

Bike to work on Thursday

In the Modesto Bee, Merced Sun-Star and Los Banos Enterprise, Tuesday, May 12, 2009

The city of Modesto is marking the annual California Bike Commute week with a "Bike to Work Day" on Thursday at Tenth Street Plaza.

Police escorts will lead riders through town on designated routes.

Bike commuters can get a free continental breakfast from 6:30 to 8:30 a.m. The first 125 riders will receive a free T-shirt and other incentives to cycle.

A prize drawing will be held, with one winner taking home an electric lawn mower donated by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.

Routes and more details can be found online by clicking [here](#).

For more information, contact the city's Rideshare Coordinator Megan Distaso at 571-5193 or mdistaso@modestogov.com

Pedal power blooming in Stockton

City will honor, reward those who commute to work via two-wheeler

By Alex Breitler, Record Staff Writer

Stockton Record, Tuesday, May 12, 2009

STOCKTON - While you wait in traffic, they swerve onto a side street. While you scramble for a parking spot, they wheel up to the front door.

And while you pump gas, they don't.

Stockton is not renowned as a standout city for bicycles. But commuters across town pedal faithfully each day to and from work, and they might get there faster than you do.

Among their motives: Health. Serenity. Clean air. And, starting this year, bike commuters are eligible for as much as \$20 per month in employer reimbursement for expenses - repairing, storing or even purchasing a bike.

Hoping to encourage more foot pedaling and less gas pedaling, Stockton officials will honor bicycle commuters through a series of events over the next three weeks.

"There are a lot of people who just don't think they can do it," said Gary Colburn, a 59-year-old program specialist who pedals 3.8 miles each morning to Harrison Elementary School.

"The traffic can be intimidating," he said. "People don't see how they could possibly feel comfortable riding around in all that traffic."

Steve Schermerhorn doesn't feel comfortable relying on foreign oil. So for two decades, he has commuted via bicycle. Schermerhorn does have a car, but it has logged only 15,000 miles over the past four years.

"There's no doubt a person can go without a car," the San Joaquin Delta College librarian said.

Kevin Hicks commuted across the Golden Gate Bridge each morning when he was fresh out of law school and working in San Francisco.

On his left, the sun rose over the Oakland hills. On his right, a traffic jam.

"It was a wonderful experience," he said, referring to the sunrise, of course, although breezing past all that traffic wasn't bad, either.

Today, Hicks is the only deputy district attorney in San Joaquin County who arrives at work in shorts and a T-shirt. He's also the only one with a closet in his office, where a proper attorney's outfit awaits.

His commute time, from the front door of his home to the courthouse entrance, is 10 minutes. It's faster than driving.

Commute Connection, a rideshare program operated by the San Joaquin Council of Governments, suggests you give it a try. If you agree to ride your bike or even walk to work just one day this week, you'll be eligible to win a bike and helmet.

The Downtown Stockton Alliance, meanwhile, plans a series of events later in the month, including free breakfast for downtown riders.

The signing of the Bicycle Commuter Act means employers who choose to participate can reimburse commuters \$20 per month, or \$240 per year, tax-free for expenses associated with bicycle commuting. Such benefits already exist for those who take mass transit or vanpool.

Stockton's streets could use some work, bicycle commuters say. Bike lanes start and abruptly stop; narrow bridges force cyclists into traffic. But motorists, they said, are mostly accommodating.

"I've gotten used to riding in traffic," Colburn said, "and I think they've gotten used to me."

Bike to work

If you pledge to ride your bike or walk to work one day this week, you'll be eligible to win a bike and helmet.

Visit www.commuteconnection.com for more information.

- May 22: Stockton Mayor Ann Johnston will take on KJOY's Dirk Kooyman in a motorist versus bicyclist "race" at 9 a.m. This is the first in a series of Downtown Stockton Alliance events.
- May 23: Mayor's Hike and Bike, 8:45 a.m. at Stockton Ballpark. Registration begins at 6:45 a.m.
- May 24: Bike to church day. For information, call (209) 320-2329.
- May 24: Bicyclists get a discount at the Stockton Ports game (2:05 p.m.).
- May 26: Employees biking to work downtown can enjoy a free breakfast reception at Janet Leigh Plaza.

Mini E lease program has electric vehicle fans all charged up 450 in a pilot program will use the automobiles as their daily commuters for a year. Experts say it could be a precursor to an explosion of relatively affordable electric cars in the near future.

