



# POLLUTION PREVENTION VIEW

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1

A Newsletter from the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

WINTER 2002-03

## Cruising Down the Highway in her Hybrid



**When her 11-year old car hit the 150,000-mile mark, Lynn Stoddard began thinking about a replacement.** At her job with the DEP Office of Pollution Prevention she had heard good things about the new hybrid cars – how they get 20 to 30 more miles per gallon than a standard automobile with significantly lower emissions. But she wasn't sold on the idea until she took a ride in a friend's hybrid and saw the energy consumption and gas savings on the dashboard's display screen. Now when Lynn and her husband Chris carpool to work in their new Toyota Prius, they compete to see which driver gets the best mileage. (The winner so far has been Chris with 65 miles per gallon!)

Three hybrid cars are on the market now in parts of the U.S. – Toyota Prius, Honda Insight and Honda Civic Hybrid. All three models are in the \$20,000 price range and come with standard equipment, like air conditioning, power windows and locks, dual airbags, and anti-lock brakes. Other major automakers have announced intentions to introduce hybrids within the next few years.

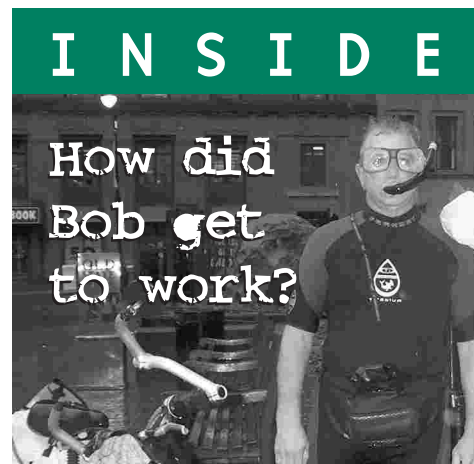
Hybrid cars combine a gasoline engine with an electric motor and batteries. They get significantly better gas mileage and produce less pollution than gas-powered cars while overcoming the shortcomings of electric cars. Electric cars, which run solely on batteries, have zero emissions but they also have a limited driving range. After about 100 miles the

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TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HYBRIDS AND OTHER "GREEN" CARS, CHECK OUT THESE RESOURCES:

- **Choosing a Green Car**  
[www.nesea.org/greencarclub](http://www.nesea.org/greencarclub)
- **Environmental Ranking of Cars and Trucks**– [www.greencars.com](http://www.greencars.com)
- **The Green Book: The Environmental Guide to Cars and Trucks**  
(The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy)
- **Cleaner Cars**  
[www.ucusa.org/index.html](http://www.ucusa.org/index.html)
- **The Consumer's Guide to Effective Environmental Choices: Practical Advice from the Union of Concerned Scientists**  
(Michael Brower and Warren Leon)
- **How Hybrid Cars Work**  
[www.howstuffworks.com/hybrid-car.htm](http://www.howstuffworks.com/hybrid-car.htm)

*The above listing of websites is provided to you as a public service and does not constitute an endorsement by DEP.*



# Getting Rid of Your Baggage

**It's that 'shop 'til ya drop' time of year again.** Do you notice that you are accumulating more plastic and paper bags from all those shopping trips? Are you running out of places to stuff them, ways to reuse them or you just can't remember to recycle them (or know if you even can)? Are you wondering about which is the better choice, paper or plastic?

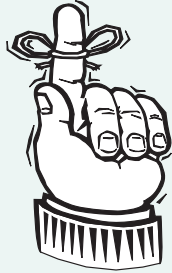
In this country, the debate over plastic vs. paper is rather ho-hum these days. Since there are convincing arguments on both sides of the fence, most consumers are simply confused about this issue. Even the Union of Concerned Scientists argue that the choice of paper or plastic is insignificant compared to the bigger choices we make as consumers that affect the environment, like buying a car. So it's no wonder the issue of the environmental impacts of our shopping containers don't quite capture our attention as much as say, global warming.

But we in P2 have the philosophy of "a journey of one thousand miles begins with one step." So on your journey of having a more sustainable lifestyle, consider bagging the plastic and paper and bringing your own reusable cloth bag. It avoids the whole dilemma - you will produce less trash and litter and do your part towards reducing pollution and conserving natural resources.

About **40 billion** grocery bags are used each year in the United States: 30 billion are plastic; 10 billion are paper.

(Source: [www.healthwell.com/d\\_backs/Mar\\_02/issues.com](http://www.healthwell.com/d_backs/Mar_02/issues.com))

## Tips for BYOB(ags)s hopping



**1. Buy a few sturdy cloth, bags with strong handles in sizes you can manage when they are full.**

**2. Remember to bring them shopping.**

- Put them in a place where you write your grocery list, hang your coat; keep your keys...anywhere they will trigger your memory.
- If you drive to shop, return the bags to the car in a place you will see them and bring them into the store.
- If you shop with older children, have their "job" be to remember the bags.

**3. Bring the bag issue to the attention of store management.**

- Tell them you would like them to sell cloth bags near the checkout.
- Have them educate their staff to ask: "Plastic, paper or your own bag."
- Ask to have a convenient recycling place for clean used plastic bags.
- Bags cost stores plenty: about 1.2 cents for plastic or 3 to 4 cents for paper. Ask the store to have a discount policy for bringing your own bags.



**4. If you forget your own bags, don't dismay. You can still:**

- Consolidate purchases.
- Refuse a bag for small purchases that will fit in a purse or backpack.
- Reuse the bags for other shopping or many things around the house.



**5. Spread the word. Make using cloth bags the "norm" by:**

- Telling your friends, coworkers and store clerks, even people behind you in line, why you use cloth bags.
- Giving cloth bags as holiday gifts.

