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New Parking Meters Encourages Alternative Transportation *University Has Sold 1,200 to Employees...*

UPDATED: 2:01 pm CDT May 11, 2006

MADISON, Wis. -- A new program that offers commuters yellow personal parking meters is encouraging those that work near the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus to use alternative transportation.

The university has sold about 1,200 of the brightly-colored meters to its employees to encourage them to take a bike, bus or vanpool, WISC-TV reported.



Faced with buying a full-year parking pass, the program allows employees who usually bike or who take a bus or vanpool to get a meter and a prepaid card. They use the yellow device only on days when they need to take a car to work.

Cathryn Pierce said that she takes the bus to work 80 percent of the time and that the new meter program saves her money and time.

"I use the program mainly because I'd rather bus or bike or walk into work and if I'd have to drive, I'd rather not have to deal with some of the congestion issues if I don't have to," she said.

The program started with a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency in 2001, and its enrollment has tripled in just four years, WISC-TV reported. Transportation services officials said that they expect it to grow as bus service expands and more bike paths are created. They said that the increasing cost of gas should also foster its growth.

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