

South Africans prefer clean cars

A national survey conducted by leading fuels brand, BP Ultimate, has concluded that South Africa's cars could be among the cleanest and best-kept in the world, with 96% of South African motorists saying they take great pride in the appearance of their cars.

The survey, which drew almost a thousand responses from male and female drivers across the country between the ages of 18 and 50, proved that whether they are driving a 15 year old Citi Golf Sonic or sleek new Bentley Continental, South African motorists take exceptionally good care of their cars. Close to eight in ten respondents said they clean their cars at least once a week, while 2% confessed to cleaning their cars just once a year.

To put it in perspective, this translates into about 164 000 grimy vehicles among the 8.2 million cars on our roads, compared to the results of a similar study conducted in the United States, which found that 16% of drivers never wash their cars - equating to a staggering 73 million dirty cars among the 138 million registered vehicles in the US.

Northern Cape has cleanest cars

The poll also revealed that drivers from the Northern Cape have the cleanest cars, with nine in ten drivers washing their cars at least every week compared to only six out of every ten motorists in the Western Cape who wash their cars weekly.

Contrary to popular belief, there is also little discrepancy between South Africa's wealthier and poorer drivers when it comes to car cleanliness. The survey showed that wealthier motorists are in fact not too posh to wash with over 78% of those occupying senior managerial posts saying they readily get out the bucket and sponge to clean their cars. Drivers who are less well-heeled are just as proud with 75% of those in lower positions saying they are not prepared to drive a dirty vehicle for longer than a week.

Peter Cock, BP's technical fuels manager, says the survey unequivocally confirms that South African motorists' car cleaning habits in general are exemplary. "Even when asked about leaving the occasional piece of rubbish in the car, over 83% of respondents said they don't." He points out that regular cleaning can help preserve the value of one's car by getting rid of salt and other corrosive substances.