By Ken Bensinger, staff writer
L.A. Times, Monday, May 11, 2009

The future of transportation is now available for lease.

In the next few weeks, 450 consumers in California, New York and New Jersey will begin picking up fully electric Mini coupes, charging them at home and using them as their daily commuters for the next year.

They'll pay \$850 a month, plus taxes and insurance, for the right to drive the first highway-legal electric cars that don't cost more than \$100,000 to hit the streets in more than a dozen years. As such, they'll serve as pioneers in what's being hailed as the next great moment in automobile

history: the electric car era.

Never mind the fact that the lease cost on a Mini E is twice that of a regular Mini or that since the battery fills up the back seat, it fits just two people, said Nick Howell, a Pacific Palisades-based technology consultant who's getting one.

"I'm just excited to get a real car that is only powered by electricity," he said.

Howell, his wife, and several hundred other soon-to-be Mini E drivers got a first look at the car one evening last week in Los Angeles at the California Science Center, where BMW, which owns Mini, threw a party reminiscent of a pep rally.

Drink in hand, Howell stared across a room full of giddy fellow lessees savoring a buffet dinner and gushing over the cheery little electric vehicles, or EVs, which zip to 60 miles per hour in 8.5 seconds and top out at 95 mph. "This is going to be an adventure," Howell said.

Nearly a decade after the short-circuiting of the first modern attempt to jump-start electric transportation -- in the form of the EV1 from General Motors Corp., Toyota Motor Corp.'s RAV4 EV and other electric test cars, most of which were destroyed after their leases expired -- the auto industry is back on the switch.

The one-year Mini E pilot program is a precursor to what experts say could be an explosion of relatively affordable electric cars in the near future.

"This is a sign of what's coming," said Edward Kjaer, director of the Electric Transportation Division at Southern California Edison, which is working with automakers including BMW and Ford Motor Co. to develop electric vehicles and infrastructure. "The real fun is going to start next year."

That's when General Motors Corp. is slated to release its much-anticipated plug-in electric Volt sedan. Hot on its heels is Ford, which last week said it would invest \$550 million to retool a Michigan factory that will make electric versions of its Focus compact, due out in 2011.

Japanese automaker Nissan Motor Co. is targeting 2012 for mass-production of its sub-\$33,000 electric car, while Mitsubishi Motors Corp. is set to begin selling its own EV in Japan in 2010.

For its part, BMW does not plan to make a mass-produced version of the Mini E. Instead, it will use data from the lease program to help produce an electric vehicle it plans to sell in the U.S. in 2012.

Meanwhile, a group of start-ups are racing to deliver their own electron-fired vehicles. Among them are Fisker Automotive, an Irvine company that promises a plug-in hybrid in about a year's time, and Santa Monica's Miles Automotive, which in two weeks will unveil the prototype of its Chinese-made sedan that's expected to sell for \$45,000 when it debuts late next year.

Then there's Tesla Motors of San Carlos, Calif., which last year began selling the \$109,000 Roadster, the first all-electric, highway-legal vehicle to be sold (rather than leased) in the U.S. since before World War II. To date, about 400 of the sleek vehicles have been delivered, and last month Tesla showed off the design of its next electric car, the Model S, due in 2012.

"We believe electric vehicles are a big part of the future of this industry," said Mark Perry, Nissan's North American director of advanced technology. He said limited numbers of Nissan's electric vehicle may hit the streets as soon as late next year.

The industry's electric vehicle push is being aided by the Obama administration, which included \$2.4 billion in funding for the vehicles in the stimulus bill passed earlier this year. And on

Thursday the administration cut funding for development of hydrogen fuel cell technology, the main challenger to battery-powered electric vehicles, on grounds that it wouldn't be practical for at least a decade.

Consumer awareness of electric vehicles is also rising, helped in part by the spike in gasoline prices a year ago, as well as growing buzz online. At least half a dozen of the people selected to lease the Mini E have launched blogs detailing the experience.

"Transportation technology is vital to our future," Bill Nye, a TV actor known for an eponymous children's science show, said at the event.

He will put aside his Toyota Prius for a year in order to drive a Mini E.

"It was the first electric car I could get my hands on, and the Tesla is a little too rich for my blood," he said.

There are a number of roadblocks between the gasoline- fueled present and the electrified future. The big ones, such as developing batteries that can survive years of charging and not cost a fortune, are fairly well known.

For start-ups, raising enough money to keep going can be hard, as Phoenix Motorcars of Ontario discovered. The company's plans to begin producing an electric pickup in late 2007 were pushed back several times, suppliers sued and, late last month, Phoenix filed for bankruptcy protection.

