

## Title:

6 Earth-Friendly Auto Tips

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384

## Summary:

Last year marked a turning point in which Earth-friendly alternative-fuel and hybrid vehicles gained major attention and an increasing market share. On top of that, the AAA Great Battery Roundup collected more than 20,000 used vehicle batteries and disposed of them in an environmentally sound manner.

## Keywords:

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## Article Body:

Last year marked a turning point in which Earth-friendly alternative-fuel and hybrid vehicles gained major attention and an increasing market share. On top of that, the AAA Great Battery Roundup collected more than 20,000 used vehicle batteries and disposed of them in an environmentally sound manner.

But you don't need to have old batteries lying around or buy a different vehicle to protect the environment. According to AAA spokesman Michael Calkins, you can make a meaningful contribution by adopting two easy-to-implement strategies: regular vehicle maintenance and better driving habits.

The following tips can put you on the road to environmentally conscious car care.

- \* Keep your engine running at peak performance in order to conserve fuel. Perform regular vehicle maintenance at the intervals recommended by your vehicle's manufacturer. Seek timely service if the "check engine" warning light remains illuminated on the dash.

To find a trustworthy repair facility, ask friends for recommendations or search on [www.aaa.com](http://www.aaa.com) for AAA Approved Auto Repair facilities near you.

- \* Check the air pressure in your car's tires regularly. Underinflated tires require your engine to work harder and use more fuel to maintain a given speed.

- \* Have your vehicle's air conditioning serviced only by technicians who are

certified to properly handle and recycle automotive refrigerants. Older air conditioning systems contain ozone-depleting chemicals that could be released into the atmosphere.

\* Some older vehicles use switches that contain highly toxic mercury to activate hood, trunk and glove-box lights. Many organizations, including a number of AAA clubs across the country, now host mercury "switch out" programs in which these environmentally hazardous parts are removed for recycling and replaced with nontoxic mechanical switches.

\* Avoid "jack rabbit" starts, sudden acceleration and speeds above the posted limits; all of these habits guzzle gas.

\* Properly dispose of engine fluids and batteries. Call your local government waste management agency to find out how. Never dispose of fluids on the ground or in any manner that might allow them to make their way into groundwater, lakes or streams.

Proper vehicle maintenance and environmentally friendly driving habits conserve natural resources, reduce exhaust emissions and reward you with a vehicle that will last longer and be safer to drive. In other words, when you "go green," the Earth wins, your car wins -- and you are the biggest winner of all! - NU