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Adding Up the Cost of Commuting

New Online Calculator from QBP Reveals Hidden Expense of Driving

BLOOMINGTON, MN – July 31, 2007 –With gas prices soaring, most drivers don't need an economist to gauge the squeeze on their budgets. But dollars don't stop gushing at the pump. As traffic volumes increase in metro areas across the country, commuters shell out ever more for maintenance and insurance. Add in the health effects of sedentary lifestyles and the looming specter of global climate change and the freeway becomes a mighty expensive toll road. To help commuters get a handle on the true cost of driving and inspire them to try biking to work, QBP developed the Commuting Calculator. Posted on QBP.com, the tool helps motorists determine how much they spend each month by factoring in daily miles, days driven per month and other variables.

“The results are enlightening,” said Steve Flagg, president of QBP. “If you're commuting 20 miles a day—which is the average for many drivers—you're parting with thousands of dollars annually. From a business perspective it's a depreciating investment that gets more expensive to maintain with each passing year. And from an environmental perspective it is simply unsustainable.”

The calculator shows how a 20-mile roundtrip in a vehicle getting 24 miles per gallon costs about \$300 a month or more than \$3,600 a year. The tool also measures days commuted per month and estimates the return on investment a bike produces. Typically, cycling just eight days a month produces enough savings to cover the cost of a budget-priced bike.

Of course, bike commuters do more than save money, they can add years to their lives by staying active. More than 300,000 Americans die every year from conditions associated with sedentary lifestyles, including heart disease, diabetes, colon cancer and stroke. Yet according to a report from former Surgeon General Audrey F. Manley, 85 percent of these diseases can be prevented through regular exercise and sensible eating.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reports that every gallon of gasoline we burn produces about 19 pounds of carbon dioxide. The average car clocking around 12,000 miles per year spews a staggering 5.2 metric tons of CO₂ emissions. By doing their part to reduce greenhouse gases, bike commuters make a difference to the health of the planet.

“If enough of us bike to work only a few times a month, we can remove a chunk of our annual CO₂ output,” said Doug Shidell, organizer of the company's competitive Commuter Bike League. “It might not turn the tables on global warming, but it's a good start.”

About QBP

Based in Bloomington, MN, QBP is a leading distributor to the cycling industry. QBP offers domestic and international retailers a wide array of products and services including a 1,500-page catalog, a robust online ordering system, a renowned custom wheel service, a specialty bike-building program and more. QBP continues to be a vigorous advocate for the cycling industry. For more information, please contact Jo Wright, director of marketing at 952 -941-9391, or visit: www.QBP.com.