

Densities would increase in southeast Fresno plan

Officials say change is needed to save farmland, cut smog, aid mass transit.

By Russell Clemings

The Fresno Bee, Tuesday, June 10, 2008

Whether Fresno-area home buyers are willing to live a lot closer to their neighbors is the big question about a new master plan for 14 square miles on the city's southeastern edge.

In a metropolitan area where people now live in homes spaced four, five or six to the acre, the Southeast Growth Area plan could place them in 10 homes per acre on average, and more than 20 per acre in some places.

City planners say the high densities are needed to preserve farmland, reduce driving-related air pollution, and support planned mass transit improvements. Moreover, says Development Director Nick Yovino, the city hopes to set an example for smaller cities that are facing the same issues.

"We want to provide the leadership for the whole San Joaquin Valley," Yovino said. "Our feeling is if we can do it, other cities can do it as well."

The \$2 million plan aligns well with other regional planning efforts that call for higher density, including the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint now being written. But existing residents of the now semirural southeast area are watching the new plan carefully. And by Yovino's own account, builders remain skeptical.

The Southeast Growth Area covers about 14 square miles in two large blocks. One block is generally bounded by Temperance, Jensen and Highland avenues and the Gould Canal on the north. The other, farther south, is bounded by Temperance, Jensen, North and Minnewawa avenues.

Some 3,000 people live in those areas. By 2050, that number is predicted to be 120,000. At typical current density levels, housing that many people could require almost 30 square miles, and Fresno might sprawl its way into merging with Sanger.

"The reality is there are going to be a lot of people moving into this area," said Richard Simonian, chairman of an advisory committee for the new plan.

Early versions of the plan will get their first public review tonight at the Fresno Convention Center. If anything resembling them is endorsed by the City Council in a vote planned for next spring, those throngs of new residents will live in neighborhoods that the city's current residents wouldn't recognize.

Several versions of the plan feature a "regional center" -- a second downtown, in essence -- centered on DeWolf Avenue between Highway 180 and Butler Avenue. Multistory buildings, with apartments or condominiums upstairs and stores on the ground level, would line the regional center's narrow streets. At its center would be a transit station.

A bus rapid transit line, fashioned after light rail but using special buses instead of trains, would speed commuters from that station to downtown Fresno, stopping every mile. Within the regional center and seven other community centers, walking would be the primary means of transport.

The densities and mass transit are intertwined, said Yovino's chief assistant, Keith Bergthold.

"To have mass transit work," Bergthold said, "you need about 20 units per acre for a quarter-mile around those [transit] stations. You want to have those higher densities, so a lot of people live very close to those stations and can use them."

Reaction to the plan is still muted as residents and others wait to see the details. Some in the area -- such as Joe Castiglione, who lives on 165 acres just south of Belmont Country Club, and Eddie Hernandez, who lives on a farm on Temperance north of California Avenue -- say they are preparing to accommodate growth.

"I think the plan's going to work all right," Castiglione said, although he admits to being "a little bit concerned, because we like living out here in the country." He said he intends to stay in his house on part of his property and, most likely, sell the rest to a developer.

Hernandez expects to move and sell his land, which he said has been in his family since 1960, for industrial development. A rail line runs along the edge of the property, enhancing its value for that purpose, and one version of the plan designates his land for industry.

Farther north, near Shields and Leonard avenues, retired lawyer and vineyardist Jerry Henry said he supports high density and transit-friendly development, but worries that future planners won't be able to make that vision stick.

"What's to prevent some future City Council from saying that's nothing but a colored piece of paper hanging on the wall?" Henry asked. "I don't think they have any way to enforce what they're doing."

The plan's early versions aim to head off some opposition by preserving the rural lifestyles of many current residents by setting them off in pockets that will remain low in density. And while local builders have long voiced doubt about being able to sell high-density homes in this market, one leader said that may be changing.

Yovino said he still hears doubts from builders: "This is totally foreign to them." But Michael Prandini, president and chief executive officer of the Building Industry Association of Fresno and Madera Counties, said his members' views are evolving.

"Ten years ago, the builders wouldn't have thought about building on a 4,000- or 5,000-square-foot lot," he said. "Now it's becoming common."

One of Prandini's worries is that the city won't be able to build needed infrastructure -- including a new sewage-treatment plant for the area -- until many years have passed. Yovino and Bergthold said, however, that the city has retained a consultant to come up with a strategy for that, possibly involving a special district and funded by bonds that would be paid off by the plan area's eventual development.

"The only way to make this plan work is that the major infrastructure has got to be put in ahead of development," Yovino said. "We've never figured out how to finance something like that before."

