



Environmental Fact Sheet



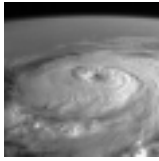
Alternatives to driving alone

- ☞ People in mixed-use compact communities drive 30-50% less than sprawling communities. They are easier to serve by public transit and it is easy to walk or bike to run errands, and to get to school or work
(National Resources Defense Council)
- ☞ If just one out of every 10 commuters who now drive to work switched to walking, we'd save 2 billion gallons of gas a year and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 25.4 million tons. *(Green Commutes, Makower)*
- ☞ Switching for a month from a five mile car commute to a bike commute keeps close to a pound of hydrocarbons, six pounds of carbon monoxide and half a pound of nitrogen oxide from entering the air. *(Divorce your Car, Katie Alvord, 2000)*
- ☞ Every transit commuter who bikes to the station saves an average of 150 gallons of gas a year. Every car commuter who switches to biking and transit can save 400 gallons of gas a year. *(Divorce your Car)*
- ☞ Eight bicycles can be parked in the space required for just one car. *(Divorce your Car)*
- ☞ Going by bus instead of car cuts nitrogen oxide pollution by 25 %, carbon monoxide by 80% and hydrocarbons by 90% per passenger mile. *(Divorce your Car)*
- ☞ One full 40 foot bus will take 58 cars off the road. *(Divorce your Car)*



Automobile Use

- ☞ The United States moves into the 21st century with less than 30% of its original oil supply *(Global 200 Revisited Gerald O. Barney)*
- ☞ Los Angeles residents drive 142 millions miles – the distance from Earth to Mars – every single day *(Going Place, Making Choices, 4H)*
- ☞ Americans drive more than 2 trillion vehicle miles per year. *(4H)*
- ☞ Short motor trips contribute significant amounts of air pollution because they typically occur while an engine's pollution control system is cold and ineffective. Shifting 1% of automobile trips to walking or biking decreases emissions by 2-4% *(Way to Go, British Columbia)*
- ☞ Roads and parking in urban and suburban communities cover between 30-50% of land base. If just 5% of a watershed is covered with impervious surfaces, such as roads and parking facilities, water quality of streams and waterways is seriously degraded due to oily runoff from streets. *(Way to Go)*
- ☞ The number of cars grew three times faster than the human population World wide in the 1990's. *(BioScience, Oct 1998)*
- ☞ Americans lose an estimated 2000-2800 acres of rural land every day to highways, housing developments, shopping malls, airports and other non-farm uses. That's 730,000 to 1,020,000 acres a year. If current trends continue, in the next 100 years approximately 1/3 of America's farmland will be lost to suburbs, malls and other uses. *(Natural Resource Conservation Management for a Sustainable Future, 1998)*



Global Warming

☞ As carbon dioxide builds in the atmosphere, it traps heat so that the earth warms as if it were in a giant greenhouse. These greenhouse gases allow the sun's energy to penetrate the atmosphere to the earth's surface, but do not allow as much of it to escape as heat. These are altering air temperature and movement, causing changes in weather and climate. This is enough to raise ocean levels causing flooding for some coastal areas.

(R. Monastersky, Science News, Jan 2 1999)

☞ Global average surface temperatures increased by about 1.7 degrees Celsius from 1900 to 1998. *(Science News)*

☞ Seven of the globe's ten warmest years have been recorded since 1990 *(Science News)*

☞ The incidence of extreme weather events has gone up 28% since 1975 and it is now confirmed that the Arctic ice caps are melting, threatening coastal regions with flooding and actually drowning some small islets. *(U.S. E.P.A.)*

☞ Atmospheric concentrations of CO₂, the main greenhouse gas implicated in global warming, are higher than they've been in 160,000 years, and they're rising.

(Intergovernment Panel on Climate Change, 1995)

☞ Driving is the biggest contributor to increased greenhouse gases.

(New State of the Earth Atlas, 1995.)



Pollution

☞ Motor vehicle use is now generally recognized as the source of more air pollution than any other single human activity. *(New State of the Earth Atlas, 1995.)*

☞ In a year, a typical North American car will add close to five tons of CO₂ into the atmosphere. Cars account for an estimated 15-25 percent of U.S. CO₂ emissions. *(Internal Council for Local Environment, 1995)*

☞ While cars today are cleaner than they were in 1970, the increases in the number of cars and miles driven have offset much of that gain. *(Divorce your Car)*

☞ Oxides of nitrogen, volatile organic compounds, carbon monoxide and particulate matters are just a few of the noxious pollutants that come out of our cars and into our air and water. *(Divorce your Car)*

☞ Oil spills damage marine life and habitats. The number of small spills under 100,000 gallons has grown worldwide and as of the mid 1990s totaled around 10 million gallons yearly. Large spills – over 10 million gallons occur at a rate of 1-3 a year worldwide. *(Oil Spills, Joanna Burger, 1997)*

☞ Disposal of used motor oil sends more oil into the water each year than even the largest tanker spill. *(U.S. EPA)*



☞ About 800 million scrap tires are stockpiled around the U.S. Every year we throw out over 260 million tires. Tires trap gases inside and tend to float or work their way to the tops of dumps. *(U.S. EPA)*