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The green way to save on fuel

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By Alastair Sloane

The answer to spiralling fuel prices and increasingly strict emission standards is closer to New Zealand motorists than they might think.

"You could say it is under their nose," says the man behind the Fuelstar fuel catalyst, Ian Cornelius.

Fuelstar fuel catalysts have been helping car, bus, truck, van and motorcycle owners reduce their fuel bills and harmful emissions since 1992.

But when fuel prices are low and issues like air quality are not in the news, says Cornelius, few people give the issues of economy and exhaust emissions a second thought.

Cornelius makes the Fuelstar fuel catalysts in New Zealand for distributors around the world.

The catalysts found a ready market here when leaded fuel was phased out but since then the growth area has been in diesel, he says.

A report by a US testing authority, California Environmental Engineering, found that the fuel catalyst on a diesel truck engine produced a reduction in both gaseous tailpipe emissions and particulate, and a big improvement in fuel economy.

CEE project manager Joseph Jones said the test revealed a reduction in fuel consumption by 27 per cent, a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 30 per cent and a reduction in particulate matter by 24 per cent.

"The figures are certainly significant and if anything, as the report states, they are conservative," said Cornelius.

"Where they are going to really help us is in the tender process, when we are pitching our product at multi-nationals, public authorities and OEM [engine] manufacturers."

This tallies with the findings both of previous tests and anecdotal feedback - (see link below) - from the thousands of satisfied Fuelstar users round the world, he says.

The Fuelstar catalyst is a stainless steel canister containing metal pellets, the main ingredient of which is tin.

Once plumbed into a vehicle's main fuel line the fuel passes through the canister in the same way it does a simple fuel filter.

The difference is that as it passes through the canister, says Cornelius, minuscule particles of metallic tin are released into the fuel supply and carried through to the engine's combustion chambers, where they act as a catalyst in the combustion process.

The tin changes the combustion characteristics of the fuel, giving a more complete and more prolonged fuel burn, resulting in improved engine efficiency and performance.

Cornelius says the Fuelstar product lasts for 500,000km or 12,000 engine hours for an off-road engine.