



May 27, 2003

Dear Commissioner Crotty:

The Division of Air recently informed us that the week of May 19 through May 25 was Ozone Awareness Week and reminded us that summer, "...the season of elevated air pollution levels," is quickly approaching. Because motor vehicles are one of the major causes of ground level ozone, we were encouraged to find a less polluting method of transportation for one day of that one week to reduce local sources of air pollution.

As employees of an environmental agency, we all realize that lessening pollution is more than a one-day affair. To be truly effective the effort must extend throughout the year. Currently, the Department is in just such a position by expanding DEC's successful Compressed Pay Period (CPP) and Telecommuting Pilot Programs. Both programs diminish the emissions of air pollutants associated with automobile exhaust by reducing the number of cars on the road.

Benefits to the Department include not only a more positive public perception of DEC (i.e., that we practice what we preach) but an easing of traffic congestion, increased employee productivity and improved employee morale. Employee benefits include having a direct impact on pollution reduction, increased morale, savings due to less gasoline usage as well as decreased wear and tear on vehicles, less stress, more time with families due to decreased commuting time and in the case of CPP the ability to plan and carry out personal and home activities/responsibilities better.

Survey responses from supervisors, participants and co-workers following the pilot period for each program indicate that both have been successful and provide valuable benefits to the Department, participating employees and the environment.

Supervisory respondents to the Telecommuting Pilot survey were overwhelmingly in favor of the program with 60% indicating telecommuting made their employees more productive due to fewer interruptions. Ninety percent (90%) of supervisory respondents indicated they would permit their staff to continue telecommuting should the program be continued.

The Compressed Pay Period Pilot began in February 2002. In August of 2002, Division Directors, supervisors, participants and co-workers were asked to evaluate the program. The majority of respondents reported positive results of the program with approximately 95% of responding supervisors stating they would consider their employees for participation in the CPP program should it be made a permanent offering. Overall, Division Directors reported that the program had a positive impact on their operations as well as on participating employees.

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With all the recent staff reductions, these programs and their associated benefits would appear to be essential elements in helping DEC fulfill our stated mission. In particular, since both programs resulted in increased productivity on the part of employees, the full implementation of these two programs in the central and regional offices would reduce pollution across the State and concurrently improve employee morale and productivity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mike Keenan".

Mike Keenan, PEF/encon Chair  
Pollution & Energy Reduction Committee

CC: Executive Deputy Commissioner Denise Sheehan  
Deputy Commissioner James Ferreira  
Deputy Commissioner Carl Johnson  
Deputy Commissioner Lynette Stark  
Assistant Commissioner Dan Gilbert  
Assistant Commissioner Jack McKeon  
Assistant Commissioner James Tuffey  
Regional and Division Directors  
Joe Lattanzio, Director of Employee Relations  
PEF/encon Stewards