Fuel economy now at all-time high

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Fuel economy of new vehicles sold in the United States reached a record-high 24.5 mpg last month, say researchers at the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute.

Average fuel economy (window-sticker values) of cars, light trucks, minivans and SUVs purchased in January is up 1 mpg from a year ago, 2 mpg from two years ago and 4 mpg from five years ago. The record-tying mark is a 22 percent increase from October 2007, the first month of monitoring by UMTRI researchers Michael Sivak and Brandon Schoettle.

"The recent improvement reflects the improved fuel economy of the 2013 model year vehicles," Sivak said.

In addition to average fuel economy, Sivak and Schoettle issued their monthly update of their national Eco-Driving Index, which estimates the average monthly emissions generated by an individual U.S. driver. The EDI takes into account both vehicle fuel economy and distance driven—the latter relying on data that are published with a two-month lag.

During November, the EDI ticked upward to 0.82 from 0.81 in October and a record-setting 0.79 in September (the lower the value, the better). The index currently shows that emissions of greenhouse gases per driver of newly purchased vehicles are down 18 percent, overall, since October 2007.

More information: Fuel economy calculations, along with a graph and table of current and recent mpg: www.umich.edu/~umtriswt/EDI_sa … es-weighted-mpg.html

Eco-Driving Index calculations, along with a graph and table of current and recent values: www.umich.edu/~umtriswt/EDI_values.html

Provided by University of Michigan