Smaller hurdles also abound.

In the case of the Mini E, BMW discovered that although its range was lab-tested at 156 miles per charge, real-world driving put it closer to 100. Installing a 240-volt charger in every driver's garage also proved tricky, since many of the houses didn't have sufficient capacity to support the load. Then there was the plug, almost an afterthought. It turned out that certifying the cable connecting car to charger -- a minor but necessary bit of red tape -- took so long that it delayed the Mini E rollout by more than two months.

"We knew we would have some obstacles to overcome," said Richard Steinberg, Mini's head of product strategy in the U.S. "They turned out to be a little bigger than we thought."

Such concerns didn't seem to register among the more than 200 people who showed up at the Science Center to gawk at the electric cars that they would soon be driving.

Chad Robertson and Kathy Bakken of Los Angeles brought their 12-year-old son, Weston, to inspect the goods. Bakken, an entertainment advertising designer, leased a GM EV1 in the late 1990s and, heartbroken when the company took it away from her, has pined for an electric car ever since.

"The minute I saw this car, I was like, 'I want it now!' " Bakken said, watching Weston sit behind the wheel, a grin spreading across his youthful face.

Sunrise Ford fined \$175,000 for improper gas-mileage modification

By Susan Abram, Staff Writer

L.A. Daily News, Tuesday, May 12, 2009

Sunrise Ford, which has dealerships in North Hollywood and Fontana, has been fined \$175,000 by the state for improperly modifying vehicles with a device designed to improve gas mileage.

The California Air Resources Board imposed the penalty for modifying some 2005 through 2007 vehicles before they were sold in violation of state law, officials said Monday.

Discovery of the unapproved parts was made during a routine dealer inspection, according to the board.

"We expect dealers to follow the law, which requires that certified aftermarket parts only be installed after a vehicle is sold," board Chairman Mary D. Nichols said in a statement. "Our air quality can suffer when careless mistakes are made, so we hope this fine sends a strong message."

Calls to Sunrise Ford were not returned.

The part, called a fuel maximizer, is intended to improve gas mileage and performance in cars by changing the flow of air as it mixes with the gasoline before combustion, according to the board.

Sunrise Ford will pay \$175,000 to the California Air Pollution Control Fund which supports research and programs intended to help air quality in California.

THE INFLUENCE GAME: Firms exact climate price

By Julie Hirschfeld Davis - Associated Press Writer

In the N.Y. Times, S.F. Chronicle and other papers, Tuesday, May 12, 2009

WASHINGTON -- Utilities, steelmakers and oil industry lobbyists have tried to ease the pain of President Barack Obama's push to curb global warming, and they've gotten an early return on the millions of dollars they've spent influencing Congress.

Lawmakers determined to get a deal on climate change are going along with valuable concessions to polluters. It's part of the political trading necessary when powerful industries are involved.

The firms, many of which depend on coal - the biggest source of heat-trapping gases - hold heavy sway on Capitol Hill, where they have spent millions working to change policy and contributing to politicians' campaigns. They have a long history of halting environmental initiatives that threaten their profits, and their stance on the climate change measure - a key element of Obama's agenda - can't be ignored.

They'll accept a costly new "cap and trade" system that would set a ceiling on greenhouse gas emissions and essentially tax them, then allow companies to either reduce their pollution or buy credits from firms that have met the targets. But only if Congress makes it worth their while - by giving them at least some of those permits for free.

The companies, backed by many sympathetic lawmakers whose support will be crucial to a final agreement, say they're not looking to help themselves but instead trying to cushion the blow to their customers, workers and communities of complying with a costly new emissions limit.

"Utilities will end up paying a king's ransom to comply with this statute whether they are allocated credits or not," said Scott Segal, a lobbyist whose clients include power producers Duke Energy and Southern Company as well as oil refiners. "It's a way to give them the wherewithal to achieve the objective of the statute."

But some environmentalists portray the lobbying as legislative blackmail.

"They've basically said, 'You want to pass something? Write us a check,'" said Frank O'Donnell of Clean Air Watch. "They know that investing a few thousand bucks now (on lobbying and campaign donations) could mean literally tens of billions of dollars later."

The "check" would come in the form of free permits to emit greenhouse gases. The allowances would be hugely valuable in the cap and trade system, where firms would essentially buy and sell pollution permits to meet emissions limits.

