

Safer Driving

The newsletter of the Stratford upon Avon and South Warwickshire Group of Advanced Motorists

Five Reasons Why Diesel is Dead

Diesel is dead. Despite being touted for many years by the UK Government as the solution to the pollution crisis, growing concerns have placed pressure on owners not to use them and on consumers not to buy them. Oslo, for example, recently banished diesel cars from its roads for two days in a bid to improve the air quality in the city. Nearer to home, Westminster council has recently announced plans to charge diesel car drivers 50 percent more to park in Marylebone to make “people think twice about using highly polluting cars”. But why the hate? Here are the five main reasons why the tide is turning against diesel.

Diesel emissions cause lung cancer

Diesel engine emissions are dangerous because they emit particulate matter in the form of tiny pieces of soot. These particles, which can be less



than 10 microns in diameter, lodge themselves in the tissue of the lungs where they “contribute to the risk of developing cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, as well as of lung cancer” according to the World Health Organisation. How big is the problem? Estimates vary but at least 7,000, and possibly as many as 29,000, people die prematurely every year in the UK as a result – and it’s not as if there is even a safe level: the WHO states unequivocally that “small particulate pollution has health impacts even at very low concentrations – indeed no threshold has been identified below which no damage to health is observed.”

Diesel emissions kill people

Nor is the problem with diesel exhaust fumes confined to particulates. Nitrogen dioxide, “a toxic gas which causes significant inflammation of the airways” according to the World Health Organisation, is almost uniquely a diesel problem and it’s a killer. Recent studies show that levels of Nitrogen dioxide have been at “illegal levels” in nine out of ten of the UK’s air quality zones since 2010, something that has been laid firmly at the feet of the diesel car driver. And the problem is getting worse; the UK had used up its entire annual air pollution allowance by 6 January 2017. And yes, the count restarted on 1 January...

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A new look for the newsletter and website

In line with the new look IAM Roadsmart design we have changed the look of the website and the newsletter. How do you like the look? If you have any opinions about the design or anything else relating to road safety/motoring then please email editor@stratfordiam.org.uk

Group News

Welcome to the New Group Secretary

The Stratford Group is very pleased to welcome our new Group Secretary Jo Fisher. It is hoped to conduct an interview with Jo to see how she plans to develop the Group in this new era.

And in this vein we would like to wish the outgoing Group Secretary Mike Page well and an immense gratitude for the hard work that Mike has done for the Group in two stints as Group Secretary.

Without the dedication of the people who put themselves forward to complete such a central role for the Group we would not be able to offer courses for Associates or other talks to interested groups.

If you are interested in helping in the running of the Group then please consider helping with the following roles:

1. **Committee member.** This involves attending monthly meetings to discuss the running of the group. Occasionally, and not compulsorily, you will be asked to attend social events, generally to help in the running of the event.
2. **Media Officer.** We are currently short of this role and we need someone who can promote the group with conventional printed media as well as the new Social Media.
3. **Newsletter Editor.** The present incumbent isn't doing the best job so if you can do better then please let us know!
4. **Observer.** We currently have a great team of Observers but we are always looking for more. If you would like to put something back into the Group by helping prepare Associates for their Advanced Driving test then let us know.

If you are interested in any of the above 'jobs' then please contact secretary@stratfordiam.org.uk

DON'T TEXT AND DRIVE

In fact don't be distracted by anything when driving. Even eating food can be distracting, especially when it requires more than one hand! The new legislation would add 6 points to your hopefully clean licence and empty your wallet/purse of £200. But this is the minimum that could be applied. You could be disqualified from driving and be given a maximum fine of £1000. Professional drivers could be fined up to £2,500. And if it results in a death or serious injury and prison sentence could be handed down.

IAM News



Of course the biggest news for the IAM is the change of name and image. The group of organisations under the IAM's banner is now under one name - IAM Roadsmart. This is the new logo and you will have noticed that this publication has been changed to reflect the new colour scheme.

Our Stratford Group logo will remain the same, and if you have a red roundel on your car advertising that you are an advanced driver you can continue using this - there is no plan to scrap the red, green or blue badges.

However, if you attend one of our Sunday morning sessions you will notice that the personnel are slowly but surely adopting the new branding, with new shirt, flags and pull-up banners.

The content of the now renamed Advanced Driving Course has also changed, slightly. We are still expected to be Safe, Smooth, Systematic and Progressive, but with less emphasis on following the police driving manual Roadcraft for associates. Those aspiring to be observers, both local and national, will be expected to work to the higher standard.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU GET FLASHED

No not by the dirty mac brigade but a well intentioned act of another motorist. Always ensure that it is safe to proceed, especially when emerging from a junction onto a main road. Even when leaving a major road for a side road ensure that a cyclist isn't moving up the inside of the stationary traffic into your path. Also look out for pedestrians who will take advantage of a queue of traffic and cross between cars. As always, take responsibility for your driving.

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We've fallen out of love with diesel

While Volkswagen might not be the only cheater, the German company will probably be seen as the one that ended our love affair with diesel. Headlines that scream “Emissions scandal: 95pc of diesel cars break official limits when driven on the road” in mainstream media mean that even non-petrolheads now understand the intricacies of the ‘VW Scandal’, turning the diesel car driver into a social pariah. And when the middle-classes, the very demographic that is responsible for buying more new cars than any other, stop buying diesel for fear of being seen as part of the problem rather than the solution, manufacturers will do what they always do and follow the money.

