



Additives: Fact or Myth?

Increase fuel mileage from those miracle additives!

A STATEMENT ABOUT FUEL ECONOMY

As gasoline prices increase, there has been a growing concern over fuel consumption and how to achieve maximum fuel economy. The information below contains reasonable and prudent advice for your fleet vehicles and how to get the most from every gallon of gas.

WHAT NOT TO DO: FUEL ADDITIVES

Various unproven products to improve vehicle fuel economy have been reported, ranging from magnets that align molecules to chemical combustion improvers. Most products claiming to provide benefits are based on unsubstantiated claims. Those that do present "scientific" results generally have too little supporting data to be conclusive, have not conducted experiments in a controlled fashion, or cannot be substantiated by anyone else but the product's manufacturer. The U.S. Federal Trade Commission summarizes results for products tested by the federal government at:

www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/autos/gasave.htm.

A review of the list shows that the majority did not work, and for those that showed some effect, the benefit was too small to be cost effective.

One more recent poor idea to improve fuel economy that should not be attempted is to blend either kerosene or diesel fuel into gasoline. Why? Both kerosene and diesel fuel are distillate fuels meant for use in compression ignition engines, not spark ignition engines. They have very low octane, and since they are heavier (higher density) than gasoline, they will cause heavy engine deposits and degradation of engine oil.

Chemicals that are normally used as solvents also should not be used. These include acetone, ketones, and methanol. These solvents can be incompatible with your vehicle's rubber or sealing components, and may dissolve the vehicle's paint finish. In the case of methanol, corrosion of metal parts in the fuel system also may occur.

WHAT NOT TO DO: ENGINE OIL ADDITIVES

GM Vehicles DO NOT require additional engine oil additives. Some additives may cause harmful effects to the internal seals and additionally void the terms of your vehicle's New Vehicle Warranty.

WHAT TO DO: MAXIMIZING FUEL ECONOMY/ MINIMIZING COSTS

The best fuel economy possible is the direct result of proper maintenance and good driving habits. Listed below are GM's recommendations to achieve the best mileage possible.

TIRE PRESSURE

One of the major contributors to poor fuel economy is underinflated tires. Tires low on pressure create drag that the vehicle's powertrain must overcome, wasting dollars in fuel. Always keep your tires inflated to the proper pressure as shown on the vehicle placard, mounted on your left front door sill. This not only serves to increase gas mileage, but cuts down on tire wear, further decreasing your costs per mile.

USE THE RECOMMENDED GRADE (OCTANE) FUEL

Purchasing higher than required octane fuel is a waste of money. Using higher-octane fuels in a vehicle that only requires regular unleaded fuel will neither increase performance nor improve gas mileage. In all cases, refer to your Owner's Manual and ONLY use the octane-rated fuel recommended for your vehicle.

SLOW DOWN, DRIVE SMOOTHLY

Avoid quick/full-throttle acceleration from a standstill in town and high cruising speeds on the interstates. While the optimum MPG for highway cruising speed varies from vehicle to vehicle, faster is almost always worse. If your vehicle is equipped with a Driver Information Center that displays Instant Fuel Economy, select that readout and vary your cruising speed while on the highway. The display will change continuously with uphill and downhill sections, but you should quickly be able to identify on level ground the speed range that your vehicle does the best in.

REDUCE WEIGHT

Avoid leaving unnecessary items in your vehicle. It takes power to move increased weight, and that means more gasoline consumption and reduced performance. While the change may be slight, multiplied by thousands of miles it all adds up.

AVOID EXTENDED IDLING

There is no need to idle your engine until it reaches operating temperature as in the past. Idling wastes fuel.

COMBINE TRIPS

Your vehicle uses much more fuel when the engine is cold. This is especially true in the winter months, when the engine will take the longest to warm up. Combine errands or trips so that the vehicle only needs to warm up once to encompass many different stops.