That's not all that remains to be figured out. Details of bus rapid transit and "walkable" development are still sketchy at best. But if it all works out, Bergthold said, a portion of Fresno by mid-century will be "more mixed and integrated, linking jobs and housing and recreation and services" into a new style of urban development for the San Joaquin Valley.

South Merced medical clinic gets grant A San Francisco foundation is donating \$180,000.

By Leslie Albrecht

Merced Sun-Star, Tuesday, June 10, 2008

Merced's south side is about to get a shot in the arm -- literally and figuratively.

Golden Valley Health Centers, a South Merced-based clinic that serves low-income residents, has received a \$180,000 grant aimed at improving South Merced residents' health.

The San Francisco-based Tides Foundation awarded the grant, which will fund two years of work. Golden Valley Health Centers will work with the Merced-Mariposa County Asthma Coalition, the Merced County Department of Public Health and the Central California Regional Obesity Prevention Project on the grant project.

The project's broad goals are to talk to South Merced community members about how their neighborhood could become a healthier place to live, said Golden Valley Health Centers CEO Mike Sullivan.

"It's getting out of our traditional mode of operating and caring for people in an exam room and recognizing that a lot of health care can go on if we just look at the community's needs," said Sullivan.

Staffers working on the grant project will hold public meetings where South Merced residents can discuss how to create a healthier neighborhood.

They'll also educate residents about the root causes of poor health, said Mary-Michal Rawling, program manager with the Merced/Mariposa Asthma Coalition.

For example, how a neighborhood is planned and built can affect residents' health, said Rawling.

Mixed-use development that makes it easier for residents to walk, bike or use public transport creates healthier neighborhoods, said Rawling.

People who walk or bike more get more exercise; fewer cars means less air pollution and therefore fewer asthma attacks, she said.

The grant project could result in some neighborhood-based solutions to improving health, such as building a community garden or forming neighborhood walking groups, said Sullivan.

Another goal of the grant is to cultivate new leaders in a part of town that's "traditionally been left out of decision making in the city," said Rawling.

The grant project will kick off with a public summit this fall. The grant is particularly well-timed, said Sullivan, because Merced's only hospital, Mercy Medical Center Merced, will move to North Merced within the next few years.

"What's going to be left behind? That's a tangible issue that needs to be dealt with," said Sullivan.

If you go

For more information about the summit that will kick off Golden Valley Health Centers' new health project in South Merced, contact the Merced/Mariposa Asthma Coalition at (209) 385-5490.

Heat Wave Moves Into 4th Day

Relief Near for Scorched Area

By Nick Miroff and Jonathan Mummolo
Washington Post, Tuesday, June 10, 2008

Somewhere over Ohio and Kentucky and the central Appalachian range, there is an end to this wicked heat wave, a benevolent air mass of milder weather moving our way that won't kill your lawn or wither your pets. If it arrives later today, as predicted, it will break the hot spell in a crack of thunder, banishing the awful funk out to sea.

And the people will rejoice. For they have suffered.

They suffered yesterday, the third day in a row, in stuffy classrooms and hot cars and at dusty construction sites. They suffered in sweaty homes without electricity and in office buildings where cooling systems quit working. With few clouds to shield the bright, baking sun, the pre-summer heat wave hit 96 degrees at Reagan National Airport at 3:22 p.m. That was well below the record high of 102 set in 1874, but surely no spring picnic. The heat index, which is how hot it feels, reached 102.

And it was plenty hot enough to put local governments, power companies and worried parents on alert. Cooling centers remained open, public pools extended hours and administrators at several schools around the region sent students home for lack of air conditioning.

The hot weather will continue today, with temperatures in the upper 90s, forecasters said. Relief would come with a front of cooler air that should arrive by afternoon or evening, with thunderstorms possible.

"Some will be capable of producing damaging winds and large hail, but they won't be as widespread as last Wednesday," said National Weather Service meteorologist Brian LaSorsa, referring to violent storms that killed a Fairfax County man.

Hundreds of thousands of area residents lost power in those storms, and although service had been nearly restored by yesterday afternoon, there were new reports of power failures in Herndon and Springfield and in parts of Maryland and the District.

The heat produced poor [air quality](#), which prompted several schools to cancel recess and forced Metro to issue a Code Red alert, offering free rides on bus routes outside the District. The agency did not get the word out to its drivers before the morning rush, so many riders paid for their trips anyway.

At least they did not have to drive in traffic. Heat-averse residents who had spent the weekend in their homes were left to contend with sweltering commutes and roasting classrooms.

In Prince George's County, Isaac J. Gourdine and Dwight D. Eisenhower middle schools and Central and Bladensburg high schools suspended classes because of a lack of air conditioning, said Tanzi West, a spokeswoman for the school system. In Rockville, Tilden Middle School also overheated, and classes were canceled.

