

IT PAYS TO BE GREEN

Get Away From That Pump!

Gasoline is heavily relied upon in many aspects of daily lives; the use of gasoline affects both us and the environment around us. Vehicles emit greenhouse gases, which contribute to global warming. Gasoline can also contaminate soil and surface waters, entering the food chain through the meals people eat. Many harmful effects of gasoline are due to individual chemicals in gasoline, which are present in small amounts that can lead to nose and throat irritation, headaches, nausea, breathing difficulties and other complications. Some effects of skin contact with gasoline include rashes, redness and swelling. Being exposed to large amounts of gasoline can lead to coma or death.

Are habits truly hard to break? What if you saved money for breaking some of them? With gasoline prices increasing incessantly all across the country and oil in its demand, the search for alternatives is dire. Although there is the common answer of owning a hybrid car, which is eco-friendly but expensive, there ultimately needs to be more practical and effective alternatives to decrease the amount of gasoline used.

It's quite simple, actually. Start by inflating tires to the recommended level, 32 to 35 per square inch, which helps minimize fuel efficiency loss. Another way is to get a tune-up, helping maintain the engine and improves mileage. If the tires are aligned when parking, it reduces tire friction. Quick checks on the vehicle's air filter and oil level can also improve mileage. Instead of driving back and forth, combine errands in one trip to reduce the gas bill.

Other alternatives include taking public transportation, carpooling, walking, or biking. The U.S. public transportation system has been estimated to save 3.4 billion gallons of oil a year, which cuts greenhouse gas emissions by 26 million tons. Carpooling also has its advantages by splitting the cost of gas with each other. Walking or riding a bicycle is a two-in-one alternative, because it saves fossil fuels and helps people stay in shape.

Although gasoline is still one of the leading sources of energy for driving cars today, its demand continues to increase as the amount of oil worldwide decreases, indicating that prices will keep rising. However, as technology also continues to advance, the shift from gasoline to an alternative fuel will start to occur in exceeding numbers. But for now, there are simple, efficient methods that can help cut the gas bill.

By Staff Writer Jennifer Thai

Energy is the very thing that fuels the earth, enabling people to accomplish essential everyday tasks such as cooking food. Without it, plants would not be able to photosynthesize, animals would be left hungry and humans left helpless. The sun, as the ultimate source of power, enables people to live in light and serves as a model to create various new forms of energy. However, since our resources are limited, inhabitants of this earth need to find ways to conserve energy.

I'm Not Lying, Recycling Works

Like a fierce lion, Mother Nature constantly fights to protect the land she owns. Unfortunately, she has to cope with the careless inhabitants that invade her precious Earth. Many people have heard the words greenhouse effect, global warming, climate change and greenhouse gases, but may not truly comprehend the extensive consequences that are associated with them.

Nevertheless, hope still exists and the methods to aid our planet are endless. To begin with, the most popular technique utilized is recycling. This method is used more often because of the compensation people get for trading in their plastics, glass and aluminum.

In addition, planting a tree in a local park is another good tactic for keeping the planet healthy. According to JEA, a community-owned utility business that focuses on energy efficiency, recycling one glass jar saves enough energy to light a standard 100-watt light bulb for four hours. Most people are aware that recycling helps the environment by reducing trash and saving space in our landfills, but few know that it also saves energy. For example, recycling one aluminum can has the ability to save enough electricity to run a TV for three hours.

There are many ways people can help reduce waste and reuse items. For example, packing meals in lunch boxes or cloth bags is one of the many methods commonly used. Also, using both sides of every sheet of paper, cutting paper into smaller squares for notes or giving away old books instead of throwing them away are other useful tactics that can help save the Earth.

Preserving this planet will take a lot of work and determination. However, it is not impossible and if people works together, Earth will be restored to its best settings once again. If we want change, we must start by doing our job as citizens of this planet.

By Staff Writer Sylvia Winston

Shine Bright Like Electricity

Electricity has been a natural phenomenon since the beginning of time. An ordinary flow of electrons in the expanse between the skies and land is seen during thunderstorms, as a bright light zaps across the sky. In lightning, the attraction between positive and negative charges in clouds results in a build-up of protons on land and especially on trees, mountains and people. As the charges connect from the sky down, lightning begins to strike.

By figuring out how this natural occurrence functions through more research, new inventions were created, such as fluorescent light bulbs. The very discovery once thought of as brilliant is now lack-luster today. Many utility companies keep their customers shackled to imported coal, instead of investing in clean energy. For example, in 2008, the Southern Company sent more than \$2.6 billion out of Georgia to pay for coal imported from places like Wyoming and South America. In fact, most of the U.S.'s imported coal comes from Wyoming, creating a huge carbon footprint in our environment.

However, there are ways to maintain a clean environment while saving electricity and money. Some of these include changing to compact fluorescent light bulbs because although more expensive, these light bulbs last about 10 times longer and run on less power than normal ones. Another strategy to cut electricity costs by 15 percent raising the temperature of the room a few degrees while keeping the air conditioner on. Also, washing clothes at night in cold water uses half as much energy as hot water does. Scraping the food off dishes and then putting them in the washer can help save over 20 gallons of heated water a day. Utilizing a power strip to conserve energy when appliances are not in use is also helpful.

All in all, it is estimated by scientists that if strong investments in energy efficiency are promoted, U.S. energy productivity could be doubled by 2030. Conservation could help extenuate the life and well-being of earth for future generations.

By Features Editor Cynthia Luong