

Bike Share Program Offers California State Employees Another Way to Be Active

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At A Glance

An estimated 300 state employees in Sacramento, California, now have increased access to active transportation options at work sites. Regular physical activity can help improve emotional health; lower risks for heart disease, stroke, and some cancers; and reduce obesity. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) collaborated across five state agencies to set up bike share programs and promote better health for all employees. Presently, employees have the option to travel to meetings via bike—instead of car—during the work day.



Public Health Challenge

Obesity increases the risk of many health conditions including coronary heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, and type 2 diabetes. In 2014, 24% of adults had obesity according to data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. The California Health Interview Survey 2001-2011

notes that in Sacramento County, an estimated 295,000 (28.0%) adults aged 18 years or older were obese and 360,000 (34.2%) adults were considered overweight in 2011. From 2001 to 2011, the obesity rate for Sacramento County adults increased by 28.4%.

Find Out More

Learn more information about the employee bike share programs in Sacramento. This project is supported by the State Public Health Actions to Prevent and Control Diabetes, Heart Disease, Obesity, and Associated Risk Factors and Promote School Health cooperative agreement (DP13-1305).

I've been using the bikes for exercise most mornings and I love it. I've had difficulty getting exercise in because walking, at times, can be painful. But, riding a bike is not. Thank You!
- Bike Share Participant

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Approach

With support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), CDPH is piloting a bike share program in Sacramento, California, that allows employees to use free bicycles for business and personal trips during work hours. The aim is to increase physical activity and decrease car usage and costs for cabs or gas. To do this, CDPH worked across state agencies to gain buy-in from senior level executives to secure public and private funding. The funding allowed CDPH to purchase helmets, bike pumps, and tools to maintain the bikes. Since 2014, CDPH has provided participants trainings on bike use, safety, maintenance, and a bike share reservation system.

Results

Hundreds of employees are using the bike share to be more active and improve their health. From May 2015-May 2016, employees took an estimated 993 trips traveling nearly 3,000 miles using bikes offered through the bike share program. In 2015, CDPH secured additional private funding that helped to expand the bike share to five state agencies—the Department of Transportation, Department of Finance, State Department of Education, State Department of General Services, and the Department of Water Resources. Now, more than 30 new bikes are available for employees to ride and be active in and around Sacramento.

What's Next

The demand for more bike shares continues to rise. Already, CDPH is making plans to expand to additional state agencies and citywide. In 2017, Sacramento, the state capitol, will launch a citywide bike share program. CDPH anticipates that employees already using the health department's bicycles will be inspired to use the city's bikes on weekends and during off-duty hours throughout the work week. CDPH will also continue to work across state agencies to increase awareness and educate employees about the benefits of active transportation and wellness programs.