In Howard County, officials shut Howard and Marriott Ridge high schools at 12:30 p.m. because the campuses' cooling systems had given out. Parents in minivans and sport-utility vehicles arrived, idling in long lines in the hot sun, waiting to take home the students.

Doug Lambert, a minister at the Greater Baltimore Church of Christ of Brooklyn, Md., had his entire day mapped out until he received a midmorning text message from his daughter Victoria, a freshman at Howard High School, asking him to pick her up. Lambert was looking forward, cautiously, to the end of the heat wave.

"They say we're going to get a break because the highs will only be in the 80s," he said as he waited in his air-conditioned van. "When temperatures in the 80s sound like a break, you know it's bad."

The air conditioning also conked out in a 10-story office building in the 6900 block of Carroll Avenue in Takoma Park, sending hundreds of workers home. "Most people left because the windows don't open and it's 85 to 90 degrees in the building," said Jeremy Busse, owner of Advanced Building Design, an architecture and general contracting firm. "It's too hot to work," he said, calling the heat wave "ridiculous."

At Waverly House, a senior housing facility in Bethesda that lost its air conditioning over the weekend, about 75 people fled for the second consecutive day to escape the heat. Officials scrambled to install room air conditioners for residents who stayed, and they expected to have those apartments equipped by this afternoon.

For some, the oppressive heat made a trip to the pool unbearable. Kelly Edwards of Leesburg and her children Hannah, 2 1/2, and Emma, 8 months, instead went to the public library in Ashburn. "It is a little worrisome," she said. "With younger kids, even going to the pool -- it's too hot for them to be out too long, even if they're in the water."

With temperatures straining engines and car batteries as much as drivers, AAA Mid-Atlantic had received about 4,840 calls for service by 5 p.m. yesterday, including 1,163 in Maryland, 1,015 in Virginia and 184 in the District. A typical 24-hour period in the summer usually totals about 5,600 calls. "The two busiest times of the year for us are in extreme heat and extreme cold," said John

Townsend, a spokesman for AAA, which includes Delaware, Pennsylvania and New Jersey in its mid-Atlantic region. Batteries, tires, engine belts and hoses -- "anything made of rubber" -- are vulnerable during extreme heat, he said.

Even shopping, usually a reliable escape on the most miserable days, could not alleviate the hot-and-bothered-ness of it all. At Leesburg Corner Premium Outlets, customers shuttled quickly through the muggy plaza, eager to reach the air conditioning in the next store. The brief periods spent outdoors were enough to sap shoppers' strength.

Heather Freeman of Dublin, Va., said she and friend were cutting their shopping day short. "We're just about done," Freeman said shortly after 3 p.m., resting on a shaded bench. "The heat kind of drains you. . . . My dogs don't even like to go out. I don't blame them. If I had on a fur coat, I'd want to go back inside, too."

BE GREEN

Here comes the sun

By Alex Breitler - Record Staff Writer

Stockton Record, Tuesday, June 10, 2008

While you can still taste your morning Cheerios, Stockton's Bev Blum is already making dinner.

At 9 a.m. one recent day, she was preparing curried rice, poppy-seed muffins, homemade applesauce and barbecued ribs — minus the barbecue.

Blum, 71, is a solar cook. Whenever she can — that is, whenever the sun shines brightly in her north Stockton backyard — she leaves food out on her deck, where it slowly sizzles for hours, maybe all day.

EDITOR'S NOTE

This is the ninth in a monthly series on reducing your impact on the environment.

Fast food it isn't. But there are rewards for her patience: no slaving over a stove. Less energy consumed. No pollution from burning charcoal.

Blum lauds all of these qualities, but they're not what got her started as a solar cook 20 years ago.

"I'm lazy," she laughed. "This way I can put something out in the morning, be gone all day and have my dinner when I get home without having to go into the kitchen."

Blum recommends the following recipes:

Simplest sunny summer supper

"Solar-cued" ribs: Put ribs and barbecue sauce in a dark, covered pot.

Curry rice: Combine 1 cup of rice, 2 cups water, 2 tablespoons butter, 2 tablespoons minced onion, 1 teaspoon curry in a dark, covered pot.

Muffins: Combine muffin mix, 1 cup water and 1 egg, and pour into a dark muffin tin, covered by a second dark muffin tipped upside down (as a lid).

Green salad: Grown in the sun but not cooked in the sun.

Applesauce: Cored apples, whole or cut, sprinkled with sugar and cinnamon in a dark, covered pot.

While most foods cook in a few hours, pots can stay out all day; meat cooked all day is especially tender, Blum said.

You can be a solar cook, too

First, you'll need a kit. You can buy one online or make your own using cardboard, aluminum foil and glue.

You'll need a cooking area that is sunny for several hours at least.

