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**CarMD Shares Tips to Help Car Owners Improve Fuel Economy;  
Alerts Drivers to Top “Check Engine” Failures that Reduce MPG**

**IRVINE, Calif.** – (March 15, 2012) – CarMD.com Corporation, a leading provider of automotive information and products, today announced top maintenance tips and “check engine” problems that have the biggest impact on fuel economy. As analysts warn that gas prices are on track to reach an all-time high this year, CarMD’s team of Automotive Service Excellence-certified technicians has tapped the most comprehensive database on car maintenance and repair trends to prepare the following tips to help drivers maximize their vehicle’s fuel economy.

“There are many small measures we can all take to reduce the impact of rising gas prices, starting with paying attention to our car’s warning signs such as the ‘check engine’ light,” said Art Jacobsen, vice president, CarMD.com Corporation. “By sharing these tips and this information, our goal is to remind drivers that there are many small, cost-effective ways to save money even as gas prices reach an all-time high.”

- 1. Heed Warning Signs** – CarMD research shows that at least 10 percent of motorists have a “check engine” light on right now, and half have ignored the light for over three months. Dashboard warning lights alert drivers to problems that affect their car’s emissions output, reduce fuel economy, and ultimately cause mechanical damage. While it may seem like your vehicle is driving just fine, it’s often guzzling extra gasoline. For example, the no. 1 most common cause for “check engine” repairs is a faulty oxygen sensor. The O2 sensor measures the amount of unburned oxygen in the exhaust and tells a car’s computer when there is either too much, or not enough fuel compared with oxygen for ideal operation. It costs less than \$250 to fix, but can lead to as much as a 40 percent reduction in gas mileage if ignored – that’s more than \$900 extra per year in fuel costs.
- 2. An ounce of prevention** – Many drivers admit to stretching their dollars by extending time between schedule maintenance appointments. In this case a penny saved may result in many hundreds of dollars spent in extra fuel costs and repairs. Air filters are a good example of how an ounce of prevention can save you money. You can inspect the filter yourself, shake out the dirt or vacuum it and re-use it, or opt to spend the \$25 or so for a new one. Ignore a dirty air filter for too long and it can result in the need to replace a mass air flow sensor (MAF). The no. 5 most common car repair, according to the CarMD® Vehicle Health Index™, a MAF can cause a 10 to 20% reduction in fuel economy, costing an extra \$250 to \$450 at the pump each year, and eventually resulting in the need to replace a much more expensive catalytic converter.

**(MORE)**

## CarMD – Tips to Save at the Pump

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3. **Lose weight** – Are you driving around with extra “junk in your trunk” or truck bed? By removing an extra 100 pounds of clutter from your vehicle, you can improve your gas mileage by several percentage points. A bucket of baseballs weighs about 25 lbs, snow chains weigh at least 10 lbs, and a set of golf clubs can weigh anywhere from 20 to 50 lbs.
4. **Make Friends** – Whether your commute is 15 miles or 50 miles, carpooling saves on vehicle wear and tear, time and money. It’s also a great way to meet co-workers, neighbors and friends. At today’s gas prices, most drivers are spending over \$40 per week filling their tank. Split these costs and you can put an extra \$1,000 in your wallet each year, not including the money you’ll save on car maintenance and tires.
5. **Avoid Idling** – Attention carpool moms, dads and older siblings. Idling for over 10 seconds uses more gas and causes more pollution than restarting your engine. While it’s not recommended to turn off your vehicle at a stoplight or while moving through a pickup line at the local fast food drive-through or school, it is a good idea to pull into an approved parking spot and turn off the engine whenever you expect your wait to be more than a couple minutes.
6. **Keep Your Tires Maintained** – Ensuring proper tire maintenance, tread and inflation can increase gas mileage by about 10 percent. Changes in season or major temperature swings are a good time to double check your tire pressure, even if you have a tire pressure monitoring system on your vehicle. It’s best to set them first thing in the morning to the high end of the manufacturer’s specifications (usually found on the inside of the driver’s door).
7. **Be Green** – If budget and lifestyle allow, it’s certainly worth considering a hybrid or electric car as fuel prices rise. But if that’s not for you, you can still drive green by planning your trips efficiently, limiting peak-hour driving and making sure to get your annual or bi-annual emissions test. There are also products, such as the CarMD® Vehicle Health System™ that let you quickly check your car for hidden problems that may result in reduced fuel economy or breakdowns.

