



Government of the Virgin Islands  
of the United States

## Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs

Golden Rock Shopping Center  
3000 Estate Golden Rock, Suite 9  
St. Croix, VI 00820-4311  
Telephone: 340.773.2226  
Facsimile: 340.773.6982

Administrative Complex  
"The Battery"  
St. John, VI 00830  
Telephone: 340.693.8036  
Facsimile: 340.776.6989

Property & Procurement Building  
8201 Subbase, Suite 1  
St. Thomas, VI 00802-5826  
Telephone: 340.774.3130  
Facsimile: 340.776.8303

### DLCA CONSUMER FUEL TIPS

The Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs (DLCA) recognizes the importance of providing consumers with the necessary tools to make wise purchase choices. The following tips should be considered by consumers in an effort to conserve fuel.

- Shop around. The DLCA Gas Survey can help you find the lowest gas prices in your area. Also, many gas stations advertise regular weekly specials at their locations.
- Charge it. Consider a credit card that offers cash back for gas purchases. Some offer two to five percent rebates, but it's wise to read the fine print. Fees, charges, interest rates, and benefits can vary among credit card issuers.
- Start driving as soon as the engine is started. Modern engines don't need much time to warm up. The engine actually warms up more quickly once the car is operating, and will stay warm after stopping.
- Don't speed. Gas mileage decreases rapidly at speeds above 60 miles per hour. According to [Fueleconomy.gov](http://Fueleconomy.gov), each 5 mph you drive over 60 mph is like paying an additional 24 cents per gallon for gas.
- Avoid unnecessary idling. It wastes fuel, costs you money, and pollutes the air. Turn off the engine if you anticipate a wait.
- Use overdrive gears and cruise control when appropriate. They improve fuel economy when you're driving on the highway.
- Minimize the need to brake by anticipating traffic conditions. Be alert for slow-downs and red lights. Anticipate bends and turns on familiar roads. Letting up on the gas often eliminates the need for braking.
- Check your owner's manual for the most effective octane level for your car. For most cars, the recommended gasoline is regular octane. In most cases, using a higher octane gas than the manufacturer recommends offers no benefit and costs you at the pump. Some cars do require premium fuel, so before you fill up, check your owner's manual to find out if the higher-priced gas is required or just recommended.
- When pumping your gas, maintain a slow flow rather than a fast flow when dispensing gas into the tank. By doing so, you can increase the amount of gasoline you receive in your tank by decreasing the amount of air vapors going in.



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- Avoid jackrabbit starts and stops. Avoiding these can increase your mpg and prolong the life of your brakes.
- Use the air conditioner only when you absolutely need it. Air conditioning dramatically reduces fuel economy. Most air conditioners have an “economy” setting that allows the circulation of unchilled air. Many also have a “maximum” or “recirculation” setting that reduces the amount of hot outside air that must be chilled. Both settings can reduce the air conditioning load — and save gas.
- Combine errands. Several short trips taken from a cold start can use twice as much fuel as one trip covering the same distance when the engine is warm.
- Remove excess weight from the trunk. An extra 100 pounds in the trunk can reduce a typical car’s fuel economy by up to two percent.
- Avoid packing items on top of your car. A loaded roof rack or carrier creates wind resistance and can decrease fuel economy by five percent.
- Keep your engine tuned. Tuning your engine according to your owner’s manual can increase gas mileage by an average of four percent.
- Keep your tires properly inflated and aligned. It can increase gas mileage up to three percent, improve handling, and prolong the life of your tires. Check your owner’s manual or the door jamb for the proper level of inflation (not the tire itself, which shows the maximum tire inflation pressure); check the tire pressure when the tires are cold, because internal pressure increases when the car has been on the road for a while and the tires heat up.
- Change your oil. According to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), you can improve your gas mileage by using the manufacturer’s recommended grade of motor oil. Motor oil that says “Energy Conserving” on the performance symbol of the American Petroleum Institute contains friction-reducing additives that can improve fuel economy.

DLCA will continue to share tips that consumers can use to conserve fuel and aid in getting the most for their money at the gas pumps.





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