



Cars hit fuel economy record in 2015

By [Timothy Cama](#) - 11/02/16 02:37 PM EDT

Cars hit a new fuel economy record in 2015 while outperforming mandated greenhouse gas emissions limits, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) said.

Model-year 2015 cars [averaged](#) a carbon dioxide emissions standard that was 7 grams per mile higher than what the EPA required for that year, which was a 13 gram per mile improvement over the 2014 requirement.

A separate EPA [report](#) released Wednesday concluded that average fuel economy was 24.8 miles per gallon, 0.5 mpg higher than the previous year.

The EPA held up its reports as proof that the federal government's efficiency and greenhouse gas standards, jointly enforced by the EPA and the Department of Transportation, are working.

"Car buyers can go to the showroom knowing that no matter what kind of vehicle they buy, it will be better for the climate — and their wallets — than ever before," Christopher Grundler, director of the EPA's transportation office, said in a statement. "This report highlights that the industry is providing vehicles that customers want, while reaching new levels of environmental performance."

Automakers have also seen six consecutive years of sales growth, which the EPA cited as evidence that its regulations are not hurting the industry.

Some green groups cheered the EPA's report, saying it shows that the industry will be able to handle a strengthening of the standards, as greens want the agency to do in the coming years.

"If automakers are beating current vehicle emissions standards, why are they trying so hard to fight them?" asked Andrew Linhardt, associate director for federal advocacy at the Sierra Club.

"Now claiming the standards are unrealistic, automakers are trying to pump the brakes on climate progress. But with automakers currently exceeding the standards, it's easy to see the safeguards are reachable and working — our cars are cleaner and more efficient than ever before," he said.

But the Safe Climate Campaign pointed out that while carmakers are meeting the standards, they aren't actually meeting the goals that the Obama administration set out, since they used provisions of the regulations to sell vehicles with lower efficiency.

“The industry used get-out-of-jail-free cards to evade the anti-pollution rules: It built more gas guzzling trucks and claimed ‘credits’ for phantom mileage gains,” Dan Becker, the group’s director, said in a statement.

The EPA [reported](#) in June that cars are unlikely to reach the 54.5 mpg efficiency goal that President Obama had boasted about for years.

Tags: [Environmental Protection Agency](#), [Department of Transportation](#), [Efficiency](#), [fuel economy](#), [greenhouse gases](#), [Cars](#)

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