

The true cost of America's love affair with the car



Tim Gerner

Is this the future of the internal combustion engine?

Worried about global warming pollution? Check the driveway: The cars and trucks driven by Americans produce staggering amounts of heat-trapping gases. General Motors vehicles alone account for twice as much carbon dioxide pollution as the nation's largest electricity company, American Electric Power, with its dozens of coal-fired power plants in 11 states.

Environmental Defense recently conducted the first-ever detailed analysis of the global warming pollution from all the personal vehicles on America's roads. (Most studies consider only new vehicles.) The results of our study, *Global Warming on the Road*, made headlines from DC to China. Some eye-openers:

■ In 2002, carbon dioxide (CO₂) emis-

sions from U.S. cars and trucks totaled 314 million metric tons. That's as much CO₂ as would be released from burning all the coal in a train 50,000 miles long—enough to circle twice around the world.

■ Because there are so many of them on the road, small cars are the biggest global warming polluters—despite the fact that many get superior mileage. (Soon, the much less-efficient SUV will take over as the #1 on-the-road polluter.)

■ Americans own 30% of the world's vehicles, but emit nearly half the world's automotive CO₂ emissions. We drive more, and our cars are generally less efficient.

“Trying to solve global warming without making America's cars more efficient is like fixing a leaky roof without a hammer,” said Environmental Defense president Fred Krupp. “Leading automakers must accept responsibility for becoming part of the solution.”

The industry claims it wants to solve the problem, but it is blocking state and national measures to control heat-trapping gases and suing California over

Drive smart: Fuel savings add up

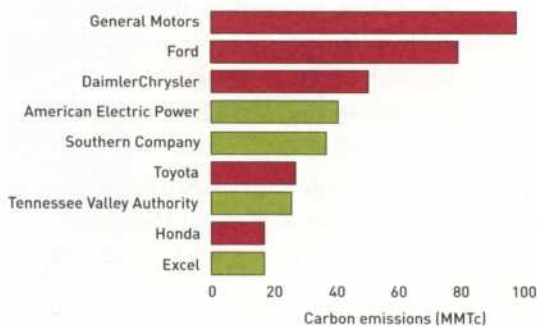
When you choose a vehicle, pick the one with the highest fuel efficiency that fits your budget and meets your needs. You can also cut fuel use and global warming pollution—and save up to \$500 a year—by following a few simple tips.

- **Drive less aggressively.** Rapid acceleration and braking can lower highway gas mileage by 33%.
- **Slow down.** Driving a mere 5 mph over the limit on the highway results in an average fuel economy loss of 6%.
- **Don't idle.** If you are stopping for more than ten seconds—except in traffic—turn off your engine.
- **Keep the engine tuned.** Regular maintenance can save up to 165 gallons of gas per year.
- **Check the tires.** Low tire pressure wastes over two million gallons of gasoline in the United States—every day.
- **Drive less.** Leaving the car parked is the best way to save gas and cut pollution.

that state's pioneering global warming legislation for vehicles. We are helping defend California in court. We're also pressing Congress to pass nationwide carbon limits that include vehicles.

According to a new study by the Transportation Research Board, the number of workers with commutes lasting more than 60 minutes grew by almost 50% from 1990 to 2000. With the rising number of vehicles on the road, it's imperative to act now if we are to stem global warming and curb air pollution.

Major global warming emitters



Tell automakers to stop fighting progress on global warming at environmentaldefense.org/action.