

Cycling or Biking

Biking to work

From reduced environmental impact to money saving benefits, biking can be a very dynamic activity for an employer to support for their employees. For the employee, participating in this moderate to rigorous activity helps them to meet daily physical activity requirements, and combining exercise with a daily commute can leave more time for the other demands on their time. Bikes take up less space than motor vehicles, leaving more available vehicle parking and potentially less frustration for the bikers (and other staff) trying to find a place to park. There are multiple cost-saving benefits for the organization and the employee, including savings on fuel, vehicle maintenance costs and insurance, parking fees, and potentially, health care costs. More information about the benefits of biking is available online at:

<http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/why/benefits.cfm?pp/benefits/index.cfm>.

How to get started:

Learn more about local biking issues by:

- Reviewing the Web site or contacting local, state, and national bicycle associations and organizations; and
- Talking to employees who already bike to work and learn more about the issues with biking in the VA and other areas.

Facility considerations can include:

- Providing safe and adequate bike parking and storage locations;
- Providing changing and shower facilities and lockers to store clothing and personal items;
- Including concessions for bike lanes and other accommodations on the VA facility in facility planning and improvements; and
- Adding and maintaining signs on road ways that emphasize safe walkways and passing to improve awareness of bikers and walkers.

Ideas for promotion:

- Providing incentives (helmets, free bagels for bikers from local baker for energy for the commute, etc.);
- Encouraging participation in community biking events and challenges;
- Providing maps of safe biking routes in the area and routes to the facility;

- Establishing a biking group to discuss any community issues at the facility (helps to identify a biking leader/champion for the facility);
- Providing educational presentations on bike safety, etc.;
- Creating programs that allow for alternate transport in the event of injury or need to be transported from facility in an emergency/due to illness; and
- Organizing cycling events for the staff (e.g., weekly or monthly cycling day).

Other things to consider:

- Highlighting staff members who participate in biking to work;
- Creating and distributing start kits - many local and national organizations provide these kits or instructions on what should be included;
- Creating a loaner bike program for employees; and
- Using vanpool and carpool vehicles with bike racks.

Helpful Resources:

League of American Bicyclists. Available at: <http://www.bikeleague.org/index.php>.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center.

Available at: <http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/>.

