



NEWS

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Employers can sign up now for the *Great Race for Clean Air* *Competition promotes alternatives to driving alone*

SAN FRANCISCO – Bay Area employers can now sign up for the Great Race for Clean Air, a competition between Bay Area businesses and organizations of all sizes to encourage their employees to carpool, vanpool, walk, bike or ride transit to work, instead of driving alone.

Businesses can register to participate in the Great Race by visiting www.GreatRaceForCleanAir.com.

“Cars on Bay Area highways are a top contributor to air pollution and smog,” said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. “Through the Great Race competition, employees try out alternatives to driving alone to work. These changes improve air quality, save money and reduce stress.”

Studies have shown that employees are more likely to change their commute behavior when encouraged by their employer.

Next month, the Bay Area Air District and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission will consider adopting a commuter benefits program that will require Bay Area businesses with 50 or more full-time employees to offer one of several commuter benefit options to their employees. A competition, like the Great Race for Clean Air, can help prepare businesses to comply with the program by learning which commute options work best for their employees and worksites.

During the competition, which runs from March 1 through April 30, thousands of Bay Area commuters will keep track of their “clean commute days” through an online journal and will be entered into weekly random drawings for prizes, such as gift cards to local merchants.

At the conclusion of the Great Race, winning company teams will be recognized for highest CO₂ savings and highest average of “clean commute days” logged per participant. Employers in five different size categories will be recognized for achieving the highest rate of employee participation.

Participants saved approximately 674 tons of CO₂ by using alternatives to driving alone during the last Great Race. This is equivalent to taking 120 passenger vehicles off the road for one year.

The Great Race for Clean Air is sponsored by the Air District in partnership with 511 Rideshare, 511 Contra Costa, the Peninsula Traffic Congestion Relief Alliance and the San Francisco Department of the Environment. For more information about Spare the Air, visit www.sparetheair.org.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (www.baaqmd.gov) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the Bay Area. For more information about Spare the Air, visit www.sparetheair.org.

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