**6. Be proud of yourself for taking this one small, but yet important step in protecting our environment.**

# Cruising Down the Highway

(continued from cover)

batteries need to be plugged in for 6-8 hours of recharging. In contrast, hybrids never have to be plugged in since the batteries recharge as you drive. They also use "regenerative braking," which captures energy lost during braking and returns it to the battery.

The hybrids have smaller gas engines than conventional cars but can keep up with the more powerful cars on the road. conventional car's bigger engine is sized for those times you need to "floor it" – the rest of the time you only use a small percentage of its horsepower. The hybrid car's electric motor and battery provide a "boost" to the gas engine for quick acceleration or going up steep hills. Because of this smaller, lighter engine, the hybrid uses less gas and emits less pollution.

According to an analysis done by the Union of Concerned Scientists, driving our cars is the single most environmentally damaging consumer action that we do. As we cruise down the road,

our cars' tailpipes emit carbon monoxide, nitrogen and sulfur oxides and hydrocarbons into the atmosphere, creating health hazards such as smog. Burning gasoline also results in the emission of carbon dioxide, a major contributor to climate change. So by choosing a car with better gas mileage and fewer emissions (what we call a "green" car), you can have a positive impact on the

environment while reducing our dependence on foreign oil.

When asked if she would recommend a hybrid to her friends, Lynn replied, "Definitely! I've never been interested in cars at all. Now I'm always trying to find an excuse to talk about my car. I love taking people for a ride to show them that it's just like driving any

other car, except you're using about half the fuel and spewing out far less pollution." See for yourself; visit a CT dealer and test-drive a hybrid! ■

Hybrid cars combine a gasoline engine with an electric motor and batteries.

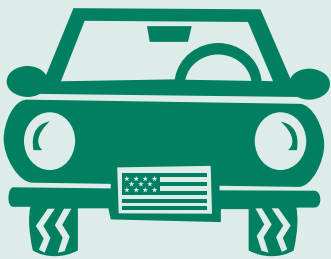
## Everything including the Kitchen Sink and you!



**The mission of the ReCONNstruction Center is to promote environmental and social sustainability by salvaging building materials for reuse.** The vision of this newly formed organization is a non-profit retail warehouse located in the greater Hartford area. It will accept donations of unwanted building materials from a variety of sources and sell them at affordable prices to the public, including organizations that serve disadvantaged people.

In addition to supporting the local economy, these materials (e.g., plumbing fixtures, tiles, lumber) will be kept out of landfills and waste incinerators. Challenges ahead include securing start-up funding and identifying a site. Most importantly, the Center needs volunteers from the community as well as those from the building trades to serve on its Board of Directors. If you are up to the challenge of helping this vision become a reality, please contact the DEP Recycling and Source Reduction Program at (860) 424-3130 or [kathy.alexander@po.state.ct.us](mailto:kathy.alexander@po.state.ct.us). ■

## Not ready to buy a hybrid but want to reduce your emissions?



### Just cut down the amount you drive!

The average American drives over 250 miles each week. Replace a weekly 20-mile car trip by combining errands, telecommuting, biking, or walking and you'll reduce your annual emissions of carbon dioxide by nearly a thousand pounds! Can't pull that off?

No problem! Just skip what you can and report it – the Center for a New American Dream will calculate your positive impact on their website [www.newdream.org/turnthetide/](http://www.newdream.org/turnthetide/).

# P 2 C A L E N D A R

## A S E L E C T I O N O F P 2 R E L A T E D E V E N T S

### P2 Lecture Series

Thursday, December 12, 2002, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.  
(Note: time is earlier than most P2 lectures)

**Gas Phase Emissions Monitoring: New Technology Demonstration Results.** James Markham, Advanced Fuel Research, Inc.

DEP sponsors a monthly lecture series on pollution prevention topics. Lectures are free, open to the public, and usually held from 11:00 a.m. to noon in the Phoenix Auditorium, DEP Building, 79 Elm St., Hartford. For additional information, contact Lynn Stoddard at 860-424-3236.



### The 2nd Annual Connecticut Course in Organic Land Care for Professionals

February 10, 11, 13, 18 and 19, 2003

Training to be held at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, New Haven



Sponsored by the CT/Mass NOFA Organic Land Care Committee  
For more information, call (203) 888-5146 or email [bduesing@cs.com](mailto:bduesing@cs.com)

## How did Bob Get to Work?

**How many times have you been stuck in traffic wishing there were a better way to get to work?** How many times have you resolved to get to the gym to work out but then can't find the time? Some people like Bob Hartman have found a way to combine their workout with their commute – and ENJOY it!!!

Bob is a DEP employee in the Bureau of Water Management and one of the regular participants in the Capitol Region Bike-to-Work promotion. The promotion is in its third year and is part of the regional transportation strategy to include bicycles in the mix of viable commuting options. Biking to work is not only great exercise, but reduces the amount of cars on the road and pollution associated with driving. On the last Friday of each month from

April through October bicyclists gather to register and enjoy a free bagel breakfast at the Old State House in Hartford.

On one Bike-to-Work day in late September, the weather forecast was for heavy rain. Bob figured that he could not avoid getting soaked, so he decided to "Triathlon-to-Work." Dressed for the weather in his wet suit he biked from his home in Windsor to the boat launch near Route 291. After locking his bike, Bob swam nearly 3 miles down the Connecticut River to the Hartford boat launch at Riverside Park. While swimming, he had to keep an eye out for the bass boats coming up the river for that morning's fishing competition. After removing his fins, mask and snorkel, he ran on the path along the river and up to the Ride-to-Work gathering at the Old State House. Thanks Bob, for helping prevent pollution with your commute! ■



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