Political interference

The Government has encouraged us to buy diesel for decades. In 1990, fewer than one in 10 cars sold in the UK were diesel, something the Government was keen to increase in order to reduce the level of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere. Gordon Brown, the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, said “diesel cars should attract less vehicle tax than their petrol equivalents because of their better CO₂ performance”. The result was immediate and long lasting; by the end of 2016 almost half of all cars sold in Britain were diesels.

But the tide is turning, and diesel sales slumped by 4.3 percent in January 2017

against the same period in 2016, in part because the Government now taxes diesel more heavily than petrol. The Government reinforces its disapproval by stating that “improving air quality is a priority”, setting up Clean Air Zones in five English cities in which heavily polluting vans, lorries and buses will have to pay to enter. Sadiq Khan is waging his own personal vendetta in London. Not content with urging the Government to finance a diesel car scrappage scheme, he plans to extend the London Congestion Charge while increasing the cost of driving heavily polluting diesel cars within it.

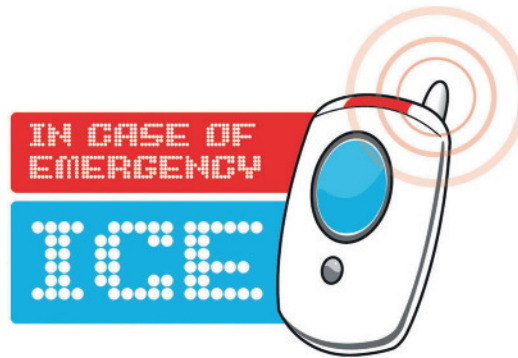


It's just not worth it any more

The final nail in the coffin is that it simply isn't worth buying a diesel car anymore. Rising tax rates on diesel fuel have eroded the financial incentives to run one, and the increases in the fuel efficiency of petrol engines mean that the incentive to pay the upfront premium a diesel car commands have diminished. Most car manufacturers suggest that 10,000 miles a year is a rough-and-ready guide as to whether it is worth buying a diesel car, making it currently financially viable only for the high-mileage motorist. With continued political interference and the rapid improvement in the fuel-efficiency of petrol engines, that mileage will further rise pushing the advantages beyond the majority of us. So, while the future might be bright, it isn't going to be driven by diesel.

SAFER OVERTAKING?

As we all know overtaking is one of the most dangerous manoeuvres we take part in when driving. The only way to remove that risk is to not do it! This isn't practical. Take it in three stages - Following, Overtaking, Returning. When you are following look for a gap, but don't be hasty. When you are passing (overtaking) check all around you including the vehicle you are overtaking. Don't be caught by surprises. Finally ensure that there is a gap in front of the vehicle for you to return to. Suddenly finding that there is a cyclist in front is not good. Observation is the key!



In 2005 a Cambridge-based paramedic launched a national campaign with Vodafone to encourage people to store emergency contact details in their mobile phones.

Bob Brotchie, a clinical team leader for the East Anglian Ambulance NHS Trust, hatched the plan after struggling to get contact details from shocked or injured patients.

By entering the acronym ICE - for In Case of Emergency - into the mobile's phone book, users can log the name and number of someone who should be contacted in an emergency. If you have more than one contact name you can use ICE1, ICE2, ICE3, etc.

The idea follows research carried out by Vodafone that shows more than 75 per cent of people carry no details of who they would like telephoned following a serious accident.

Bob, a paramedic, said: "I was reflecting on some of the calls I've attended at the roadside where I had to look through the mobile phone contacts struggling for information on a shocked or injured person. It's difficult to know who to call. Someone might have "mum" in their phone book but that doesn't mean they'd want them contacted in an emergency. Almost everyone carries a mobile phone now, and with ICE we'd know immediately who to contact and what number to ring. The person may even know of their medical history.

"By adopting the ICE advice, your mobile will now also help the rescue services quickly contact a friend or relative - which could be vital in a life or death situation."

The campaign is also asking people to think carefully about who will be their ICE partner - with helpful advice on who to choose - particularly if that person has to give consent for emergency medical treatment.

Bob hopes that all emergency services will promote ICE in their area as part of a national

awareness campaign to highlight the importance of carrying next of kin details at all times.

Phone security (Source Wikipedia) For security purposes, many mobile phone owners now lock their mobiles, requiring a passcode to be entered in order to access the device. This hinders the ability of first responders to access the ICE phone list entry. In response to this problem, many device manufacturers have provided a mechanism to specify some text to be displayed while the mobile is in the locked state. The owner of the phone can specify their "In Case of Emergency" contact and also a "Lost and Found" contact. For example, BlackBerry mobiles permit the "Owner" information to be set in the Settings / Options / Owner menu item.

Alternatively, some handsets provide access to a list of ICE contacts directly from the "locked" screen.

Upcoming events:

Date	Event	Details
June 10th	Aston Martin visit	A visit to the Prodrive headquarters at Banbury
August 19th	Visit to Richard III museum	
October	Cotswolds distillery	
November	Skittles	

PLEASE BOOK IN FOR ANY OF THE ABOVE EVENTS.

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