



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Area Businesses Challenged to Improve Region's Air Quality**

After one month, businesses participating in the Smart Trips Commuter Challenge are off to a great start and have already reduced 77,000 pounds of CO2 emissions from the air.

The business with the highest participation percentage will receive a Tomato Head pizza and Magpies cupcake party at the end of the challenge. Companies with the highest participation levels in six size categories will receive Magpies cupcake parties and certificates.

The University of Tennessee is pulling ahead in Group 1, businesses with 3,000 plus employees. They participated in How Many Can You Fit in a Fit? and Bike to Work Day during Smart Trips month and have logged 4,732 alternative commutes, reducing 13,857 pounds of air pollution. Knox County Government employees and ORNL are in second and third place, but separated by less than 1,000 logs.

In Group 2, 1,000 to 2,999 employees, TVA is the leader by a huge margin. They have reduced emissions by 10,286 pounds in May. Elavon has made an impressive start in this group, mostly by carpooling, followed by the City of Knoxville and Brunswick Boat Group, whose employees are able to do a lot of telecommuting.

Group 3, 500 to 999 employees, is a close competition between Kimberly Clark and Traveler's Insurance, as is Group 4, 100 to 499 employees, between Home Federal and 21st Mortgage. In Group 5, businesses with 26 to 99 employees, the Metropolitan Planning Commission is the standout with employees logging 288 commutes, which are divided fairly equally amongst bicycling, carpooling and taking the bus.

In the final group, those with less than 25 employees, Elizabeth Eason Architecture stands alone at the top. With an 80 percent participation rate, the firm has submitted 236 logs and has singularly removed 157 pounds of emissions from the region. This is most impressive since they have only 6 employees.

Individuals participating in the Commuter Challenge who have logged at least one green commute a week (22 days or more) also will be eligible to win great prizes from Smart Trips and hhgregg.

The Smart Trips Commuter Challenge is a fun and exciting way to save money and earn rewards for greening up your commute by using alternate methods of transportation. The challenge began May 1 and ends on September 30. For more information, go to [www.knoxsplat.com](http://www.knoxsplat.com).

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