



NEWS EVENT  
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## RECORD NUMBER TO BURN CALORIES NOT GASOLINE ON BIKE TO WORK DAY

**Bikes Outnumber Cars on Market Street, Ridership up 30% over Last Year;  
VIP's Ride to City Hall, Everyday Bicyclists Share the Benefits of Riding**

(SAN FRANCISCO, CA) — As gas prices tick toward \$4 per gallon and more people turn to bicycling as an affordable, healthy, sustainable commute option, new counts in San Francisco suggest an unprecedented turnout for Bike to Work Day on Thursday, May 15<sup>th</sup>.

Bicycles outnumbered automobiles last week at San Francisco's Market Street and Van Ness Ave. intersection, according to counts taken last week by the SF Municipal Transportation Agency. Between 8am and 9am on May 8th, bicyclists made up 48% of the eastbound traffic, while motorists comprised 46%. This is a nearly 30% increase over the number of people biking last year days before Bike to Work Day.

"Last year we were excited to see bicycles outnumber cars *on* Bike to Work Day, but this year it's happening a week *before* the big day," says Leah Shahum, of the 8,500-member San Francisco Bicycle Coalition, which organizes the citywide event to promote bicycling. "We have no doubt that more people than ever will try bicycling this Bike to Work Day."

**Members of the media are invited to the Bike to Work Day press conference at 8:15am on the Polk St. steps of City Hall.** VIP's, including a majority of the members of the Board of Supervisors and other city officials, will be joined by everyday cyclists and local employers who will share their inspiring, personal accounts of saving money, time, and CO<sub>2</sub>, as well as losing weight, thanks to their bike commutes.

Following are some of those personal accounts (these and others are available for interviews before or at the press event):

**Financial Benefits: Riding a bicycle versus owning and driving a car saves an individual an average of \$8,000 each year**

"The cost of driving to work every day was not in my monthly budget, so I started riding my bike to and from work," says Michael Vare, who has saved \$4,000 in gas by bike commuting 3-to-4 days a week from Marin County to his office in San Francisco's

Financial District. "The best part is that I can take the bus, grab the ferry, or ride my bike, and they all take the same time door to door."

More people are citing high gas prices as a reason to start biking. Timmy Bailey, who works at Valencia Cyclery in San Francisco says, "We are getting more customers who mention that they're getting a bike to lessen their gas expenditures."

### **Employer Incentives: More Biking Saves Businesses Money**

"We pay employees ten cents for every mile they log on their bicycle odometer in a given year," says Ben Davis, owner of Words, Pictures, Images, a San Francisco design firm. And San Francisco's New Resource Bank offers employees \$250 to commute by bike and provides secure bike parking.

### **Health Benefits: People commuting 10 miles a day by bike burn 110,250 calories, keeping off 30 pounds of fat each year, on average**

"As a Cardiologist, I know that being more physically active is a great way to reduce your risk of heart disease, but having a busy career and a family with three small children doesn't leave much time for exercise," says Paul Varosy, M.D., who started biking to work 2 years ago and has since lost 30 pounds. "Now I can work a full day and incorporate an hour of biking and still be home in time for dinner with the family. The best part has been remembering how much fun riding a bike can be."

### **Environmental Benefits: People commuting 10 miles a day by bike instead of automobile save 3,500 pounds of greenhouse gas emissions each year, on average**

"I donated my car on Bike to Work Day last year and that was a way for me to take action against global warming," says Marc Brandt, who now commutes to his office in Burlingame by bike and Caltrain. "I can easily bike or walk anywhere from my Nob Hill apartment."

### **Bike to Work Day will see many first-time bike commuters**

"Biking was intriguing to me because I loved biking as a kid, and I was tired of taking the bus and even more tired of driving my car," says Cassandra Costello, who started riding on Bike to Work Day two years ago from the Richmond District to her Civic Center office. "Riding my bike to work changes my entire day. I come into work refreshed and much less stressed, and I always know how long it will take me to get to work."

In addition to these and other bicyclists sharing the impacts that bicycling has had on their lives, the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition will also release its updated *Report Card on Bicycling in San Francisco*, a survey of more than 1,600 people.

To learn more about Bike to Work Day and the benefits of bicycling, see [www.sfbike.org/btwd](http://www.sfbike.org/btwd). For a schedule of VIP rides, see [www.sfbike.org/bikebus](http://www.sfbike.org/bikebus)

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