

Transport

Cars and vans are among the most obvious culprits of CO₂ emissions – but you still need to make your deliveries. Here are some simple ways you can square that circle, pursuing environmentally-conscious policies but keeping your business on the road.

Training drivers in fuel-efficient driving techniques

After a survey involving 55 of its employees, the AA found it could make savings of 10% on its weekly fuel bill by changing gear early without straining the engine and ‘rolling’ (not starting up from a stand-still, e.g. when approaching lights). Make sure your drivers know how to drive responsibly – find out more from the AA:

www.theaa.com/motoring-advice/

Considering hybrid vehicles or other fuel technologies

When buying cars or vans, think long-term savings rather than short-term costs. Petrol cars, for example, emit 10% more CO₂ than diesels. Diesels produce more toxic emissions while LPGs get through more fuel. And then there are ‘hybrid’ cars: some perform well, but what about that battery life? To get you started, try the Environmental Transport Association’s car buyer’s guide:

www.eta.co.uk/car_buyers_guide

Fitting vehicles with speed governors

Driving at 70mph uses up to 9% more fuel than at 60mph and up to 15% more than at 50mph [Source: Department for Transport]. Fitting a ‘governor’, a device to regulate speed, may make sense, but if you successfully embed your message suggesting a maximum speed may be more welcome.

Planning deliveries to minimise fuel use

Make sure your clients get the message: if their suppliers are local their carbon footprint is lighter. Enforce this with a responsible delivery policy: think about when you travel (e.g. avoiding rush hour) and cluster your deliveries, taking the shortest, most energy-efficient routes. The ETA’s Green Route Finder is a good starting point: www.eta.co.uk/map

Considering whole, life fuel usage when buying vehicles

The true cost of vehicles is usually buried beneath the bonnet – so make sure you ask about fuel efficiency and reliability up front then study the data from the manufacturers report. The ETA’s car cost calculator shows what a difference an engine can make:

www.eta.co.uk/car_cost_calculator

Monitoring vehicle fuel efficiency (mpg, l/kg)

Know the fuel consumption of the vehicles you buy and insist drivers maintain a log book to track mileage and fuel costs. Note miles per gallon alongside weight of loads. Rises or falls in fuel price should also be noted alongside journey costs.

Monitoring transport fuel use for last 12 months

Fuel efficiency data should be tracked across time to show you whether your driving and delivery policies are working. How much are you saving? How much of your spend is due to rising fuel costs and how much to poor vehicles or drivers? Draw on feedback from drivers and use a data collection process to embed the greener driving culture.

Regularly maintained the transport fleet

Much of a fleet’s fuel efficiency comes before you even turn a key: through regular servicing, the right engine oil and checking tyre pressure. Softer tyres use more fuel.

Key words

Fuel-efficient – essentially the miles or kilometres per gallon of fuel used by the vehicle.

Hybrid – a vehicle that uses more than one kind of energy source. In cars, typically, an internal combustion engine that charges an electric motor.

l/kg – the amount of CO₂ (in litres) emitted per kilogram of fuel used by a particular vehicle.

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