Food cooks best in black pots with tight lids to capture the heat.

Put the pot in a plastic bag that will allow sunlight to enter but will trap the heat.

Shiny reflectors positioned like a screen around your pots will capture even more sunlight.

Some advanced tips:

Add water or not? Vegetables, fruits and meats cook well without water, which tends to wash away nutrients. For grains and beans, use the same amount of water you'd use when cooking conventionally.

What time should I cook? Solar cooking is best when the length of your shadow on the ground is shorter than your height. The sun is most intense from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

My food won't cook quickly enough! Clouds, strong winds, thick pots, the amount and size of the food, and the amount of water might be slowing you down.

For more details and suggestions, visit the Web site of Sacramento-based Solar Cookers International at www.solarcooking.org.

Cook times

1-2 hours: eggs, rice, fruit, vegetables (above ground), fish, chicken

3-4 hours: potatoes, vegetables (roots), some beans and lentils, most meat, bread

5-8 hours: large roasts, soup and stew, most dried beans

Ford, GM now green with envy

By THE SEATTLE TIMES

Modesto Bee, Tuesday, June 10, 2008

U.S. automakers are describing what amounts to the SUV tipping point. They say gasoline prices that raced past \$4 a gallon have ended the era of the highway behemoth, with consumer preference irrevocably changed.

Maybe. Considering how wrong Detroit was for decades about the desire for an American-made, fuel-efficient car, the industry's record as a prognosticator is woefully suspect. After successfully resisting federally mandated fuel-efficiency standards just as the U.S. market steadily bought foreign vehicles with better mileage, a wrenching restructuring is under way.

Another round of truck and SUV plant closures has been announced, which will bring to 35 the number shut down by GM, Ford and Chrysler since 2005, according to industry analysts. Another 35 plants run by suppliers are shuttered or going dark.

Corporate average fuel-efficiency standards were introduced by Congress in 1975 after the first big oil shock. They not only stretched fuel economy and contributed to reductions in air pollution, they signaled a purposefulness about conservation that cut imports and sent a strong message. Prices that spiked came down. So did the U.S. driver's pursuit of higher mileage, CAFE opponents argued.

Except consumers found quality and savings in cars from abroad. As U.S. automakers contract — or implode — foreign automakers will build five more plants in this country. We are now the offshore outsource. Employment will go from 113,000 workers to 152,000 by 2011, according to news accounts.

Ford has its own riff on that theme. Plans are to move assembly of its economical Fiesta to Mexico, where it is intended to be Ford's car of choice for the international market. Mexico is very excited, as it has lost manufacturing jobs to China.

As the automakers talk of a return to profitability, the key words are North American results, with the new plants and major job hires in Mexico.

Gasoline was expensive at \$2 and \$3 a gallon. Consumers looking for a U.S. option found all the creativity going into trucks and monster SUVs.

Maybe the hybrid Chevy Volt will spark some excitement when it comes out in 2011. The Toyota Prius will be celebrating its 10th anniversary of U.S. sales.

[Letter to the Fresno Bee, Tuesday, June 10, 2008:](#)

'Problem is the drivers'

To Harold J. Gallagher (letter June 5) and to all readers who believe the signal lights are the problem, consider the following: In a letter to the editor, traffic engineer John Ennis wrote "For 10 years as a traffic engineer, I tried and failed to synchronize the signal lights in Fresno."

Mr. Ennis did synchronize the lights as much as possible. The problem is the drivers. Drivers must educate themselves to understand that the lights are red half of the time and green the other half. You only need to synchronize your driving to the lights. Not a difficult thing to learn.

No progress will ever be achieved without an ongoing campaign to educate drivers. [The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District](#) has the responsibility, along with the cooperation of the newspaper, radio and TV, to accomplish results. This campaign would be a great public service that would have a positive impact on reducing air pollution.

Unfortunately, not everyone reads letters to the editor.

Clay K. Comer, Pinedale

[Fresno Bee column, Tuesday, June 10, 2009:](#)

Can Fresno get it right in latest try to plan growth?

By Bill McEwen / The Fresno Bee

I want to believe the hype.

I want to believe that City Hall can team with builders to turn 14 square miles on the edge of Fresno into a beautiful community, where people walk and bike to the market and take mass transit to work.

I want to believe in the Southeast Growth Area plan -- marketed as SEGA -- because compact, well thought-out neighborhoods would preserve water, reduce air pollution and preserve valuable farm land.

City Hall certainly has gone about this task differently than it did planning other parts of Fresno.

One, it is actively courting public participation instead of doing the legal minimum and trying to fly under the radar.

Two, it has enlisted internationally recognized Peter Calthorpe, an expert in urban planning, to develop SEGA.