Obama has proposed auctioning off the allowances to companies that emit heat-trapping gases, an approach his administration projects would raise \$646 billion over the next 10 years that would then be used in large part to help families afford higher energy prices.

But the key House architects of the climate change plan, Democratic Reps. Henry A. Waxman of California and Ed Markey of Massachusetts, are working on legislation that's expected to give some of the permits away for free - at least initially.

That already represents a major win for industry, and has touched off a scramble by various players to grab a portion of the allowances. The lobbying has picked up in recent days, with a committee vote on the legislation expected before Memorial Day.

Striking a bargain on doling out the credits "will help us in the transition for consumers, rate-payers and various industries, especially as we work out the regional consequences of the legislation," Waxman said.

"We're not using allocations just because people would like some revenue, we're doing it for very legitimate purposes."

Members of Congress - particularly those from oil- and coal-producing states in the South and Midwest that could have the hardest time meeting new emissions limits - have a powerful incentive to heed the lobbyists' calls: The fear that their constituents could otherwise be hit by steep electricity price increases or job losses at companies most profoundly affected by the changes.

"It would be impossible for me to vote for a bill like this if I couldn't get this kind of assistance in the early years," said Rep. Mike Doyle, D-Pa., whose Pittsburgh-area district is heavily dependent on coal. "If we're not going to help them out, we're not going to have a bill."

He backs a plan, being pushed by electric utilities with support from a coalition of big corporations and environmental groups called the United States Climate Action Partnership, that would give most of the free allowances to power distribution companies. They're asking for 40 percent to be given to those firms, the proceeds of which they say would be passed on to consumers who would otherwise see no relief from price hikes.

Obama's plan to sell the credits and return some of the money to households would do nothing for commercial or industrial electricity users.

"The last thing any utility CEO wants is to have compliance costs that are higher than necessary, to have customers have higher prices than necessary, and for them to all get angry at the utilities," said Dan Riedinger, a spokesman for the Edison Electric Institute, a trade group for shareholder-owned electric utilities that has been outspoken in lobbying for free permits.

Power producers such as Duke also want to get their hands on some credits, an approach that many economists argue would bring a windfall to their shareholders with little or no consumer benefit.

Big manufacturers that rely heavily on fossil fuels and face foreign competition, such as steelmakers and aluminum giant Alcoa Inc. among others, are pushing to get about 15 percent of the permits. Those would be designed, proponents say, to soften the blow of higher energy prices for the companies and ease pressure to move production to countries without strict emissions limits.

Oil refiners also want to get in on the action, arguing that they should qualify for a chunk of the permits that go to other energy-dependent manufacturers who face competition.

"Our message is that we expect to be treated fairly," said Kyle Isakower, director of policy analysis at the American Petroleum Institute. "Any industry that's receiving allocations has a valuable commodity. We're certainly very concerned with equity."

EarthTalk: What does carbon neutral' really mean?

By E/the Environmental Magazine

In the Modesto Bee, Monday, May 11, 2009

Dear EarthTalk: What does "carbon neutral" really mean? And is it really possible to live in such a manner without just resorting to buying carbon credits?

- Vera Hoffman, Seattle

Carbon neutral is a term that has sprouted many definitions, and how to achieve it has spawned numerous interpretations, too. According to the New Oxford American Dictionary, which made carbon neutral its 2006

"Word of the Year," it involves "calculating your total climate-damaging carbon emissions, reducing them where possible, and then balancing your remaining emissions, often by purchasing a carbon offset."

But the term is really so '06. Today's term, "climate neutral," complicates the issue. Tracking carbon is great, but carbon dioxide (CO₂) is only one of several greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming, says the 2008 publication, "Kick the Habit: A U.N. Guide to Climate Neutrality," by the United Nations Environment Program. CO₂ makes up some 80 percent of the world's greenhouse gases, but five others - nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, sulphur hexafluoride and methane - also contribute. Limits on all six gases were called for by the Kyoto Protocol international climate treaty.

Semantics aside, whether a person can live in a climate-neutral manner is a question of lifestyle choices and making improvements over time. Start your climate neutral quest by calculating your energy usage. Type "climate footprint" or "carbon footprint" into Google and try a couple of calculators that track use in different ways. One is Earthlab's; the University of California at Berkeley also offers one at: <http://bie.berkeley.edu/files/ConsumerFootprintCalc.swf>.

For a calculation, you'll need information about your home energy use and your travel by car and public transit. Some calculators ask whether you're vegetarian, how much you recycle and compost, and how much you spend buying goods and dining out. The equation can get involved. Record your information sources, and then revisit the calculator periodically with new numbers to see how you're doing.

