



3.9 Million Americans Telecommute, Helping Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

By Jacob Dauler

September 25, 2007

Many people today enjoy the benefits of telecommuting, but they never thought they were helping our environment at the same time. According to the Consumer Electronics Association (CEA), the estimated 3.9 million telecommuters in the United States contributed to the goal of reducing energy usage and greenhouse gases.

CEA conducted a study of telecommuters and the effect on the environment. The study, titled “The Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact of Telecommuting and e-Commerce”, used workers that telecommute at least one day per week, some telecommuted full time. They compared the energy usage of telecommuters with those of traditional methods.

According to CEA, the energy savings is the equivalent of the amount used by 1 million US households every year. By working from home, telecommuters do not use the amount of gasoline as a person working in the office. This also results in a reduction of CO₂ emissions by not driving their vehicle to work.

Take into consideration a one-way commute of 22 miles. A person working in an office would travel 220 miles a week or over 11,000 a year, just going to work every day. According to CEA this is equal to about 320 gallons of gasoline and 4.5 to 6 tons of CO₂ emissions.

In the CEA study, they found that just one day of working from home is equal to 12 hours of a normal household’s energy usage; not including the couple of gallons of gasoline and reduced CO₂ emissions. “This report demonstrates that consumer electronics are part of a climate change solution, as the use of electronics is preventing greenhouse gas emissions and reducing fossil fuel consumptions,” said Gary Shapiro, president and CEO of CEA.

The power companies today have been under a lot of pressure to reduce fossil fuel usage. One of the answers may lay with the corporations and businesses that use the energy everyday. If businesses and companies would look into ways of using telecommuters to do some of their tasks, they will help reduce the energy usage in our country. Technology today should be used to its fullest potential and everyone will benefit from it.

We have all seen the studies of how much energy today’s electronics use. This is the first report that focuses on their energy savings. Who would have ever thought that using your computer, fax, or copier would help save the environment and reduce greenhouse gases? It is nice to know I am doing my part.

Source: Consumer Electronics Association (CEA) “National Study Finds Electronics Significantly Reduce Energy Use, Cut Greenhouse-Gas Emissions”