And, three, Development Director Nick Yovino and his staff will reveal their proposals tonight in a public meeting at the Fresno Convention Center.

In case you aren't yet swayed to attend the unveiling, know that City Hall bills the session as "a milestone event for the San Joaquin Valley's future."

History tells me not to believe the hype -- or trust that cutting-edge plans won't be chopped and diced into a thousand rezoned pieces by speculators, developers and politicians.

Any optimism I have about City Hall's ability to do it right is tempered by Fresno's sordid planning past.

Nightmares of the past 20 years remain fresh: the Operation Rezone corruption investigation, the continuing "Fresno 40" tug-of-war, the northeast "Urban Reserve" that wasn't, the Woodward Park Community Plan that changed before the ink dried and George Kerber's assessment, after being forced out as planning director in 1989, that Fresno's development process was "crippled" and a "vehicle for political deal-making."

I fear that with government treasuries hurting, City Hall will opt for quick tax dollars from cheap and easy development instead of fostering environmentally sound neighborhoods.

I fear that the market won't support the higher densities and better use of resources called for in SEGA.

And I fear that few people will care enough to force politicians and developers to stick with the plan. When only 27% of registered voters bother to cast a ballot for mayor, as happened last week, the runaway winner is apathy.

The stakes are high for SEGA because City Hall's goal is to use economic, transportation and land-use concepts favored by planners writing the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint.

But if Fresno -- the anchor of the Valley -- sticks with its old ways, small towns won't rein in growth, either. The ugly result: continued approval of acreage-gobbling subdivisions and loss of prime farm land.

I could be worrying for nothing. With gas approaching \$5 a gallon, local auto dealers say they can't keep hybrids and other fuel-sipping cars in stock. People are embracing change -- just to pay the bills.

Maybe it's all about the cost of gas, and the car-and-freeway culture that lured families out of the city and into the suburbs is about to go the way of the buggy whip.

Even here in sprawling, developer-run Fresno.

[Letter to the Editor, Washington Post, Tuesday, June 10, 2008](#)

Metro's Code Red Miscommunication

It is a fine idea for Metro to offer free bus rides on Code Red air-quality days such as yesterday. ["As Temperatures Rise, Residents Seek Relief," front page, June 8].

News organizations are advised by Metro to make announcements of free rides to the public. Unfortunately, however, Metro does not tell its drivers in time for the morning rush. Yesterday morning, I boarded my bus at 7:30 and was told by the driver that I had to pay the full fare.

Several minutes later, the driver was informed of the Code Red by phone. I will be able to get a refund, but it is a cumbersome process that will take time.

Metro needs to fine-tune its procedures to make good on its promise of free bus rides on Code Red days.

SANDRA A. SAWICKI

Annandale

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Federal Government analyzes the impact of solar energy programs. For more information on this and other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

Analiza gobierno federal impacto para programas de energía solar

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Tuesday, June 10, 2008

La Administración federal de Tierras lleva a cabo una serie de audiencias públicas para analizar el impacto que tendrían varios proyectos de energía alternativa, especialmente de energía solar, en el oeste estadounidense.

Las siguientes audiencias serán en Barstow, Riverside y Sacramento. Después dicha consulta pasará a los estados de Arizona, Colorado, Nuevo México, Nevada y Utah.

[Los proyectos, principalmente en áreas desérticas, podrían sustituir con energía solar la generación de electricidad, que actualmente produce contaminación del aire en toda la región oeste del país.](#)

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses the increase in fuel promotes telecommuting.](#)

Aumento de los combustibles alienta el teletrabajo

By Rob Lever

Agence France Presse

Diario Las Americas, Monday, June 09, 2008

WASHINGTON - Es un día típico para Joanne Senn: envía a sus hijas a la escuela, alimenta a los gatos y se apresta a iniciar su jornada laboral como responsable de marketing del sector de programas informáticos de IBM... en su cocina.

Esta estadounidense de 46 años, que vive en Austin (Texas, centro-sur) dice pasar 95% de su tiempo de trabajo en su domicilio, donde consulta su correo electrónico, organiza conferencias telefónicas con sus colegas en Europa y Estados Unidos e intercambia ideas por medio de un programa de mensajería instantánea.

“Es muy gratificante escapar al tráfico”, se congratula Senn, que evita el diario trayecto de 25 kms hasta las oficinas de IBM en Austin. “Uno puede concentrarse más”, dice feliz.

A lo largo y ancho del país, cada vez más trabajadores -asalariados o no- se orientan hacia el teletrabajo para economizar en gastos de transporte, en momentos en que los precios de los combustibles no paran de subir.

