

Press Release No. 30/2009

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Cycling to work – not only on “Sport and Health Day”

UBA participates in nationwide campaign launched on 1 June

“UBA is on the move” is the Federal Environment Agency (UBA) motto as it celebrates a sports and health day on 3 June. A national campaign to promote cycling to work was also launched on 1 June by the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Fahrrad-Club (ADFC)* and Germany’s largest state health insurance scheme, *Allgemeine Ortskrankenkassen (AOK)*, which the UBA is also supporting. Cycling plays a key role for the Agency’s staff, whether it’s to commute to work, to go shopping, or when on holiday. Cycling is fun, keeps you fit and protects the environment and the climate as well. According to a current survey on mobility conducted by UBA, 20 percent of staff at headquarters in Dessau-Roßlau cycle to work daily; that figure is 18 percent in Berlin. All in all, a good result in an overall comparison to the rest of the country: the national average of the cycling commute to work is only about 9 percent. Since there is always room for improvement, the UBA has taken an active part in the national campaign this year.

The UBA in-house mobility management has targeted and encouraged the use of bicycles in recent years as part of ecomobility. Safe and easily accessible bike sheds were set up at the Agency’s sites as well as showers and locker rooms, and bicycles for official use were acquired. The Berlin site at Bismarckplatz had several car park spaces converted to bike stands located near the building entrances. Furthermore, a toolkit is available at all sites for small repair jobs. The cycling to work campaign (*Aktion “Mit dem Rad zur Arbeit”*) aims to encourage cycling as it is easily integrated into the daily routine. Doctors believe that living by an “in moderation, but regularly” motto is effective prevention against the effects of lack of exercise. It is actually quite simple, for the positive effects on health can already be appreciated with 20-30 minutes’ daily exercise—and that is the time that most normal commutes to work by bicycle would easily cover. Moreover, every commuter who travels 5 kilometres to and from work by bike instead of car saves about 400 kilogrammes of ozone-depleting carbon dioxide emissions. A 10-kilometre commute adds up to 750 kilogrammes carbon dioxide, thus making a case for protecting the climate and the environment.

For this year’s health day the UBA is offering special repair service to cyclists and is campaigning for the intramural athletic and sports groups, which include a group of hobby

cyclists and a racing team. There are also a number of other opportunities for the Agency's staff members to take up a sports activity in their leisure time.

More information on the cycling to work campaign is on the Internet at www.mit-dem-rad-zur-arbeit.de

Updated information on the subject of bicycle and other means of transport is available on the UBA website at <http://www.umweltbundesamt.de/verkehr/>. More on bicycle transport is also on the National Cycling Plan website at <http://www.nationaler-radverkehrsplan.de/>.

Dessau-Roßlau, 2 June 2009