

2009 Escape Environment

2009 FORD ESCAPE, MERCURY MARINER SEE AERO BOOST

Cheating the wind with aerodynamic improvements helps the 2009 Ford Escape and Mercury Mariner become more fuel efficient.

Already among America's most fuel-efficient and environmentally friendly SUVs, the Escape and Mariner receive aerodynamic refinements on top of powertrain upgrades that contribute to an overall estimated 1 mpg improvement in fuel economy for the four- and six-cylinder models.

"Aerodynamic refinements are the most cost-effective ways to reduce fuel consumption," says Van Stewart, Escape/Mariner aerodynamicist. "Without significantly altering the design of the vehicle, we can find ways to optimize the flow of air to reduce drag and improve fuel efficiency."

For the 2009 Escape and Mariner, engineers redesigned the front bumper spoiler and added rear tire spoilers for better airflow management.

The front spoiler was extended further over the wheels to diminish drag and was lowered by 40 mm to redirect air flow. The rear tire spoilers help reduce the aerodynamic drag of the rear wheels and tires.

"Thanks to the aerodynamic refinements made to the Escape and Mariner, they are now fully optimized given the current design of the vehicles," said Stewart.

This is no small feat, because the Escape and Mariner already were aerodynamically efficient designs.

Stewart and his team of aerodynamics engineers tested all aspects of the vehicle to find areas of potential improvements for incremental fuel economy. From underbody shields to door sealing and new mirror designs, the Ford team spent hours in the wind tunnel and with sophisticated computer modeling to analyze airflow patterns and measure drag data.

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