No menos de 48% de los empresarios del país ofrecen posibilidades de trabajo domiciliario al menos una vez por semana, según Society of Human Resource, una asociación de ejecutivos. Otras iniciativas que buscan enfrentar la disparada de los precios de los combustibles incluyen principalmente la semana de cuatro días, asistencia para compartir vehículos o subsidios para el transporte, según la asociación.

IBM integró la noción de teletrabajo y otras opciones similares desde 1992, con resultados positivos. La empresa afirma que cerca de 40% de sus 386.000 empleados tienen la opción al menos parcial de trabajar a distancia.

Gracias a tecnologías como las redes privadas virtuales, que permiten a los empleados contactarse en circuitos seguros de las empresas, los asalariados pueden ser igualmente productivos fuera de sus oficinas, estima Andrea Jackson, responsable de movilidad y condiciones de trabajo de IBM, en relación al creciente interés por el teletrabajo.

“En IBM nos concentramos en los resultados”, afirma. “Con esto en mente, el lugar a partir del cual se trabaja no tiene realmente importancia. Hemos descubierto que (las condiciones flexibles de trabajo) permiten a los empleados ser más productivos”.

Un estudio realizado en 2006 por la universidad de Maryland y Rockbridge Associates mostró que cerca de 2% de los estadounidenses realizaban teletrabajo a tiempo completo y 9% parcialmente.

Pero la investigación mostró que 25% de los trabajadores podrían potencialmente trabajar a distancia y que si lo hicieran podrían economizar al menos 3.900 millones de dólares.

Charles Colby, presidente de Rockbridge, indicó que esa ganancia podría ser mayor con el alza de los combustibles, pero que el número de personas que efectivamente se inclinarán hacia ese modo de trabajo es todavía incierto.

“Tal vez descubramos que la gente continuará acudiendo a su lugar de trabajo, pero opten por compartir sus vehículos o usen automóviles que consuman menos combustible”, afirmó.

Según Jack Heacock, vicepresidente de la Telework Coalition, un grupo que promueve el teletrabajo, esta práctica se está extendiendo más allá de las esferas tradicionales como centrales telefónicas.

“En los últimos seis meses, hemos recibido un número creciente de llamados de industrias pesadas que buscan información sobre lo que podrían hacer por sus empleados”, señaló.

Heacock advierte sin embargo que algunos empresarios son reticentes a este modo de trabajo. “La mayoría de los empresarios cree firmemente que es imperativo estar en su lugar de trabajo”, lamenta.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Californian residents protest against plans for the expansion of a refinery in Richmond.](#)

Protestan residentes de California contra planes de expansión de refinería

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Friday, June 06, 2008

Residentes mayormente latinos de la ciudad de Richmond en California protestaron contra planes de una refinería de la firma Chevron para ampliar su capacidad de producción de combustibles con mayores volúmenes de petróleo crudo.

La Alianza para la Justicia Ambiental de Richmond declaró que la planta ya emite niveles peligrosos de contaminación y que incrementarlos haría muy difícil vivir en el área.

La protesta fue sometida ante el gobierno local, que analiza un permiso para Chevron. Las activistas Concepción Chávez y Jessica Tovar dijeron por separado que la refinería ha causado problemas de salud y que la comunidad tiene derecho a vivir en un mejor ambiente.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Toyota develops an improved version of its Fuel Cell Hybrid Vehicle.](#)

Toyota desarrolla vehículo híbrido

Tiene célula de combustible.

AP

La Voz, Friday, June 06, 2008

TOKIO (AP) _ Toyota desarrolló un nuevo vehículo híbrido impulsado por hidrógeno y electricidad que puede viajar más del doble que el modelo anterior sin recargar, dijo el viernes la empresa.

La autonomía del nuevo modelo es de 830 kilómetros (516 millas) en comparación con 330 kilómetros (205 millas) del modelo anterior de Toyota, dijo el fabricante en una declaración.

El modelo FCHV-adv, que recibió el martes la aprobación del gobierno japonés, estará disponible en Japón para su alquiler a largo plazo este año, dijo la portavoz Kayo Doi de Toyota Motor Corp. El precio y otros detalles no estaban disponibles y los planes para el exterior todavía no estaban decididos, dijo.

[Los modelos propulsados por células binarias de combustible no contaminan el ambiente ya que se impulsan con la potencia de la reacción química cuando el hidrógeno almacenado en el tanque se combina con el oxígeno en el aire para producir agua.](#)

El FCHV-adv del segundo mayor fabricante automotor en el mundo trae un motor eléctrico y funciona como híbrido al alternar entre ese motor y la célula de combustible. Los híbridos anteriores de Toyota alternaban entre un motor eléctrico y un motor tradicional de gasolina.

