

# U. S. Department of Transportation

# news:

Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590



REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY U.S. SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION NEIL GOLDSCHMIDT, RIDESHARING AWARDS PRESENTATION, DENVER, COLORADO MAY 1, 1980

At the White House Tuesday President Carter personally stressed the importance of ridesharing as one of the ways we can get more out of every gallon of fuel and every transportation energy dollar.

Nationally we're shooting for a difficult goal. We want to get 30 million Americans -- 40 percent of the commuting work force -- into some form of ridesharing by 1985. To do that we're asking employers and employees, in both the public and private sectors, to join together in a "20/20" program -- a 20 percent participation in ridesharing or transit use or, for those already at that level, a 20 percent increase.

There are organizations in the country already ahead of us in this effort, or with an excellent headstart on that goal. Three of those organizations are here in Denver, and I want to recognize them today for the outstanding example they are setting in ridesharing and energy conservation leadership.

The first is Mountain Bell, whose fuel savings program is one of the best and most comprehensive I have seen.

- The company encourages transit use by subsidizing the cost of bus fares for employees. From fewer than 200 Mountain Bell employees who bought bus passes before the program started, the number has grown now to nearly 2,500 -- or 25 percent of the downtown work-force.

- Bell has 15 12-passenger vans in use for vanpooling purposes and 20 more to begin operation before the end of the year. The estimated fuel savings for the 280 cars the vans will replace: 72,000 gallons a year.
- The vans used by telephone installation crews are being replaced by station wagons for a 50 percent improvement in fuel efficiency -- an estimated 150,000 gallons a year.
- Bell's parking garage incentives mean that the highest passenger vehicles pay the lowest rent.
- The shift to compact and subcompact cars in the company fleet has produced a savings of more than a million gallons of gasoline since 1975 even though the total mileage driven has increased by 658,000 miles.
- Finally, Mountain Bell is taking the rare but very useful step of training employees in how to drive more economically. When an employee renews his company license, he is tested on fuel efficiency driving techniques.

Second, the Denver Regional Council of Governments ("Doctor COG") has been involved in a ridesharing program since 1974. The program was expanded recently to include an advertising campaign and a coordinating committee of employees and government agencies.

- The investment in this program has gone from \$92,000 three years ago to \$356,000 last year.
- The Council of Governments is now sponsoring 103 vanpools in the greater Denver area, and processing applications at the rate of 1,400 a month.
- As an outgrowth of this program, the Colorado State Department of Highways is launching a major ridesharing effort. The department was, in fact, one of the 17 applicants selected last year for funding by the Federal Department of Transportation under the national ridesharing demonstration program. We are awarding the Colorado Department of Highways a grant of \$120,000 to meet the costs of the demonstration program.
- The more than 3,700 people now carpooling under the COG program are saving an estimated 986,000 gallons of gas a year and -- equally important -- reducing air pollutants by 4 1/2 tons a day.

Third, the Business Coalition for Commuting Alternatives was established by the Denver Chamber of Commerce primarily for the purpose of improving the air quality of the Denver area. They are doing that, and they are also producing significant fuel savings.

- The Coalition has worked with the Colorado General Assembly to support legislation providing incentives for employers who promote ridesharing.
- Vanpool workshops are being held for employers. To date representatives of 80 companies or agencies have attended and have put 97 vans on the road.
- Acting on a suggestion by the Coalition, Governor Lamm is sponsoring a "governor's award" for employers achieving a high degree of success in ridesharing.

I want to express my own appreciation for the fine efforts of these three organizations -- Mountain Bell, the Denver Regional Council of Governments and the Business Coalition of the Chamber of Commerce.

In recognition of those efforts, I want to give each of the organizations what I suppose you could call the "Secretary's Award" for excellence in promoting greater energy efficiencies. I am pleased to present these awards because they show that we can save energy, and reduce transportation costs, without giving up our mobility. My congratulations, and my thanks, to each of the recipients.

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