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A Division of Money Management International

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### ROAD TRIP MONEY SAVING TIPS

*Money Management International offers holiday travel tips*

Over the last year, studies have shown that Americans are increasingly turning to the comforts of family and home. At no time during the year is this more apparent than the holiday season. Whether a result of a nostalgic desire for a simpler time or an effort to cut back on spending, many families have decided to forgo the longer delays at the airport this year and just drive to their holiday destinations. Driving trips can be memorable and fun, yet when not planned properly, they can end up costing as much (if not more) than flying.

Before heading off, consider these money-saving tips:

1. Assess your car's roadworthiness. Check the tires and windshield wipers for wear, make sure the tires are inflated properly and the fluids are full. Spending a little money on a tune-up will provide better gas mileage and reduce the chances of you being stranded by the side of the road. But just in case it does happen, make sure you have a roadside assistance kit with jumper cables, a toolbox, fix a flat, etc. to help avoid towing expenses.
2. Going somewhere you've never been before? For travel books and/or maps, try a used bookstore or print out Internet maps and take them with you. Use the local library for audio books and travel games for children.
3. Make a list of things that would require a stop at a convenience store along the way if forgotten – sunglasses, CDs, snacks, water, maps, film, camera, aspirin, Band-aids, antiseptic, books, and toys/games for the kids. Double check your list before leaving home.
4. If your drive is long enough to require an overnight stay, make your hotel reservations in advance. Take advantage of specials, coupons, discounts and complimentary breakfasts. Choose hotel accommodations in outlying areas rather than areas of high demand. Select hotels that have kitchenettes so that you can prepare meals in vs. eating out.
5. For overnight stays, forgo purchasing travel size products. Most hotels provide complimentary shampoo and other vanity items.
6. Research your destination's Chamber of Commerce Web site for discounts, coupons and free information.
7. Consider renting a car vs. driving your own. Many car rental agencies offer special discounts for the holidays.
8. Make sure your vehicle's registration, inspections and insurance are current. A ticket is always an unplanned and avoidable expense.

9. Understand your cellular roaming charge policy. A prepaid calling card may be a less expensive option.
10. Pack clothing appropriate for the climate so that there are no last minute trips to the mall for a missing jacket, sweater, etc.

Carolyn Tarrant, education and community relations director for Consumer Credit Counseling Services of South Jersey, "Lastly, put together a spending plan for the trip and stick to it. Take along a set amount of cash to avoid ATM fees and use cash or debit cards to ensure that you do not overspend. The goal is to return home from your trip with lots of memories and little debt."

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