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## ***Utah companies find ways to save employees gas money and time***

By Erika Edberg

Everyone seems to be complaining about gas prices these days ... and with gas running more than \$3 a gallon for regular unleaded, they have good reason. But some Utah companies are going the extra mile to help their employees save money at the pump -- by not making them even come into the office in the first place.

Allison Yrungaray is a public relations specialist for a firm based in Orem, but she works from her home in Bountiful. A nanny takes care of her three little ones in the other room, and she likes being close to them. But she loves not spending two hours on the road every day. "I estimate that I'm saving at least two tanks of gas a week, which is over \$50 each tank, right now," Yrungaray said. "I think it saves me almost a thousand dollars a month not commuting down there."

Her boss is John Pilmer, and he says as long as his staff members have a laptop and a cell phone, they can work from anywhere. "It's very much working around the family ... making your work part of your life rather than making your life part of your work."

Pilmer says his employees save gas money, wear and tear on their vehicles, precious time with their families and they keep pollutants out of the air. He thinks most companies could probably find a way to do the same. "Even if it's just one day a week, even if it's just a few of your employees that are supporting staff and don't have to be in the office, let them work from home," Pilmer said.

There's another example at AdvancedMD Software in Draper, where employees spend a lot of time on computers doing software development. Last year when company officials realized they had 6 employees driving in every day from Weber and Davis Counties, they decided to open a satellite office in Layton, and it's meant big savings for them. By keeping those cars off busy Interstate 15, it saves those workers 500 hours annually --

more than sixty work days a year.

They're driving 21,000 fewer miles each year, avoiding wear and tear on their cars -- not to mention fuel costs. "We've estimated that it saves each employee about a thousand gallons of gas a year," says Chief Financial Officer Michele Hilton. "With six employees, that's 6,000 gallons. And with the price of gas prices you're looking at 18 or 20,000 dollars a year you've saved in gas."

For telecommuters like Yrungaray, those are some pretty good perks of the job.

Pilmer says even if some companies decide they can't avoid having their employees work at the main office, they can offer incentives for them to take mass transit instead of driving alone -- maybe even paying for workers' bus tickets.

They can also consider replacing gas-guzzling company vehicles with more fuel-efficient models.