La eficiencia de combustible del FCHV-adv fue mejorada un 25% con mejores frenos y otras mejoras, dijo Toyota. El nuevo modelo puede arrancar y andar con temperaturas de hasta 30 grados centígrados bajo cero (22 Fahrenheit bajo cero), dijo.

Los modelos de células de combustible suelen ofrecerse en alquiler prolongado puesto que la tecnología es demasiado cara como para que la mayoría de los clientes puedan comprarlos directamente.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses the 10 ecological commandments which will be officially recognized on June 11th by the Vatican.](#)

Los 10 mandamientos ecológicos

Serán dados a conocer el 11 de junio

Univision Online, Friday, June 06, 2008

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO - El Vaticano preparó un decálogo de recomendaciones para el "buen ecologista" que pide, entre otras recomendaciones, no reducir al mero uso utilitario a la naturaleza, ni manipularla de forma indiscriminada.

Apegado al Catecismo

El texto, que resume las enseñanzas de la Iglesia católica en materia de medio ambiente, será presentado en Milán el próximo 11 de junio por Gianpaolo Crepaldi, secretario del Pontificio Consejo Justicia y Paz.

L'Osservatore Romano, el diario oficial de la Santa Sede, adelantó en su edición digital del miércoles que estos "diez mandamientos" ecológicos "indican los criterios morales para corresponder, en modo responsable, al proyecto sobre la Creación".

Según la publicación, el decálogo ecológico establece dos "exigencias fundamentales" para respetar la naturaleza como bien colectivo. La primera de ellas no reducirla al planeta a una utilización a mero objeto de manipulación por parte del hombre.

Cuidar la naturaleza

La segunda exigencia, añade, no "absolutizar" la naturaleza ni superponerla a la dignidad de la persona humana.

"En consecuencia, se debe hacer que prevalezca la ética sobre la técnica", subrayó.

"A nivel nacional e internacional es necesario armonizar las políticas de desarrollo con aquellas ambientales y obrar activamente, incluso a través de acuerdos mundiales, para el desarrollo integral y solidario de las regiones más pobres" del planeta, indica el avance sobre el decálogo ecológico.

Se solicita también -concluyó el avance de *L'Osservatore Romano*- un "cambio de mentalidad" que induzca a adoptar nuevos estilos de vida y una respuesta espiritual inspirada por la convicción que la Creación es un don de Dios puesto en las manos de los hombres.

Los mandamientos ecológicos

En decálogo ecológico de la Iglesia Católica coincide con una guía elaborada por Crepaldi, quien en 2005 dio a conocer un resumen de los principales puntos de la enseñanza de la Iglesia sobre temas ecológicos.

Los 10 mandamientos ecológicos según Crepaldi -publicados en la página digital de Zenit.org-, son los siguientes:

Usa la Tierra y sus recursos con responsabilidad. La Biblia presenta los principios morales fundamentales de cómo afrontar la cuestión ecológica. La persona humana, hecha a imagen de Dios, es superior al resto de las criaturas terrenales que, a su vez, deben usarse responsablemente. La encarnación de Cristo y sus enseñanzas testimonian el valor de la naturaleza: Nada de lo que existe en el mundo está fuera del plan divino de creación y redención.

No manipules ni explotes de mala manera los recursos naturales. La enseñanza social de la Iglesia recuerda dos puntos fundamentales. No debemos reducir la naturaleza a un mero instrumento a manipular y explotar. Ni debemos hacer de la naturaleza un valor absoluto, o ponerla por encima de la dignidad de la persona humana.

Piensa que la Tierra también es para nuestros hijos. La cuestión del medio ambiente abraza a todo el planeta, puesto que es un bien colectivo. Nuestra responsabilidad hacia la ecología se extiende a las futuras generaciones.

Trata con respeto la Tierra y sus recursos naturales. Es necesario confirmar la primacía de la ética y de los derechos del hombre sobre la tecnología, para preservar la dignidad humana. El punto central de referencia para toda aplicación científica o técnica debe ser el respeto por la persona humana, que, a su vez, debe tratar a los demás seres creados con respeto.

No modifiques el ecosistema. Si lo modificas, hazlo con responsabilidad moral. La naturaleza no debe considerarse como una realidad divina en sí misma; por lo tanto no debe apartarse de la acción humana. Es, más bien, un regalo ofrecido por nuestro Creador a la comunidad humana, confiado a su inteligencia humana y a su responsabilidad moral. De ahí se sigue que no sea ilícito el modificar el ecosistema, siempre y cuando esto se haga dentro del contexto del respeto por su orden y belleza, y tomando en consideración la utilidad de cada criatura.