### About CarMD.com Corporation

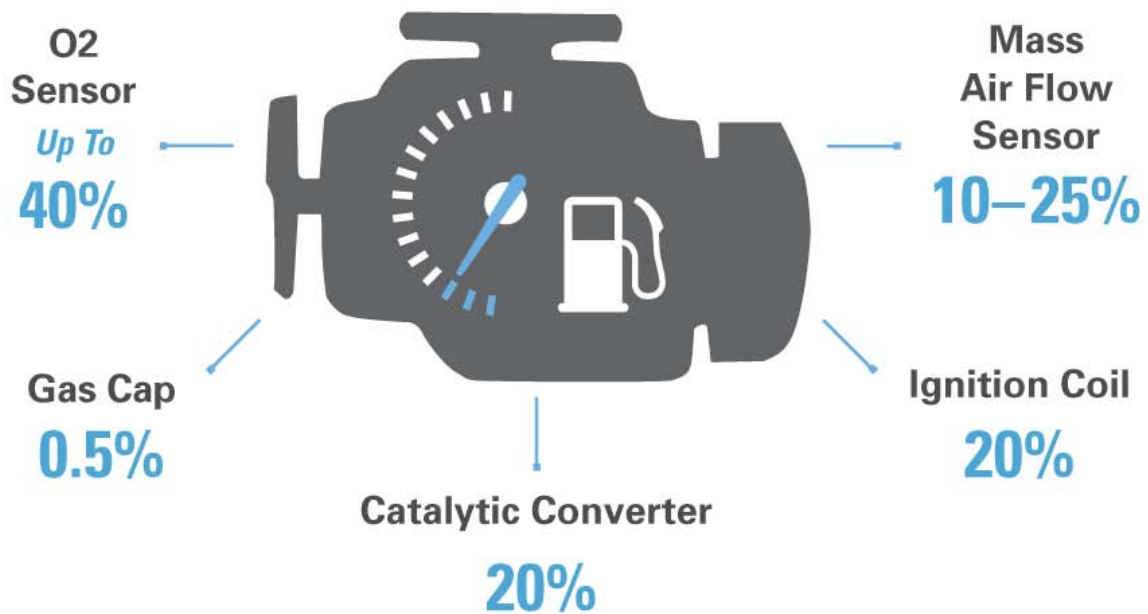
The mission of Irvine, Calif.-based CarMD.com Corporation is to empower consumers and the vehicle market by providing the tools and information needed to make better-educated decisions about vehicle health and maintenance. An ISO 9001:2008-certified company, CarMD’s premiere product is the CarMD® Vehicle Health System™. The company has also built the largest, most up-to-date database of diagnostic trouble codes, expert fixes and repair costs. For information, including statistics, articles, blog and tips to keep your vehicle healthy and improve fuel economy, visit [www.CarMD.com](http://www.CarMD.com).

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(Media Note: CarMD executives are available for interviews to address fuel saving tips and other automotive maintenance, safety and repair topics. Please contact Kristin Brocoff via email: [kristinB@CarMD.com](mailto:kristinB@CarMD.com))

# Top 5 “Check Engine” Light Failures

and how they reduce  
**FUEL ECONOMY** when ignored



\*based on 163,532 “check engine” repairs made from Jan. 1, 2011 to Dec. 31, 2011. Source: April 2012 CarMD® Vehicle Health Index™.

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