

Peace Energy: Transportation Efficiency Tips

Excerpted from a piece by Terri Suess, NJPA Board and Peace Energy Committee

The U.S., with 5% of the world's population, uses about 26% of its oil. Not only does this breed resentment in other countries, it undermines our national security. Most of the oil consumed in the U.S. is used as gasoline and other transportation fuels. To significantly reduce our dependence on oil (and the need for military intervention to acquire vast amounts of it), we must find ways to reduce consumption.

Here are five things you can do today:

- 1. Choose a car that uses less gasoline.** When buying a car, consider a hybrid-electric or alternatively fueled vehicle. If these are beyond your budget, buy a vehicle that gets at least 25% better mileage than your current vehicle. If the typical household increased fuel economy by 25%, the nation would save about 250 million gallons of gasoline per year, which would meaningfully reduce oil dependence.
- 2. Keep your car well tuned.** Make sure your tires are properly inflated for summer and winter driving. Check that pollution controls are working well. Change the oil every 2,500 to 3,000 miles. This will ensure your car does not waste gas or emit excess air pollutants.
- 3. Give yourself a definite driving-reduction goal.** Develop a strategy to reach your goal, reducing the miles you drive each week. Set a target of reducing your driving by perhaps 10%.
- 4. Look for opportunities to car pool.** With a little planning, you could probably find at least a few trips each week when you could drive with a friend, neighbor or co-worker.
- 5. Consciously select walking, bicycling and public transportation.** Before stepping into the car, think about whether the trip you are about to make is one that you could make with public transportation, by walking or by riding a bicycle.

Source: The 15th Annual Tour De Sol, "The Great American Green Transportation Festival" (with a stop in Trenton, NJ on May 12, 2003), presented by the Northeast Sustainable Energy Association. For more information and details contact NESEA at www.nesea.org.

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