Cuando utilices los recursos naturales no dañes el medioambiente. Las cuestiones ecológicas ponen de relieve la necesidad de alcanzar una mayor armonía entre las medidas destinadas a fomentar el desarrollo económico y las dirigidas a preservar la ecología, y entre las políticas nacionales y las internacionales. El desarrollo económico, además, necesita tener en consideración la integridad y el ritmo de la naturaleza, puesto que los recursos naturales son limitados. Y toda actividad económica que utilice los recursos naturales debería incluir también los costes de salvaguardar el medio ambiente en los cálculos de los costes totales de su actividad.

Trabaja por el desarrollo de los pobres. La preocupación por el medio ambiente significa que debemos trabajar activamente por el desarrollo integral de las regiones más pobres. Los bienes de este mundo han sido creados por Dios para ser utilizados sabiamente por todos. Estos bienes

se deben compartir, de una forma justa y caritativa. El principio del destino universal de los bienes ofrece una orientación fundamental para tratar con la compleja relación entre ecología y pobreza.

Ayuda a crear leyes para proteger el medioambiente. La colaboración, por medio de acuerdos mundiales, respaldados por el derecho internacional, es necesaria para proteger el medio ambiente. Es necesario poner en práctica la responsabilidad por el medio ambiente de forma adecuada a nivel jurídico. Estas leyes y acuerdos deberían guiarse por las exigencias del bien común.

Cambia tu estilo de vida, cuida el planeta Tierra. Los estilos de vida deberían orientarse según los principios de sobriedad, templanza y autodisciplina, tanto a nivel personal como social. Las personas necesitan escaparse de la mentalidad consumista y promover métodos de producción que respeten el orden creado, así como la satisfacción de las necesidades de todos. Una mayor conciencia de la interdependencia entre todos los habitantes de la tierra ayudaría a este cambio de estilo de vida.

Agradece a Dios por haberte confiado el cuidado de la Tierra. Se debe dar una respuesta espiritual a las cuestiones medioambientales, inspirada por la convicción de que la Creación es un don que Dios ha puesto en manos de la humanidad, para ser usado de modo responsable y con cuidado cariñoso. La orientación fundamental de las personas hacia el mundo creado debería ser de gratitud y agradecimiento. El mundo, de hecho, conduce a las personas hacia el misterio de Dios que lo ha creado y lo sigue sosteniendo. Si se olvida a Dios, la naturaleza se vacía de su significado más profundo y queda empobrecida. Si se vuelve a descubrir el papel de la naturaleza como algo creado, la humanidad puede establecer con ella una relación que tenga en cuenta sus dimensiones simbólicas y místicas. Esto abriría a la humanidad un camino hacia Dios, creador de cielos y Tierra.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses bio fuel has its defects. It implies serious risks to the environment, including issues with deforestation.](#)

Los biocombustibles tienen sus defectos

Implican serios riesgos medioambientales

Univision Online, Thursday, June 5, 2008

CIUDAD DE MÉXICO – No todo es miel sobre hojuelas. Investigaciones de la Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, en esta capital, revelaron que el uso de biocombustibles implica serios riesgos para el medio ambiente e incluso traería problemas de deforestación.

Sin reglas ni políticas públicas

De acuerdo con la profesora Michelle Chauvet hacen falta programas de evaluación y políticas públicas para el uso de energéticos extraídos de organismos vivos o sus materias de desecho.

Al aumentar la posibilidad de hacer negocios con biocombustibles, "sin cambiar patrones de producción", llevaría a tener grandes extensiones de tierra "mecanizadas" y sobreexplotadas, comentó Chauvet

En el marco del Foro Avances en Bioenergía, la especialista señaló que el cambio del uso del suelo —pasar de tener una producción de monocultivo en grandes extensiones de tipo industrial— necesario para impulsar la producción de bioenergéticos, afectaría a comunidades indígenas, cuya forma de vida está relacionada con el campo y el bosque.

La especialista recordó que la producción del combustible extraído de la palma de aceite de Malasia y Tanzania requiere de apoyos crediticios que duran los ocho años que tarda en crecer la planta, "en todo este tiempo el dueño acumula tal cantidad de deuda que ya no puede retirarse y además no ha recibido ganancia", dijo.

Los biocombustibles tomaron fuerza con el aumento del costo de los energéticos y se perfilan como una opción para producir energía en un futuro cercano. El etanol y el **biodiésel** son actualmente los combustibles biológicos más desarrollados por todo el orbe.

Su utilización cotidiana representa beneficios como la seguridad energética, reducción de emisiones contaminantes, el incremento de ingresos para sector agrícola, creación de fuentes de trabajo y desarrollo comunitario.

Para el año 2020 la Unión Europea exigirá que 10 por ciento de sus carburantes contengan un componente de biocombustibles —actualmente registra capacidad para producir uno por ciento—, por lo que considera a los países con condiciones climatológicas y geográficas para producir las materias primas para alcanzar esa meta.