The final element involves a carbon offset, "an emission reduction credit from another organization's project that results in less carbon dioxide or other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere than would otherwise occur," says the David Suzuki Foundation, which promotes "ways for society to live in balance with the natural world." You can purchase credits from a renewable energy company, for instance, to offset the amount of carbon emissions you can't eliminate through other measures.

Will your efforts make a difference? Kick the Habit says that, for individuals, "less than 50 percent are direct emissions (such as driving a car or using a heater)." About 20 percent are caused by the creation, use and disposal of products we use; 25 percent comes from powering workplaces; and 10 percent from maintaining public infrastructure. You can drive your car less and turn down the heat, but consider ways you can affect business and government policies that could tap into that other 50-plus percent.

"We are all part of the solution," wrote U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in the foreword to Kick the Habit. "Whether you are an individual, a business, an organization or a government,

there are many steps you can take to reduce your climate footprint. It is a message we must all take to heart."

CONTACT: "Kick the Habit," www.unep.org/publications/ebooks/kick-the-habit.

[Fresno Bee Smog Blog, Tuesday, May 12, 2009:](#)

Wind speeds have been near average

By Mark Grossi

A quick note for a reader who asked if it has been windier than usual this spring. I think not. At least, not in Fresno.

The wind speed in March and April this year have been about average. In fact, the statistics on the National Weather Service site show that wind speeds were higher a year ago.

As I recall, the question came up during a discussion of the smoke from the Santa Barbara fire.

Any thoughts on why the Valley's ozone season seems to be mild so far compared to previous springs?

[L.A. Daily News editorial, Tuesday, May 12, 2009:](#)

Clean bike bill

Clamp down on smoggy cycles

California has more than 830,000 registered motorcycles, and up to 85 percent of them have modified exhausts that are loud and polluting, the California Air Resources Board reports.

Many of those modifications are illegal, too. Which is why two bills making their way through the state Legislature would mandate smog tests, either every year or every other year, for cycles built after 2000.

Motorcycle riders who remove catalytic converters from their bikes contribute more than 5.2 tons of smog a day into California air. Manufacturers claim that's a minuscule portion of the 5,691 tons of pollutants from all sources in California. Yet motorcycles, which account for less than 1 percent of registered vehicle-miles traveled, contribute 10 percent of passenger-vehicle-produced smog, according to a recent news report.

When the catalytic converter is removed from a motorcycle, it produces twice the amount of smog. And a dramatic increase in noise.

That shrieking noise, often the result of altering a motorcycle's exhaust system, is reason enough to clamp down on illegal cycles. But mandating smog tests still won't solve the problem. Some aftermarket exhaust systems that owners routinely install cost up to \$4,000, and you can be sure they would be reinstalled after a smog test.

Motorcycle groups support riders' rights to customize their bikes, and we do too - to an extent. But when this customization hurts others in the form of pollution - both air and noise - their protests ring hollow.

Californians love their vehicles, and customize them in many creative ways. Which is fine, as long as what they do to their cars, bikes and trucks is legal. Targeting motorcycles that pollute is one way to reduce smog (5.2 tons a day less is nothing to sneeze at). It's also a way to reduce the shrieking noise from illegal exhaust systems on bikes that come up behind you between lanes at high speeds.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, arguably the state's most famous motorcycle rider, hasn't taken a stand on the two bills - SB 435 and AB 859. But if they are passed, he should get out his pen and sign on the dotted line.

[Letter to the Fresno Bee, Tuesday, May 12, 2009:](#)

Oil will run out

Besides the normal fluctuations in temperature, we are somewhere in between two ice ages and under other very powerful cyclical cosmic influences. In the near term, we should make use of all alternative sources of power (even nuclear) that effectively minimize our contribution to global warming.

John R. Donaldson [letter April 24] writes that global warming is the most important issue facing us. In the long term, space, solar power and other scientific progress may yield solutions of which we don't yet dream.

But while we dally with relatively insignificant sources of alternative energy, we deplete oil deposits as though there were no tomorrow. But tomorrow will come, and the day after that, our grandchildren may need that oil as raw material for plastics, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, pesticides.

It is both short-sighted and unconscionable for us to mindlessly burn it up: That process is not only our main contributor to global warming, but it also is irreversible.

