

May 15 to June 25, 2010 New Hampshire's Commute Green Promotion

Bike/Walk to Work Day Breakfast Event Organizers Guide

The goal of the Commute Green 2010 six-week program is to encourage people to bicycle, walk, carpool, or take transit to work and other destinations.

The organizer's main tasks are to:

- Increase awareness of local commute options and the statewide Commute Green promotion
- Schedule an event or events to take place at your company or community during the May 15 to June 25. The Bike/Walk to Work Day is Friday, May 21.
- Coordinate the logistics of having a sign in station, food and other giveaways (**optional**) at your event
- Get the word out to your company or community about the event
- Make it fun and easy for the maximum number of people to participate
- Promote the statewide Bicycling Awareness Rides being held between May 15 and June 25. Please see separate flyer for this new 2010 program.

For some people the habit of bicycling, walking, carpooling and taking transit to get around is unfamiliar. Anything you can do to make these modes of travel more accessible and appealing will make a difference. For new cyclists or walkers, you can hold "warm-up" group rides, walks, or safety seminars. For transit riders, make sure you have current information on hand about schedules and stops. Carpoolers will need to know their options for finding carpool matches.

One of the best ways to convince people to use a new commute is to do it yourself. Sharing your positive commuting experiences will make the thought of trying it intriguing! Studies show that once people try something they are likely to do it again.

To assist people, gather as much information as you can on the options for getting to your workplace or community, including suggested bicycling and walking routes, as well as transit and carpool information. If you need assistance with this, contact the State of NH's Rideshare Coordinator, coordinator@dot.state.nh.us, telephone (603) 271-4043.

Set a Date, Time, and Timeline for your event(s)
(A suggested timeline and check list is available in the toolkit on the website).

Start planning now so others can help, and there is plenty of time to solicit donations of food and other prizes.

Choose a Location

Depending on if your event is at a worksite or someplace else in your community, select a pleasant area where people can congregate. This area should be adaptable for different group sizes. If it's outside, is there shelter available? You will also want, space to park bikes, and space for at least two tables – one for food and one for sign-in, raffle prizes, giveaways, etc.

Giveaways and Incentives

In addition to the statewide contest participants will be eligible to participate in, do you want provide any giveaways or incentives specific to your location? A safety kit will be sent to you by NHDOT with the following items that you may want to raffle off. In addition other participation incentives can be obtained from local bike or athletic shops as well as public health outreach programs and other local businesses. It's nice to find something that you can get in enough quantity to give to everyone, and a few more special

things as raffle prizes. These might be gift certificates to a restaurant, bicycle or walking accessories, transit passes. Get your organizing team thinking about obtaining donated raffle items. If you're organizing an event at your company, your human resources dept. may have money set aside for special events. If you don't have money to buy prizes, talk to businesses to arrange donations in exchange for publicity and the resulting business it brings. Hold your own local raffle for participants. Use your imagination and your connections.

Food!

It's usually pretty easy to get local bagel shops or coffee shops to donate coffee and bagels or pastries for a breakfast type event. Also think about orange juice, bananas, orange sections, or other fruit.

Usually supermarket managers can make gift certificate donations of up to \$20-\$30 in-house, without going to a regional manager for approval. That level of donation from one or two supermarkets should be more than enough for all the OJ and fruit you'll need.

Promote Safety

Make sure walkers are aware of any "known" hazards. For bicyclists, when people feel that they know how to ride safely, and that the route they've chosen is safe, they will be much more likely to try bicycling to work. Make available the "Don't Be a Road Warrior/Don't Be a Road Hog" pamphlet, the "ABC Quick Check" safety sheet, and regional bike maps from NHDOT.

Encourage people to test-ride their intended route during quiet hours on a weekend day so that they can learn about potential trouble spots, such as potholes and storm drains, without having to be as concerned about the traffic.

Encourage people to use good judgment. Information and safety materials cannot replace individual responsibility when it comes to safety.

Arrange for Facilities

It is very important during the Commute Green promotion, and every day, to remove all possible barriers to going places by bike, such as lack of facilities. A 1998 Harris poll found that 17% of people would sometimes commute by bike if secure parking and showers were available at work!

The best parking for a bicycle is in a well lit, sheltered, public area. Temporary parking can be made available by using barricades or by clearing out a room for bike storage (all participants should bring their own locks).

If you work at a company that has shower and locker facilities, can they be made available to bicycle commuters? No showers? How about making arrangements with an office nearby that does, or contact a local YMCA or fitness center about using their changing facility.

If you would like assistance with establishing bicycle friendly facilities or have recently done so, let us know - we may be able to offer some advice, and would like to showcase your efforts during and after Commute Green promotion. Contact the State of NH's Bike-Ped Office, Jerry Moore, at JTMoore@dot.state.nh.us 603-271-3320.

Keep It Going

The purpose of Green Commute Week is to encourage people to use other ways to get to work, and on an ongoing basis. We hope that participation will continue. Take advantage of the warm weather to promote season-long bicycling and walking to work and other destinations, as well as carpooling and using public transportation year-round.

Publicizing Your Event(s)

Downloadable flyers, posters, sample press releases, templates, and other materials are available on the Bike-Walk Alliance of NH web site www.bwanh.org. Newspapers will print press releases for free. Other organizations may be willing to enclose a paragraph or notice for you in a mailing or newsletter they're already doing. Bulletin boards and window or lobby displays can be used for encouraging people to participate in Commute Green.

Also, you may discover other communication channels. For example, a proclamation from your town Selectmen or Town Council lends support. A sample letter to a local board of selectmen is included, along with draft proclamation text, in the on-line toolkit. Within a large organization a memo from the boss supporting the event carries particular weight. Town offices, YMCAs, bike shops, coffee shops, health clubs, libraries, and company cafeterias are ideal places to set up information kiosks or tables. You might want to display a map to recruit group ride leaders or to help novice riders to find bicycle buddies. Have commuters mark their starting points and routes -- especially fun for those who venture to commute from off the map. The map is a great attention-getter, which gets people to find their commuting routes, and see who else goes that way. A message board as part of the display can also help cyclists, walkers and carpoolers find commuting buddies.

A running tally of the number of people who want to participate in the event, and how they will be commuting also helps build interest. You could provide entertainment to promote the event. This doesn't have to be extravagant. Maybe a local band is looking for publicity and will play for free. Perhaps a speaker or well known person in your town or company who walks, bicycles, carools or takes transit to work could welcome employees and offer encouragement.

Keep Us Posted

The more we know about your event, the better we can publicize it and help with suggestions and assistance. We're keeping and distributing a complete listing of events on an ongoing basis, so keep us posted with your plans and your questions!

Record your Commute Green activities and be eligible for prizes

An on-line survey hosted by the Bike-Walk Alliance of NH plus an optional mail-in paper survey will allow Commute Green participants to record their trips by any means of "green" transit, the frequency within the six-week promotion, their mileage per method of travel, and any problems encountered. Participants traveling in a "green way" at least six times between May 15 and June 25 then completing the on-line or paper survey will be eligible for prizes including an overnight stay at a NH resort.

Good luck with your events and promote "green" travel year round!

Commute Green 2010 Promotion

Supported by
NH DOT Bureau of Rail and Transit
www.bikeped.nh.gov 1-800 462-8707
coordinator@dot.state.nh.us

Bike-Walk Alliance of NH
www.bwanh.org
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