

By early 2002, the program had enrolled 79 employees in five companies. The estimated emissions reductions were 52 kg/day VOC, and 6 kg/day NO_x.

Washington Metropolitan Region: The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), through the Commuter Connections Telework Resource Center (TRC), conducted a 21-month Telework Demonstration Project with eight organizations in the Washington Metropolitan Area. The objectives were to help employers evaluate telework as a business strategy, document the effects of telework on travel behavior, employee performance, and costs and savings to the organizations, as well as to increase awareness of teleworking and create the infrastructure to support teleworking within the participating organizations so the programs could be expanded at the end of the project.



Net Tech Center workstation in Winchester, Va. — a General Services Administration Telework Center. *Photograph courtesy of Linda Whitmer.*

The COG provided consulting services to help employer sites start or expand telework programs in exchange for using the sites as case study examples. The selected sites were required to have top-level support, a telework team, and a designated coordinator, and the sites were responsible for needed equipment and communications services.

The total budget for the Telework Demonstration Project based on actual expenditures was \$397,600. The District and the State of Virginia funded the program with CMAQ funds. Maryland's contribution was provided through state appropriated funds. The estimated emission reductions were 9 kg/day VOC, and 18 kg/day NO_x.



Courtesy of Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center Image Library, www.pedbikeimages.org/ Dan Burden, Photographer.

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It all adds up to cleaner air

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CMAQ and Telework Programs



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

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What Is CMAQ?

The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program provides a flexible funding source to state and local governments for transportation projects and programs to help meet the requirements of the Clean Air Act, and its amendments. CMAQ funds support transportation projects within areas designated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as nonattainment or maintenance by reducing mobile source emissions. Eligible activities include travel demand management strategies, such as telework, traffic flow improvements, and public fleet conversions to cleaner fuels, among others.

What Is the CMAQ Funding Process?

CMAQ funds must be invested in a nonattainment or maintenance area if one exists within that state. Minimum apportionment states without nonattainment or maintenance areas can use the funds as they would any Surface Transportation Project (STP). For mandatory funding, the funds must be spent on projects that reduce Ozone (O₃) precursors, such as Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC), Oxides of Nitrogen (NO_x), Carbon Monoxide (CO), or Particulate Matter (PM) from transportation sources. The project must also come from a conforming plan, where applicable, or a Transportation Improvement Program. The state is responsible for the distribution of CMAQ funds.

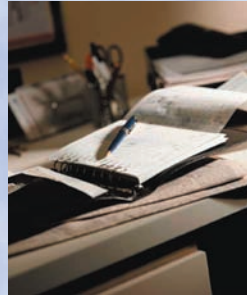
The federal share for most eligible CMAQ projects is 80 percent. The CMAQ program operates on a reimbursement basis, with funds not provided until work is completed. All CMAQ funded projects must conform to established guidance.

What Is Telecommuting?

By definition, telecommuting or teleworking occurs when paid workers reduce their commute by carrying out all, or part of, their work away from their normal place of business, usually from home or a telework center. The purpose is to move the work to the worker instead of moving the worker to work.

How Does Telecommuting Reduce Transportation-Related Emissions?

Telecommuting is an example of a Travel Demand Management (TDM) project. TDM strategies are techniques or programs that attempt to reduce the demand for Single Occupant Vehicle travel. TDM strategies can improve air quality by decreasing vehicle miles traveled and vehicle trips through the implementation of alternate transportation strategies. The promotion of employee trip reduction programs, the development of transportation management plans, and the establishment of “auto-free zones” fit into the category of travel demand management strategies.



Telecommuting can play a role in combating both traffic congestion and air pollution by providing employees with an important alternative to driving alone to work at peak hours everyday. Even working from home one or two days a week, or even a month, can help not only ease congestion and improve employee morale, but also improve air quality.

Telecommuting is receiving increased attention due to the National Telecommuting and Air Quality Act of 1999 (HR 2084/Public Law 106-69, Section 365) that introduces a market-based incentive program to encourage telecommuting. The pollution credit program allows businesses with teleworkers to gain pollution credits that can be sold to other businesses.

Are Telecommuting Programs Eligible for CMAQ Funding?

The Department of Transportation supports the establishment of telecommuting programs. Planning, technical and feasibility studies, training, coordination, marketing and promotion are eligible activities under CMAQ. Physical establishment or construction of telecommuting centers, computer and office equipment purchases and related activities are not eligible.

Examples of Successful Telecommuting Projects

There are several successful examples of telecommuting programs across the country with measurable reductions in the number of trips and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).

Houston: The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC), in partnership with local and national stakeholders and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) designed a program to provide incentives for businesses to implement telework programs. The program includes providing tax credits for emission reductions for companies and their employees that reduce VMTs through telecommuting.

In addition to offering a tax deduction for emission credits donated to H-GAC’s Area Emission Reduction Credit Organization (AERCO), a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization, the Program also includes a region-wide clean air initiative and public relations campaign. The conformity analysis for the Houston-Galveston transportation plan and Transportation Improvement Program lists teleworking as one of four “Commute Solutions” in the Voluntary Mobile Emissions Program. The \$9.6 million Commute Solutions programs received \$7.68 million in CMAQ funding and the estimated emissions reductions were 32 kg/day VOC, 112 kg/day CO, and 45 kg/day NO_x.

Philadelphia: The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, in partnership with local and national stakeholders and EPA, designed a program to promote telecommuting and quantify the associated emission reductions potentially to develop tradable credits based on these reductions and other incentives to motivate employers to develop telework programs. Philadelphia initiated its pilot program in March 2000 based on a model developed by the local Design Committee tailored to meet the city’s business market and needs.