Harald Frieser, Fresno

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses the Valley of Mexico keeps getting hotter each summer; it's a boiling pot due to urbanization and climate change. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

El Valle de México, un caldero por el cambio climático y la urbanización

Juan G. Torres

El Periódico de México, Tuesday, May 12, 2009

Suele pasar que cada año aseguramos que esta temporada es la más calurosa que hemos pasado en nuestra vida o que son los peores aguaceros de la historia. A veces la memoria traiciona, pero no siempre es así. Científicos de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) aseguran que en el Valle de México cada vez se siente más calor en la época de verano y la explicación que dan es que la temporada anual de aguaceros ha disminuido y la de secas es más intensa.

El Valle de México, donde está asentada la zona metropolitana de la Ciudad de México con 20 millones de habitantes, es una especie de cazuela rodeada de montañas que cuenta con bosques y ríos sobre los que se ha extendido la macha urbana por la que circulan millones de automóviles y camiones emitiendo toneladas de partículas contaminantes.

El ingeniero Ernesto Jáuregui Ostos, del Centro de Ciencias de la Atmósfera de la UNAM, explica que la sustitución de suelo natural por calles y edificios merma la humedad y vuelve la ciudad más caliente y seca. Además, la escasez local de precipitaciones pluviales también se relaciona con un aumento de las corrientes del oeste sobre los vientos alisios, a consecuencia del cambio climático, señala el científico.

Explica que en el Valle de México cada vez llueve menos porque las temporadas cíclicas de lluvia, que se presentaban entre finales de abril y octubre, se han recorrido a mediados de mayo por la creciente urbanización de la capital del país.

“La sustitución de los suelos naturales con árboles por calles deforestadas, pavimentadas y rodeadas de edificios, es un factor local que ha ocasionado una reducción del ciclo anual de precipitaciones pluviales, aunque es apenas uno de los tres factores que participan en el fenómeno”, asegura el especialista en climatología urbana.

Los otros dos agentes que explican que haya menos lluvias en esta ciudad son de índole global: "Uno es el predominio de las corrientes del oeste, que se caracterizan por aire seco y descendente sobre los vientos alisios, que son húmedos y producen convección, un fenómeno fundamental para la formación de nubes, precipitaciones y ciclones".

El otro elemento es el calentamiento global, que ha ocasionado una alteración de los patrones cíclicos de la atmósfera en todo el planeta y ha favorecido un incremento general de la temperatura.

"La combinación de estos tres factores hace cada vez más compleja la predicción del clima, un área de estudio que tiene como principal característica la variabilidad", asegura el experto.

A esta situación se suma en el Valle de México el deterioro de la calidad del aire, dice Jáuregui, quien afirma que si los cambios globales afectan a esta zona también es cierto que las alteraciones en el valle repercuten en el globo.

Las "alteraciones a escala local contribuyen, junto con la deforestación, al cambio global del clima. A partir de la segunda mitad del siglo XX, estas modificaciones son en promedio del orden de 0.52 grados Celsius por década de aumento de temperatura", asegura.

Como consecuencia de este calentamiento en la Ciudad de México declinó la humedad relativa del aire, mientras se quintuplicó la frecuencia de los aguaceros intensos.

"Es decir, hay menos lluvias, pero las que se registran son precipitaciones fuertes que ocasionan encharcamientos en la ciudad", advirtió el experto.

De acuerdo con recientes investigaciones universitarias, la expansión de la mancha urbana en el Distrito Federal avanza cada año 495 hectáreas, lo que representa que la ciudad crece en promedio 13,500 metros cuadrados diarios. Y en la década de los 90 la ciudad se extendió en más de 171 kilómetros cuadrados.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses animated cartoons become a success against climate change. It is another tool used to educate young children about climate change awareness.](#)

Video de dibujos animados se convierte en éxito contra el cambio climático

By Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Monday, May 11, 2009

Un video de dibujos animados sobre el consumismo de los estadounidenses se coloca rápidamente como una de las mejores herramientas educativas contra la contaminación y el cambio climático. Por lo menos seis millones de niños han visto el video en escuelas e iglesias. El programa, Enfrentando el Futuro, que enriquece el currículum de los maestros en todo el país, prepara un curso sobre su contenido. Según algunos analistas, el video de 21 minutos, de Annie Leonard podría incluso superar el impacto que alcanzó una producción que lanzó hace unos años el ex vicepresidente Al Gore. El documental ha sido calificado de "crudo" y "directo", al revelar tácticas de las corporaciones empresariales, pero tiene inesperada aceptación entre los niños. En internet hay una versión del video con subtítulos en español.