

AND YOU

- Plan trips ahead. So you know approximately where you'll be at all times.
- Travel during weekdays when you're more likely to find open gas stations.
- Travel early in the month when gasoline allocations have just been doled out.
- Don't assume gasoline availability will be the same where you're headed as it was where you've been. Some states have already begun controlling when certain vehicles can buy gas (odd/even day, no R.V. days, etc.) and some stations won't sell to out-of-state buyers, period. There can even be vast differences from city to city within a state. Even if it looks downhill on the map, you can't coast from San Francisco to Los Angeles. Call the local Auto Club (AAA) or Service Station Dealers Association for the lowdown.
- At home, deal with the same station consistently. If there is a fuel shortage, they'll more likely sell to regular customers first.
- When all else fails, go to Canada. Don't defect, but consider a Canadian route or vacation this summer. Not only is gasoline available across the Detroit River, but it's cheaper too, especially considering the favorable exchange rate on the dollar.
- Don't Panic. Carefully balance the benefit of extra miles per gallon against the loss in selling your less economical car. If you love large cars, don't buy a tiny one you'll dislike.
- Last, don't fall for any magic plan or product claiming to save huge amounts of gasoline. If you believe the advertising and bolt all of those devices on your car, you'll probably expect it to give back five gallons for every mile you drive. Some are good, some terrible, most do virtually nothing, and almost all cost more than you could ever save. Before spending your money, know what you're getting.

If you've got a hot new tip or idea to save gasoline, let Car Biz know. We'll try it, and pass it along to our readers, with full credit to you. If it works.

