

AUTO

Warning on LPG valves

LPG motorists have been warned again about a potentially faulty gas valve they should have replaced.

LPG tanks fitted with a Sidek PRX pressure relief valve need to have their cars inspected and the valve changed, according to Consumer Affairs Victoria.

The valves have been associated with tank ruptures under certain conditions.

Consumer Affairs Minister Tony Robinson said while the risk was slight, an LPG tank could rupture with some force, potentially causing injuries and property damage.

He said the department was embarking on a letter campaign to all LPG car owners.

He said owners should have their vehicles inspected at a registered LPG installer or fitting station.

The latest step follows an initial warning about the valve in March.

VicRoads, Worksafe, the Automotive Alternative Fuels Registration Board and LPG Australia have all recommended motorists have their LPG tanks checked.

The warning comes as a bad batch of LPG shut down service stations and damaged dozens of Bendigo cars last week.

Twenty-four Coles Express and between 25 and 30 BP service stations across Victoria temporarily stopped their gas supply as a result of its compromised quality.

Caltex service stations, which have some of their LPG supplied by Shell, were also affected.

The Shell Company of Australia has taken responsibility for the bad gas and says it will compensate customers.

Getz still leads cheap race

By IAN CRAWFORD

HYUNDAI'S capable little Getz continues to be the cheapest-to-run car on the Australian market, according to the latest RACV vehicle operating costs survey.

The study found based on data collected in April and May this year, the three-door 1.4-litre Getz S cost \$122.83 a week to run — \$6.29 a week more than it did last year.

In conducting the survey, the RACV surveyed 60 vehicles — most because they were the best-sellers in their categories and others were chosen for reference or interest.

Starting with the initial purchase price and the cost of a loan, all the costs for owning and operating a vehicle were included and using Australian averages, a distance of 15,000km was adopted and a turn-over period of five years.

The survey took into account depreciation, loan interest, registration, licensing and insurance



Hyundai Getz

and the cost of fuel, tyres, servicing and the usual repairs.

The fuel cost was calculated on a six-month average of petrol station prices across Melbourne and it set diesel at 143.1 cents and unleaded petrol at 135.9.

While at \$122.83 a week the Hyundai Getz was the cheapest-to-run car, the dubious honour of the most expensive went to Toyota's LandCruiser 4.7-litre diesel that tipped the financial scales at a whopping \$401.53 a week.

In fact the figures show that it



Toyota Prius

would be cheaper to run a Toyota Corolla AND a Toyota HiLux 4 x 4 than one LandCruiser — even when the 'Cruiser covers 75,000km and the other two travel a combined 150,000km.

In the small-car segment, Hyundai again triumphed with its great 130i SX turbo-diesel coming in at \$151.55, the medium-car winner was Holden's Korean-built Epica CDX at \$196.27 and in the large-car category, Toyota's Aurion AT-X prevailed with \$226.20.

Honda's CRV was the pick of the compact SUVs at \$214.08, the medium SUV and seven-seat segment was won by the Kia Carnival EX people mover (\$229.90) and the large SUV category was taken out by the Nissan Patrol DX at \$309.36.

Among the commercial vehicles, the Falcon LPG-powered ute did best at \$214.67 and Ford's Ranger XL two-door ute was the pick of the 4 x 4 vehicles at \$219.44.

Overall, the RACV found owning a diesel-powered vehicle was 4.7 per cent more costly than its petrol equivalent.

In the fashionable hybrid arena, the survey found that the Honda Civic hybrid actually costs \$23 a week more to run than its petrol-powered Civic VTi sibling.

And the story for the Toyota Prius was no better.

It costs nearly \$50 a week more to run than a Corolla and about \$5 more than a Camry.

■ For more information about the survey, visit racv.com.au

Crush hoon cars, Baillieu says

THE cars of hoon drivers should be crushed and not just confiscated, the Victorian Opposition says.

Opposition Leader Ted Baillieu says the State Government's policy of impounding cars for 48 hours is seen more as a badge of honour than a deterrent for reckless and deliberately speeding drivers.

More than 5000 drivers have had their vehicles impounded since state anti-hoon legislation was introduced in Victoria two years ago.

Mr Baillieu said the number of vehicles impounded had increased from 120 a month when the legislation was introduced to almost 280 a month.

"What's happening in this state

is that the application of the legislation has not been in such a way as to produce results for first offenders.

"Hoon driving is becoming a popular sport, and having your car confiscated for 48 hours is now seen as a badge of honour.

"It's no good just taking a car off somebody on Friday night and giving it back to them on Monday morning.

"Premier John Brumby and his ministers should now be contemplating going further.

For example, Western Australia and NSW have flagged laws to crush cars. WA and South Australia can clamp cars for a first offence

and SA police can apply to extend clamping to 90 days."

But Bendigo West MLA and Police Minister Bob Cameron said the laws sent a clear message to hoon drivers.

"After two years it can be said that these laws have been a great success.

