

Filling your tank with water

by BRIAN LOCKHART

I was on one of the online forums I frequent the other day.

The forum poses questions by members and searches for answers for everything from personal experiences to the best route to take from Phoenix to Alaska.

A question came up a few days ago from a reader asking if it is possible to water down the gasoline in your car to increase the volume of fuel and get better mileage.

The question was either posted by a troll, or by someone who seriously needs to brush up on both their knowledge of science and their common sense.

The question did get some answers. Some were serious - others suggested using pure spring water for the best results as tap water contained too many minerals and might cause problems with your engine.

Either way, I feel that person's pain when it comes to fuel consumption as I'm sure many of you also do.

I stopped in at an out-of-the-way gas station last week and was shocked to find out I was paying \$1.48 per litre.

I did a check when I got back to a more populated area and found the common price was actually \$1.40.

Whoever owns this particular station took advantage of the fact that who ever was dropping into his remote station would just pay the extra 8 cents because they had no choice.

This increase in the price of fuel is starting to hit our economy in ways that is going to make us all pay through the nose for just about everything.

As soon as the price of fuel started rising, I kept a close eye on the prices in my local grocery store and I'll bet many other people have been watching this as well.

Sure enough, everything started going up as the cost of transportation to get those oranges from California to the Ontario Food Terminal went through the roof.

Those transportation costs translate directly to everything else in the country that arrives by truck ? which of course is everything.

We are all paying more, and more, and more, while salaries and wages stagnate. You're getting poorer by the day.

Meanwhile, Canada has the third largest oil reserves in the country, and instead of capitalizing on our natural resources, we pay the Middle East for their oil.

But why should we use oil when the new electric car era is upon us?

Well, it seems the new electric car era is arriving a lot slower than all the hype from the last few years indicated.

For a while, it seemed we were all going to be going electric within a few years.

Some European countries have already announced they are going fully electric within a few short years and gasoline-powered vehicles won't even be allowed on their streets. Well, good luck with that.

If you have been looking for a new car in the past year, most likely you started visiting automotive websites prior to actually driving to an auto dealership.

The automotive industry has had a good decade. It is producing high-quality automobiles with great designs and more and more technology.

However, when you visit the websites of the major automotive players, the cars and SUVs you see at the top of the page are all gasoline powered vehicles.

To even find a hybrid or electric version, you have to search for it.

Like any business, the product they want you to buy receives the most exposure.

While most, if not all companies, produce a hybrid vehicle, and some have a fully electric vehicle, the auto companies are not presenting them as the next era in personal travel.

Right now, they are being treated as more of an after thought or an "also ran" type of vehicle that you purchase if you really want to.

If the auto companies have pushed the hybrids and EVs to page two, you can bet that's a good indicator of what is going to happen over the next few years.

A check with government information shows that Canadian fuel prices are "on par" with other countries and it lists all sorts of European states that are paying a similar rate for fuel.

Well, so what? You can also drive across most European countries in a day.

Increasing fuel prices will only lead to inflation and you can watch that inflation erode your weekly pay cheque ? and that has already happened.

It is time to use the resources we have to stabilize the economy, not pay some Middle Eastern country to stabilize theirs.