



NEWS EVENT
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SAN FRANCISCANS PEDAL AWAY FROM THE PUMP ON GAS-FREE FRIDAYS

**Advocates Encourage Bicycling One Day a Week;
Everyday Bicyclists Share Gas-Free Stories**

(SAN FRANCISCO, CA) — With soaring gas prices and global warming on the rise, San Franciscans are being urged to go Gas-Free on Fridays. Each Friday in October, “fuel-up” stations will be set up next to bike lanes across the city to keep riders energized with coffee and snacks. “Gas-Free Fridays,” organized by the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition (SFBC), aims to get more people on bicycles, recognizing that half of all driving trips are under two miles in length.

“More people are recognizing the economic benefits of biking for transportation, not to mention the health and environmental benefits,” says Leah Shahum, Executive Director of the 9,500-member SFBC. “We’re seeing real diversity in the kinds of people bicycling these days — women in dresses, men in suits, and parents and kids.” **San Francisco has seen an estimated 15-30% increase in bicycle ridership in the past year alone.**

“It so much easier than I thought it would be and it’s not that hard to avoid hills,” says Rebecca Smith-Bindman, MD who just started biking 4 months ago. “Biking to work is so much more enjoyable than driving and I now get to work in a good mood and I am still in a good mood at the end of the day when I bike home.”

A short bicycle trip is also a simple way to ease the financial burdens of skyrocketing gas prices and help the City of San Francisco reach its own environmental goals. “Now is a great time to try bicycling,” says Nathaniel P. Ford, Sr., Executive Director/CEO of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA). “The SFMTA supports bicycling as an attractive, green transportation alternative to driving a car.”

Getting more people on bicycles and out of cars for short trips also means a healthier San Francisco. 50% of our greenhouse gas emissions come from transportation, and a disproportionate amount of automobile pollution occurs in the first few minutes of

driving, before pollution control devices work effectively. So, short car trips are important trips to replace with sustainable alternatives.

“We want people to think about substituting one trip a week that they normally take by car, and try it on a bike,” says Shahum. “I encourage you to try a short trip to the video store or to a restaurant and see how easy biking can be.”

To keep morning bicyclists motivated, the SFBC will provide a different kind of fuel—Fair Trade Certified™ coffee, tea, and snacks—at “fuel-up” stations across San Francisco.

Oct. 3rd: Market and 12th Streets, 7:30–9:30am

Oct. 10th: Valencia and 17th Streets, 7:30–9:30am

Oct. 17th: Embarcadero (between the Ferry Bldg. and Justin Herman Plaza), 7:30–9:30am

Oct. 24th: City Hall, Polk and Grove Streets, 7:30–9:30am

Oct. 31st: Folsom and 7th Streets, 7:30–9:30am

Bicyclists will also be rewarded by knowing that riding a bicycle 10–miles a day versus owning and driving will save them \$8,000/year, will burn an average of 110,250 calories (that’s 35lbs of fat!), and save our City 3,500 lbs. of greenhouse gas emissions each year.

See www.sfbike.org/independence for additional information.

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