

Wheels: *John H. writes by e-mail: My wife drives a 2000 LeSabre we bought with 25,000 miles on it. When I checked the mileage, I was pleased to find we were getting almost 30 miles a gallon. The car now has 125,000 miles on it and still starts and runs great. The gas gauge is not working right and I told her to fill the tank and zero the trip odometer, then fill up again when the mileage indicated she was down to half a tank. I was surprised to find we were only getting about 15 miles to a gallon. Do you have any idea why the mileage dropped so much when the car runs so good?*

Halderman: Because there is such a drastic change in the fuel economy, I suggest that you double check how it is being calculated. Are you using the trip odometer? If so then using the number of gallons divided into the number of miles driven should result in accurate numbers. However, this depends on several factors which could affect the figures including:

1. Was the fuel stopped when the pump first shut off or was more fuel added? I suggest being as consistent as possible to use the same pump (if possible) and stop when the pump shuts off or at least the second time to avoid overfilling the tank.
2. Did the drive result in over 100 or more miles? Driving more miles will result in more accurate calculations.
3. Perform the calculation several times and average the reading to arrive at the best reading.

If the fuel economy is still very low, then I suggest that you take the car to a professional service technician for an evaluation.

The fuel mileage that a vehicle gets is dependent on many factors. When a vehicle experiences a decrease in mileage, the following items can be the most common causes and should be checked for proper operation and condition:

- Tire inflation pressures (If lower than the door placard, this could affect the fuel economy)
- Engine running condition. The engine can seemingly run well but be running rich due to a fault in the evaporative emission control system.

