

## Getting to Know Your Subie

When we become familiar with our vehicle, we're not only more likely to pick up early warning signs, we begin to appreciate the beauty and uniqueness of our autos and tune in to their beat.

### Gas Consumption:

Monitoring gas consumption is a great way to get close to your car, from knowing how far you can really go on one tank, to noticing and acting on changes in how much fuel your subie is eating to go a certain distance.

### Find your MPG:

*First off*, go to the gas pump, fill up, then reset your trip ODO to zero. *Next*, every time you fill up (this should be done before your low-fuel light comes on, it's better for your fuel pump!), divide the number of miles you've gone by the gallons of gasoline pumped (then reset your ODO for next time). Say, 149 miles divided by 6.2 gallons of gas. It's 24. This number is your MPG.

Watch this number from fill up to fill up. With inconsistent driving, driving conditions, different brands of fuel, and octane ratings (85, 87..), this number can vary from tank to tank by around 5 mpg. With normal weather, and consistent driving style, you shouldn't see more than a 1-3 mpg variance. Noticing a drastic change (say, from 24 to 18) for more than one tank, means something could be wrong.

### Problems that could distort your MPG numbers:

- *-tire pressure*: Low tire pressure is not only dangerous by way of tire blowout possibility, it can affect your mpg.
- *-alignment*: Is he/she pulling to one side or another; meaning are you having to hold a constant one-way (either left or right) pressure to the steering wheel when you drive? This can scrub rubber off tires, prematurely wearing them. Friction is also a gas hog.
- *-various other problems*: From something minor like a loose or worn (yes they wear) gas cap, to more serious things like low transmission fluid or frozen brake calipers. Long periods without service or inspection are sometimes costly and/or potentially dangerous.