"The small number of re-offences shows the message does get through.

"When we brought these in, the Liberals said the first offence should be a warning.

"I rejected that then and I reject it now.

"If we had adopted their soft stance we would have had 5000

warnings sent out, not 5000 cars confiscated."

Mr Cameron said fewer than 4 per cent of hoons reoffended once their vehicles were impounded.

Bendigo remains the worst area for hoon behaviour, and men aged 18 to 25 years comprise 66.1 per cent of Victorians hoon offenders.

Mr Cameron said a Crime Stoppers Hoon Hotline launched in April this year had greatly assisted police.

More than 3000 calls relating to hoon driving and other traffic matters had been received. — AAP

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'02 Ford Courier Turbo Diesel Tray.....	\$14,990	'99 Ford Courier Tray.....	\$14,990	'96 El GLI 8 Seat Falcon Wagon.....	\$7990
4x4, Air conditioned, power steering, tow bar, steel deck tray, long reg. RGE-702		4x4, Turbo diesel, air conditioning, power steering, tow bar, aluminium tray. PPO-220		Cruise control, air bag, auto, power steering, air conditioning. WVD-1590	
'01 Mazda Bravo Dual Cab.....	\$22,990	'99 Commodore JT Acclaim.....	\$10,990	'95 VS Commodore Sedan.....	\$7990
Turbo diesel, 4x4, canopy, snorkel, tow bar, F.W. hubs, bull bar, low kms. WLM-136		ABS, dual air bags, traction control, cruise control. WLO-140		ABS brakes, air bag, cruise control, alloy wheels, air conditioning, power steering. NMB-529	
'01 VX Commodore Sedan.....	\$10,990	'99 Rodeo LX Dual Cab.....	\$11,990	'95 Hyundai Excel Sprint.....	\$4990
Cd radio, cruise control, air bag, abs brakes, tow bar, automatic, air conditioned, power steering. PPO-417		Manual, air conditioning, power steering, canopy. PUU-669		Manual, air conditioning, power steering, RWC, long reg. NDU-756	
'01 Hyundai Accent Hatch.....	\$9990	'99 Subaru Forester.....	\$15,990	'94 ED Dual Fuel Falcon Wagon.....	\$
Automatic, air bag, air conditioned, power steering, manual, long reg, warranty. RIU-378		4x4 LTD, dual airbags, cruise control, auto, air conditioning, low kms, long reg. UAY-420		1994 ED Dual fuel falcon wagon, cd radio, long reg, alloy wheels, tow bar, power steering, air conditioning	
'00 VT II Commodore Wagon.....	\$10,990	'99 AU Falcon Sedan.....	\$9990	'94 Toyota Camry CSI Sedan.....	\$7990
Cruise control, ABS brakes, air bag, air conditioning. PZU-231		Air bag, automatic, air conditioning, power steering, alloy wheels, 127,000 Kms. PVR-583		Automatic, power steering, air conditioning, long reg. NSU-137	
'00 VT II Commodore Sedan.....	\$11,990	'99 30 Litre Diesel Hilux.....	\$12,990	'93 Toyota Corolla Seca.....	\$6990
Cruise, alloy wheels, tinted windows, auto, air con, power steering. QOY-854		Bull bar, towbar, 4x4, power steering, side steps, sunraysia wheels, long reg. PPE-330		Manual, power steering, low 136,000 kms. FFE-966	
'00 VT Olympic Edition Commodore.....	\$9,990	'98 Mitsubishi Magna TF Wagon.....	\$9990	'91 Ford Laser GL.....	\$4990
Auto, power steering, air conditioned cruise control. QDT-598		Low kms, auto, power steering, air conditioning, Cd radio, long reg, warranty. PLA-904		Automatic, good reg, low Kms, RWC, cd radio. ERE-125	
'00 Ford Falcon AU Tray.....	\$11,990	'98 Ford Laser LXI Hatch.....	\$8990	'90 Nissan Patrol Wagon.....	\$8990
Alloy wheels, CD radio, tow bar, remote locking, air conditioning, power steering, aluminium tray. WVF-355		130,000 Kms, air bag, power steering, air conditioning. QBF-242		Power steering, air conditioning, manual, bull bar, tow bar. WIJ-518	
'00 AU Super Cab Falcon Tray.....	\$10,990	'98 EL Falcon GLI Wagon.....	\$5990	'98 Pulsar Q Hatch.....	\$1490
ABS brakes, air bag, air conditioning, power steering, CD radio, tow bar. QBW-208		Automatic, air conditioning, power steering, CD radio, tow bar. OZK-281		Power steering, air conditioning, manual, alloy wheels, as traded. FGU-529	
		'97 Ford Festiva Trio.....	\$6990	'86 Nissan Navara Dual Cab.....	\$3990
		Air conditioned, manual, long reg, low kms. SHM-3553		Dual fuel, power steering, tow bar, canopy, as traded. RIU-318	

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