



# U.S. PIRG

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## **A New Energy Future: Cutting Our Dependence on Oil**

America has the technological know-how to dramatically reduce our dependence on oil and other fossil fuels. By building cars that go farther on a gallon of gas, giving Americans better transportation choices, and using clean, renewable fuels, we can slash our use of oil, improve our environment, safeguard our energy security and, in many cases, save money.

The United States should commit to a goal of reducing our oil use by one-third of today's consumption by 2025 – saving twice as much oil as we currently import from the Middle East.

### **America has the tools to dramatically reduce our consumption of oil.**

***More Efficient Cars and Trucks:*** Automakers have the technology to build cars that go much farther on a gallon of gas. Advanced transmissions, engines and electrical systems and improved aerodynamics can cut the gasoline consumption of all vehicles, from subcompacts to SUVs. And in an era of higher oil prices, those improvements often save consumers money.

Increasing fuel economy standards to 40 miles per gallon over a decade, and to 45 miles per gallon by 2023, would cut our consumption of oil by 2.4 million barrels a day by 2025. Heavy-duty diesel trucks can also be made to get 50 percent better fuel economy using technology that exists today – potentially saving 1.1 million barrels of oil per day by 2025.

***Plant-based Fuels:*** Plant-based fuels like ethanol and biodiesel can substitute for much of the oil we currently use in cars and trucks. By producing plant-based fuels cleanly and efficiently, we can save 1.5 million barrels of oil per day or more by 2025.

***Better Transportation Choices:*** Americans drive more miles in our cars every year, making us more and more dependent on oil. But there are alternatives. By expanding transit service, increasing the use of telecommuting, and designing our communities to allow more people to walk, bike and use transit to get where they need to go, we can provide Americans with more options to avoid high gas prices and curb our consumption of oil. If every American simply drives no more than he or she does today, we could cut our consumption of oil by 3.6 million barrels versus projected levels by 2025.

***Saving Oil in Other Ways:*** America also uses oil to heat our homes, to power factories, and to create products like chemicals and plastics. By cutting our use of energy in our homes, businesses and industry by 10 percent below today's levels by 2025, we can save an additional 1.9 million barrels of oil per day.

**Using these and other tools, we can cut America's oil consumption by more than 7 million barrels a day – about one-third of America's current oil use.**

**America has many options to reduce our use of oil.**

Among the steps the nation can take are the following:

- Increase fuel economy standards for cars, light trucks and SUVs to 40 miles per gallon and set strong fuel economy standards for heavy-duty trucks.
- Set goals for the use of plant-based fuels like ethanol and biodiesel and enact policies that ensure that those fuels are developed cleanly and sustainably.
- Invest in expanded and improved public transit service, promote “smart growth” practices that reduce the need for driving, and encourage other transportation choices like telecommuting, carpooling, biking and walking.
- Adopt strong energy efficiency standards and codes for buildings and appliances.
- Invest in research and development of new technologies that can further reduce our use of oil.

**For more information, contact:**

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