



## A Green Driving Policy—Getting Started



Greening your workplace is good for the planet and good for business. One way to green your business is by having a green driving policy. A green driving policy informs staff, stakeholders and the public that being green is a priority and an expectation. Green driving habits will reduce your organization's impact on the environment and enhance safety.

Before implementing a driving policy, it is important to first look at current driving practices and then assess possible areas for growth. Get started by consulting with all levels of staff, including management, fleet vehicle coordinators and drivers.

This document is designed to serve two purposes. Firstly, it provides an overview of green driving practices and background information related to these habits. Secondly, policy statements are provided and can be inserted in your organization's green driving policy or manual.

### Tracking Fuel Consumption & Resources

As an organization or work group, it may be helpful to track fuel consumption. One Simple Act has created a tool to track fuel consumption and calculate green house gas emissions for air and automobile travel. You can use this information to look for opportunities to reduce travel and emissions, or you can use the data to purchase carbon offsets.

Tool: *Workplace Travel Footprint Calculator*

[www.onesimpleact.alberta.ca/docs/workcal.xls](http://www.onesimpleact.alberta.ca/docs/workcal.xls)

If you are interesting in learning more about how driving habits impact fuel consumption and the environment check out the National Resources Canada website:

<http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/transportation/personal/index.cfm?attr=0>



## Best Practices & Driving Policy Inserts

[Insert company name] expects all employees driving in company vehicles to follow green driving habits. By following these best practices, drivers can contribute to reducing our organization's carbon footprint and increase safety:

1. **Reduce vehicle speed:** Decreasing vehicle speed from 120 km/h to 100 km/h uses 20 per cent less fuel. Follow the speed limit and use cruise control (when conditions allow) to help prevent inadvertent changes in speed.

**Policy Statement: At (insert name), drivers will not exceed the speed limit.**

2. **Minimize aggressive driving:** Aggressive driving, which is characterized by speeding, quick acceleration and hard stops, can increase fuel consumption by 25 per cent. Driving smoothly is safer and more fuel-efficient.

**Policy Statement: At (insert name), drivers will avoid aggressive driving, which is characterized by speeding, quick acceleration and hard stops.**

3. **Use air conditioning sparingly:** Air conditioning can increase a vehicle's fuel consumption by up to 20 per cent because of the extra load on the engine. When possible, use the vehicle's flow-through ventilation on the highway (i.e., the external air intake). In the city, open a window. Use air conditioning intermittently and sparingly.

**Policy Statement: At (insert name), drivers will minimize the use of air conditioning.**

4. **Lighten the load:** An extra 100 lbs. (48 kg) of weight can increase fuel costs by 2 per cent. Lighten the load by carrying only what is needed to get the job done.

**Policy Statement: At (insert name), drivers will ensure that vehicles are driven with only necessary cargo weight.**

5. **Measure tire pressure at least once per month:** Properly inflated tires last longer, make the vehicle safer to drive and save fuel. Inflate tires to the recommended pressure, which is usually indicated near or on the driver's door, in the glove compartment or in the owner's manual.



**Policy Statement: At (insert name), drivers will check tire pressure monthly. Drivers will adjust tire pressure accordingly, or inform vehicle maintenance staff that tire pressure needs to be adjusted, within (insert number of days) days of tire pressure check.**

6. **Plan and combine trips:** Planning car trips in advance to avoid rush hour or construction zones will save time on the road. Also, combining many errands into one outing will save time, fuel and money. Trips of less than five kilometres do not allow the engine to reach its peak operating temperature, which means fuel consumption and exhaust emissions will be significantly higher than when covering the same distance with a warm engine.

**Policy Statement: At (insert name), drivers will improve driving efficiency by planning trips during non-peak hours of (insert hours) and combining many errands into one trip.**

7. **Avoid unnecessary idling:** If the vehicle is stopped for more than 60 seconds, except while in traffic, turn off the engine. Idling costs money, wastes fuel, and increases emissions that may contribute to environmental or human health issues. Even in winter, your vehicle requires one to two minutes of warming time. By using a block heater, parking indoors, or scraping frost off windows before starting your vehicle, you can reduce idling time in cold weather. If Alberta's 2.3 million registered vehicle owners reduced their idling time by five minutes per day, the province's greenhouse gas emissions would be reduced by 224,000 tonnes per year, which is equivalent to heating over 28,000 Albertan homes.

**Policy Statement: At (insert name), engines will be turned off if vehicles are stopped for more than 60 seconds, except while in traffic. Vehicles will only be allowed to warm up for (insert time of between 30 seconds and two minutes).**

8. **Ensure vehicles are serviced regularly:** Follow the service recommendations and change the air filter, spark plugs, engine oil and other fluids to ensure optimal performance and fuel efficiency. A poorly maintained vehicle uses more fuel and produces more emissions.

**Policy Statement: At (insert name), all vehicles will be maintained according to the maintenance schedule. This will be overseen by (insert name or department).**