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Olds says

Catalytic converter helps gas mileage

Oldsmobile continues to make further gains in fuel economy for 1976 with the introduction of several engineering advancements, the continued use of the catalytic converter and high energy ignition system (HEI).

Among the fuel-saving engineering improvements are the following:

- Five-speed overdrive transmission: This new lightweight floor mounted manual transmission is optional on the Starfire, and with the 260 V-8 engine on the Omega, Cutlass Supreme, Cutlass Salon and Cutlass Supreme Brougham.

This transmission has a high-ratio first gear permitting axle ratio to be reduced while maintaining good performance. This, combined with a .80 overdrive fifth gear, provides for a significant improvement in highway fuel economy.

- 2.41-to-1 axle ratio: This optional 98 axle ratio helps to provide improved fuel economy for drivers who spend considerable time at constant highway speeds.

- 260 V-8 engine improved: Oldsmobile engineers have recalibrated the spark timing of this small V-8 to make further fuel economy gains for 1976. This includes the addition of a spark switching valve which better matches spark advance characteristics to engine speed and load.

- 7½-inch axle: This new lighter weight rear axle helps contribute to improved fuel economy. Standard on all Omegas, it is 26 pounds lighter than the 8½-inch axle formerly used.

- Toronado improvements: The carburetor, ignition and exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) systems have been recalibrated to further improve the drivability and fuel economy of the 1976 Toronado.

In addition, the General Motors developed catalytic converter, which was responsible for much of the improvement in fuel economy in 1975, will again be standard on all 1976 Oldsmobiles built for sale in the United States.

The underfloor converter is an emission control device added to the exhaust system to reduce the hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide in the exhaust gas stream.

It contains one-eighth inch diameter beads coated with a platinum-palladium catalyst which accelerates the oxidizing process and reduces nearly all of the unburned hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide to water vapor and carbon dioxide gas.

The catalytic converter system continues to include a stainless steel ex-

haust crossover pipe giving the system a 50,000-mile life. Unleaded gasoline is used to prevent lead contamination of the catalyst, which can reduce or destroy conversion efficiency.

A side benefit of unleaded fuel in combination with the continued use of the high energy ignition (HEI) system is the extended maintenance interval. The HEI, which will be standard on all Oldsmobiles for the second consecutive year, helps maintain good fuel economy by keeping the ignition system in tune.

Oldsmobiles for 1976 can go up to 22,500 miles between plug changes. Ignition points and condenser have been eliminated. This ignition system also provides up to 35,000 volts for improved starting and cold weather performance.

Other 1976 engineering developments include the following:

- A moisture minder in the refrigeration system simplifies diagnosis for faster service. Standard on all air conditioning systems except Starfire and Omega, this is a ceramic cylinder with a sight glass that shows blue if the system is okay or pink if moisture is in the system.

- A driver-controlled load-leveling system is optional on all intermediates and full-size models. This system has a control on the instrument panel allowing the driver to adjust the level of the car by raising the rear end. The system includes a vacuum-powered air pump with tubing linked to the special rear shock absorbers with integral air cylinders. The control can be set so the level of the car is normal when running with a load.

- An optional twilight sentinel automatically turns on the car's lights at dusk and off at dawn when the car is in operation on all 1976 intermediate and full-size Oldsmobiles. With the twilight sentinel, the driver also can set his lights to go off after leaving the car. The car's lights still can be operated by the regular light switch.

- A heavy-duty cast aluminum fan clutch has a finned front cover for increased capacity. To be used with trailer hauling packages on intermediate and full-size cars, this new fan clutch also uses more viscous silicone fluid for increased fan speed resulting in improved engine cooling.

- The 88 and 98 chassis components have been retuned for 1976 to provide a pleasing soft ride with good road isolation feel.

- All Oldsmobiles have new brake linings for improved braking.