

Green Credentials

Uniting Communities won the 2010 Australasian Fleet Management Association Fleet Environment Award. Uniting Communities is the first Australian Registered Charity and first South Australian organisation to be certified Carbon Neutral in accordance with the Federal Government's National Carbon Offset Standard.

Uniting Communities's fleet vehicle usage makes up 23% of our total carbon footprint. The figures are similar for the average household. Reducing vehicle and fuel usage will not only reduce carbon emissions but also save you money.

Here are some ways for you to drive green

For some of us, relying on pedal power and public transport just isn't possible. Cars are a necessity to get to work and to do our jobs. This doesn't mean that, as a driver, you can't save money and reduce carbon emissions. Everyone can be a part of the solution.

<u>Unload</u> it	Car additions or weight increases air resistance and fuel consumption, sometimes by over 20%. When you don't need them, take off bike and roof racks and leave the golf clubs and baby strollers at home.
Smarter <u>air- conditioning</u>	Air conditioners can use about 10 % extra fuel. If it is hotter inside your car than outside, wind the windows down for a few minutes to help cool the car and then put the air conditioning on. However, if you are driving over 80 km/h in hot weather, air conditioning is better for fuel consumption than an open window because of the aerodynamic drag.
Inflate <u>tyres</u> properly	Driving with under-inflated tyres increases fuel consumption because they need more energy to roll. Inflating your tyres to the manufacturer's recommendation can save money on fuel and around 100kg of greenhouse emissions per year. You will also improve the handling and life of your tyres too.
Stick to the <u>speed</u> limit	Apart from being safer, this saves on fuel efficiency, especially at higher speeds. At 110 km/h your car uses up to 25 per cent more fuel than it would cruising at 90 km/h.
<u>Plan</u> your trip	Stop/start driving is much less efficient and more polluting than driving at a constant speed. Try to avoid travelling during peak hours and on congested roads.
<u>Share</u> the journey	Combine your trip with another colleague. Ask your colleagues if they can give you a lift.

The myths of idling

Even in winter, warming up your engine takes 30 seconds. Any longer has no benefit for modern cars. And if you are going to be parked for more than 30 seconds, turn off the engine. Idling for longer uses more fuel than turning off the engine and restarting it.

Myth: Idling is good for your engine

Reality: Excessive idling can actually damage your engine components, including cylinders, spark plugs, and exhaust systems. Fuel is only partially combusted when idling because an engine does not operate at its peak temperature. This leads to the build up of fuel residues on cylinder walls that can damage engine components and increase fuel consumption.

Myth: Shutting off and restarting your vehicle is hard on the engine and uses more gas than if you leave it running

Reality: Frequent restarting has little impact on engine components like the battery and the starter motor. Component wear caused by restarting the engine is estimated to add \$10 per year to the cost of driving; money that will be recovered several times over in fuel savings from reduced idling.

Some examples of what innovative car manufacturers are doing**Interactive efficiency**

Driving green has been wholly embraced by a car maker and heavily awarded too. Ecodrive is a computer program that enables drivers to measure how green their driving is. A USB stick is inserted into their dashboard when they drive and afterwards it is taken out and inserted into their computer. The Ecodrive program measures the journey and how efficiently the car was driven. It compares your journey with previous journeys. It provides tips to become a more efficient driver and records carbon emissions and cash savings that are made.

Smarter fuel saver

Idle stop systems save fuel by shutting down a vehicle's engine automatically when the car is stationary by about 10%. Conventional idling stop systems restart a vehicle's engine with an electric motor using exactly. Initiating engine restart through combustion rather than using an electric motor, which is the same process as when the engine is started normally. This system saves fuel and restarts the engine more quickly and quietly than a conventional idle-stop system.

Hybrids

The price of fuel is one major reason why 'green' car sales continue to rise. Hybrids are 'best in class' five green star rated fuel efficient vehicle as rated by the Federal Government's Green Vehicle Guide. Have a look for yourself at www.greenvehicleguide.gov.au

Hybrid vehicles are fuel efficient resulting in measurable reductions in carbon emissions as well as fuel costs, e.g. sitting idle in traffic or at lights, the petrol engine is not engaged - only the electric motor is in use, so there are no emissions when the car is on and stationary. For every mid-sized petrol vehicle that's swapped for a Hybrid Petrol/Electric you will save approximately \$784 per year in fuel costs and reduce your CO2 emissions by over 1.3 tonnes per year (based on 20,000kms) and that's by swapping just one vehicle!

EVs and Fuel Cells

Alternative 'greener' fuels are also on the rise with the growth in demand for Electric Vehicles as well as Hydrogen Fuel Cell vehicles – which are powered by Hydrogen and emit only water!