

THE REFLECTOR

PROMOTING HEALTH FOR PEOPLE AND THE PLANET

A Newsletter from the OHSU Bike Commuters Group

July 2005

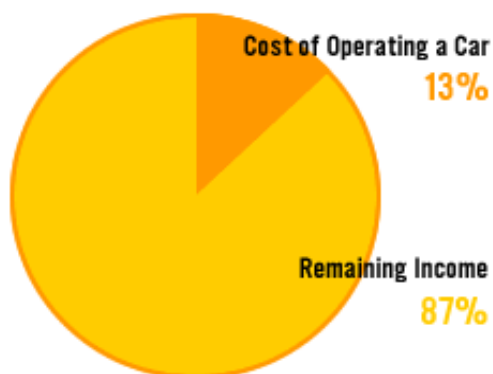
Parking Permit Blues

The OHSU Parking Committee has approved an increase in parking fees that will affect all employees who use OHSU parking locations, both on and off campus. The increases are necessary for maintenance etc., *but* wouldn't it be better to ride a bike? Let's compare.

Money Facts

- The operating cost of a car for one year is about \$5,170 (AAA Mid-Atlantic)
- The operating cost of a bicycle for a year is about \$120 (League of American Bicyclists)
- The average family has to work for more than 6 weeks to pay a year's car expenses, compared to less than one day needed to pay for a year's bicycle expenses (based on U.S. Census, 1998 median family income figures)
- Bicycling to work can save time and money by integrating your commute and your exercise routine
- Walking is **free!**

Portion of a Typical U.S. Household's Income Spent on Owning and Operating an Automobile



BIKE TO WORK!



The Bike Commuters Group (BCG) promotes bicycling as a healthy mode of transportation that benefits individuals and the environment. For more information about the BCG or to find ways to get involved, contact us at bike@ohsu.edu or visit our website at www.ohsu.edu/bike/.

Shower in a Ziplock

by David Thompson, MD FACP



This is a story involving personal hygiene. Ordinarily, I only share this stuff with my closest friends. But having become a bike commuter at OHSU, I feel a bond with the rest of you going shoulder to fender out there and so I am sharing this stuff, just in case it might make it easier to get through the day, especially during these warm months when we arrive at work in our wet (smelly) bike clothes.

In the early 1970's, I began practicing medicine in a group in downtown Portland. One of the older physicians urged me to resume running, since like many young professionals fresh out of training, I was gaining weight and feeling stress, and thought that regular exercise was something you had to give up at some point when you entered the professional real world.

I tried running early in the morning. Not for me since I had to make hospital rounds. After work. Ditto. The best time was in the middle of the day. But I needed to be clean and dry, seeing patients in the afternoon, and there was no shower in the office. The nearby Metro YMCA hadn't opened yet. A mid-day run, particularly in the summer, was simply not possible without a way to clean up.

So that's how I came up with the Shower in a Ziplock:

- Use a 1 quart size freezer (heavy gauge, better seal) Ziplock.
- Fold a terry cloth dish towel to fit in the Ziplock.
- Pour in 1/2 cup rubbing alcohol.
- Pour in 1/2 cup water.

Depending on how thick your towel is, you may need more or less total volume. It should be wet but not dripping wet. You can experiment with this and with the ratio of alcohol to water. Principle not precision.

Push out the air as you seal the Ziplock and you're ready to go. (You can double seal using two Ziplocks if you are worried about leakage, but I've never had this problem.)

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FAQ and Comments from the Annual Bike Fair

"It would be great to have more publicity for the Citizens of the Road campaign."

The Citizens of the Road campaign targets bicyclists and vehicle operators in an attempt to teach them the rules of sharing the road. So pass it on to everyone you know.

<http://www.bta4bikes.org/act/program/cotr.html>
<http://www.easytoshare.com/>

"Who can I talk to about getting bike lanes on [fill in the blank] Street?"

That depends on where you live. In Portland you can fill out a maintenance request at <http://www.trans.ci.portland.or.us/bicycles/maintain.htm>.

If you live in another area, please contact the BCG at bike@ohsu.edu.

"Who can I call to get hazards removed from bike lanes?"

See above.

"Why doesn't the Parking office have bike maps?"

The Bike Commuters Group will be installing displays for maps from the City of Portland very soon. We've been trying to figure out how to do this in limited space. Currently, you can pick up maps in the Department of Public Health and Preventive Medicine. They are in the Campus Services Building on the 6th floor across from room 655. Feel free to stop by and pick up city maps, OHSU bike facilities maps, and other useful and interesting information about bikes.

"How can I get one of those new bike lockers?"

As of August 5, the Parking Office will be taking names for a lottery. To get in the lottery, send an email to Tony Guarnotta guarnott@ohsu.edu and Angela Timmen timmena@ohsu.edu and let them know where you would like to park.

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If you are hot and sweaty after mid-day exercise (or a morning bike or run commute), wait 20 minutes doing something useful (for me this was reviewing lab results and sending reports, writing insurance letters, returning a call to a patient) before cleaning up. Or if it is lunch time, eat your brown bag lunch during this time.

Why 20 minutes? It takes about this long to stop sweating after your finish your exercise. If you shower without this cool down period, you will just sweat through your clothes. No fun. Then find a private place, strip down, and using your wet but not dripping towel wipe down your body going from "clean to dirty" — i.e., start with face and neck, then arms and hands, then torso and legs, then armpits, groin, and feet. Immediately replace the towel and seal the Ziplock. This will prevent further unnecessary evaporation of the alcohol into the room. You will not need a towel and you will feel quite refreshed by the evaporative cooling of the diluted alcohol. You are ready to start the rest of your day, clean and dry. You will be twice as productive, making up whatever time you "lost" while out exercising!

Take your Ziplock with damp towel home, throw the towel in the wash, rinse out the Ziplock, and you are ready to pack for tomorrow.



Candy Drugs

The candy industry is setting its sights on fitness buffs and kids. At this summer's largest candy trade show, several new lines of "energy enhancing" candies were released in an effort to capture



a piece of the \$3 billion/year consumers spend on performance boosters. New product lines included jelly beans packed with 120 milligrams of electrolytes and taffy pieces containing the equivalent of one coffee cup worth of caffeine in each bite. "I don't think that the new products belong in the candy aisle," said Cynthia Sass, a registered dietitian and spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association. "The use of stimulants is an even greater concern because they can cause dangerous increases in a person's heart rate and blood pressure." Larry Graham, president of the National Confectioners Association, disagrees, saying the candy industry has every right to "build healthful benefits into their candy."

<http://www.organicconsumers.org/toxic/candy.cfm>