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Awareness

Driving Smarter for Earth Day

The Red Bank Environmental Commission is unveiling a new eco-friendly driving challenge just in time for its Earth Day celebration.

By [Patch Staff](#) | [Email the author](#) | April 18, 2012

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Just in time for Earth Day, the Red Bank Environmental Commission is introducing a program designed to curb vehicle emissions called RED(uce) Bank. The program is being unveiled during the commission's Sunday, April 22 Earth Day celebration at the [Red Bank Middle School](#).

The environmental commission is hoping to encourage residents to make a few small changes in their everyday habits to help not only clean up the air, but save money, too. As part of RED(uce) BANK, the commission wants drivers to take the Drive Smarter Challenge, an initiative developed by the Alliance to Save Energy.

The Drive Smarter Challenge is essentially a handful of tips that can save money, improve the environment, and lead to a healthier you! So they say. Here are the tips as provided via release:

Tune up. Fixing a car that is noticeably out of tune or has failed an emissions test can improve its gas mileage by an average of 4 percent – saving up to 20 gallons of gasoline and about \$56. Fixing a faulty oxygen sensor can improve mileage by as much as 40 percent – saving up to 320 gallons of gasoline or up to \$1,218 per year.

Select the right oil. Using the manufacturer's recommended grade of motor oil can improve gas mileage by 1 to 2 percent, resulting in annual savings of up to \$37. Motor oil that says "Energy Conserving" on the API performance symbol contains friction-reducing additives. To save even more money, change your oil regularly to extend the life of your vehicle. And remember to recycle used oil which, with proper controls, can be safely reused as a fuel or re-refined back to a lube oil.

Inflate your tires. Keeping your tires properly inflated is simple and improves gas mileage by around 3 percent, saving as much as 14 gallons of gasoline, or up to \$56.

Turn your ignition off when waiting for trains to pass at railroad crossings, at drive through windows, when stalled in traffic for long periods, or while fueling your car. Vehicles that idle 10 minutes per day waste more than 29 gallons of fuel each year. At \$4/per gallon that's a savings of \$116.

Curb road rage. Speeding, jackrabbit starts and rapid braking can lower gas mileage by 33 percent at highway speeds. Drivers can save up to 240 gallons of gasoline - about \$913 - by driving sensibly on the highway.

Carpool. Using the average U.S. work commute of 12.1 miles, commuters could save about \$159 a year by carpooling twice a week with two other people in a

vehicle that gets 20.1 miles per gallon – assuming three passengers share the cost of gas. Looking for a carpool partners? Please check out Red Bank's free carpool matching service at www.carpoolworld.com/redbank.html

Drive less. By cutting your vehicle miles traveled by just 5 percent by combining trips, walking, biking, or taking public transportation, you can save up to \$91 per year on gasoline costs. Walking and biking are good for your health too!

According to the environmental commission these tips are especially helpful considering Red Bank's current state of environmental affairs. Red Bank's air pollution index for carbon monoxide is 74 percent worse than nationwide, and the local nitrogen dioxide index is 49 percent higher.

The Earth Day celebration is being held Sunday, from 1 to 4 p.m. at Red Bank Middle School. The event will feature games, information, arts and crafts, door prizes, community groups, and a bicycle workshop that will help teach you how to maintain and make small repairs to your eco-friendly ride.

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