

Our Mustangs And Our Fragile Earth

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As many of you already know, Earth Day was April 22 — the 20th anniversary of the original Earth Day in 1970. The day was set aside to celebrate this beautiful planet we live on, and to make people aware of what we can do to help preserve our natural environment. Many activities were planned worldwide to commemorate this event.

You're probably wondering what all of this has to do with our favorite little pony cars, right?

Don't worry, I'm not going to suggest we shouldn't drive them any more because they are detrimental to the environment. I have one too!

What I am going to say, however, is that we must drive and take care of our cars in an environmentally responsible manner. This applies to our "daily drivers" as well.

The way I see it, if we don't make changes to our driving and auto maintenance habits now, there may come a day when we won't be able to drive anything that runs on fossil fuel — must less our highly prized "babies." It would be a crying shame if one day our Mustangs, Shelys, Cougars, T-Birds, etc. were nothing more than expensive works of "stationary 3-D art" — memorials to a day we can never return to.

I also believe that we, as auto enthusiasts, have a responsibility to be even more environmentally aware than the average driver, because we are driving recreationally. And if we do not set a good example, we risk being called the "worst offenders." I do not want to be singled out by my children (or nieces and nephews, as the case may be) for not caring enough about the planet that they and their children must live on that I couldn't make a few changes to help save the environment.

Let's face it. If we don't start making changes now, no matter how small, drastic measures may have to be taken some day, such as outlawing all recreational driving of vehicles running on fossil fuel. I don't know about you, but I love both my planet and my Mustang and I'm willing to do whatever I have to do to ensure that I can enjoy both of them without making them mutually exclusive.

Here's a list of some things we can do pertaining to our daily driving and maintenance habits that can help make a difference. I know we can't do all of them, but try to do what you can. Every little bit helps!

1. **Use alternate forms of transportation when you can:** car pool, take the bus, walk or bicycle.

2. **Use unleaded gas** — make the proper changes to your car if necessary.

3. **Keep your car well tuned** and the tires properly inflated.

4. **Obey the speed limit** and avoid quick accelerations and decelerations. (Hm...tough one, eh guys?)

5. **Lobby for the investment of public monies into public transportation** rather than highway expansion.

6. **Avoid "drive through"** lines where

your car engine must idle for long periods.

7. **If your car has an air conditioner make sure it's not leaking** and that the CRFs (freon) are recycled anytime it is serviced or before the car or air conditioner unit is scrapped.

8. **Dispose of old/used tires, anti-freeze, motor oil, batteries, cleaners, paint, etc. reasonably.** Turn in your old battery when you get a new one and recycle motor oil, transmission fluid, brake fluid, tires and antifreeze.

9. **Plant a tree.** They consume some of the carbon dioxide that our cars emit!

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