How to minimize the impact of your vehicle on the environment

Although necessary, our vehicles are very harmful to the environment. The average American automobile emits its own weight in pollutants into the atmosphere each year. Auto emissions account for about 60 percent of air pollution (especially ozone smog) in our cities. Routine vehicle maintenance also creates hazardous wastes such as used motor oil, used antifreeze, tires, and other waste that must be disposed of properly to prevent environmental contamination. Here are some tips to help minimize the impact of your vehicle on the environment:

Buy fuel-efficient vehicles. When making a decision to purchase a new or used vehicle, consider fuel efficiency. Select the most fuel-efficient vehicle to save gasoline and reduce pollution.

Keep your car in tune. Dirty carburetors, clogged air filters, and worn points waste gas and increase air pollution.

Choose radial tires and keep them properly inflated. Radial tires don't wear out as fast as bias-ply tires and cause less particulate matter pollution per mile. Maintaining proper tire pressure can save up to 10 percent of your fuel costs.

Don't top off your tank. Adding that last shot of gas after the pump shuts off may cause gas to spill and dangerous fumes to escape into the air.

Use your air conditioner wisely. Air conditioning drains your engine of performance and reduces gas mileage by as much as 20 percent.

Drive at medium and steady speeds. Drive at steady speeds and avoid unnecessarily fast acceleration to increase gas mileage and reduce pollution.

Reduce your driving. Carpool, vanpool, or use public transportation, even if only a few days a week. Bike or walk short trips. Brown bag your lunch, shop by mail, and bank by phone. Plan ahead to combine work, errands, and social trips.

General Tips for Reducing Waste

- Buy only what you need, use less, and substitute non-toxic products when feasible.
- Use all of the hazardous materials you buy. Do not throw partially filled containers into the trash.
- Follow safety precautions and other instructions on the product label.
- Keep all products out of the reach of children and pets.
- Never pour vehicle waste into storm drains, sewers, septic systems, or onto the ground.
- Know where you will dispose and store materials before doing it yourself. Call your nearest DEQ Regional Office if you are unsure where to take the waste.
- Keep all fluids separate and labeled to make proper recycling and disposal easier.
- All automotive wastes can be reduced by using alternate transportation such as walking, bicycling, carpooling, vanpooling, and taking the bus.

Your Vehicle and Pollution Prevention: Safe Handling, Storage, and Disposal of Pollutants

Material	Type of Hazard	How to Store	How to Avoid Spills or Releases	How to Clean Up Spills	Safer Alternative or Reduction Methods	
					Recycling or Disposal	
Antifreeze	Contains ethylene glycol, which is toxic. May also contain heavy metals such as lead. Animals are attracted to its sweet taste.	In original plastic containers.	Use large enough pan when flushing radiator. Repair radiator leaks.	Wipe up small spills and discard in garbage.	Recyclable on limited basis. Use professional services that recycle antifreeze or save for hazardous waste collection program. Do not flush into septic system or storm drains.	Propylene glycol based antifreeze is less toxic; however, it is a contaminant in ethylene glycol recycling.
Batteries, Lead Acid	Lead is a toxic heavy metal. Battery acid is corrosive.	Upright in a sturdy acid-resistant, leakproof container.	Store upright. Place leaking batteries in sturdy, acid-resistant, leakproof container.	Neutralize small acid spills (under 2 gallons) using cement, lime or baking soda.	Recyclable. Exchange your old battery when purchasing a replacement. State law requires vendors of vehicle batteries to accept used batteries for recycling. Disposal of batteries in garbage is illegal.	Purchasing batteries with longer lives will reduce the need for replacement and disposal.
CFCs or Freon	Gases are harmful to the Earth's protective ozone layer.	N/A	Service your air conditioner regularly. Repair leaks. Run your air conditioner once a month to keep seals tight.	N/A	Freon is recyclable. Service at a service station that collects and recycles freon. Federal law requires all auto air conditioner service stations to retrieve and recycle CFCs.	Use newer, nontoxic refrigerants. Use your air conditioner wisely.
Cleaners and Polishers	Most contain toxic ingredients. Some contain phosphates, which promote the growth of algae in lakes and rivers.	In original containers.	Use appropriate amounts according to instructions on container.	Absorb spills and take contaminated absorbent to a hazardous waste collection program. See label instructions.	Use up according to instructions or give to someone who will, or save for hazardous waste collection program. Do not flush into septic systems or storm drains.	A variety of non-toxic cleaners are available. Use the least toxic product that will accomplish the job.
Degreasers and Solvents	Degreasers contain chlorinated solvents and are very hazardous.	In original container in a cool, dry location.	Follow instructions for proper use to avoid spills.	Absorb spills and take contaminated absorbent to a hazardous waste collection program. Store absorbent in a fire resistant container.	Use up according to instructions or share with someone who will. Keep separate from used oil. Save for hazardous waste collection program. Do not flush into septic systems or storm drains.	Non-toxic and non-flammable alternatives are available. Use water based substitutes whenever possible.

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Gasoline	Flammable and toxic. Contains benzene, a cancer-causing chemical that can be inhaled or absorbed through the skin.	In approved containers, away from living area, ignition sources and direct sunlight.	Don't overfill your tank.	Clean up spills immediately with cat litter or absorbent pads.	Use up or save for hazardous waste collection program. Do not use as a solvent, fire starter, paint thinner or weed killer. Do not flush into septic systems or storm drains.	Carpool, bus, plan trips, walk, and bicycle. Keep tires properly inflated.
Oil, Used Motor	Oil picks up heavy metals from engine. Petroleum products are toxic to people, wildlife and plants.	In a sealed metal or plastic container. Do not mix with other substances.	Put large drip pan under crankcase oil opening. Check for oil leaks regularly and repair them.	Clean up spills immediately with cat litter or absorbent pads.	Recyclable. Do not mix with other sub-stances. Drain oil filter overnight (24hr.) into drip pan to remove oil residue. Do not use oil as dust suppressant or weed killer. Do not dispose of in a landfill, septic system, or storm drain.	Using re-refined oil saves energy and resources. Keeping your car tuned reduces oil use. Energy-conserving multigrade oils improve gas mileage.
Tires, Used	Tire piles attract rodents, mosquitoes and other pests, and are fire hazards. Toxics are released into the air and water when tires burn.	Prohibited anywhere other than at permitted or authorized waste tire storage sites.	N/A	N/A	Can be recycled. Some worn tires can be retreaded. State law requires tire sellers to accept used tires when new ones are purchased. A disposal fee may be charged.	Keep properly inflated. Buy long-lasting or retread tires. Have your worn-out tires "custom" retreaded.
Transmission and Brake Fluid	Brake fluid is corrosive. Transmission fluid contains petroleum distillates and is ignitable.	Store separately in original containers.	Follow proper filling and draining techniques.	Clean up spills immediately with cat litter or absorbent pads.	Keep separate from used oil. Save for hazardous waste collection program. Do not flush into septic systems or storm drains.	Reduce use by repairing leaks.