

Clash for clunkers program godsend for some

By Vince Rembulat, Reporter

Manteca Bulletin Sat. July 11, 2009

For over 10 years, Miguel Ramirez has relied on his 1983 Toyota sedan to get to and from work.

The Manteca resident is a journeyman pressman, having been employed during the years by the San Francisco Chronicle, the San Jose Mercury News and the Lodi News-Sentinel.

However, Ramirez's work situation is currently on idle, but he's on-call if and when duty calls.

"My type of work means having to go out of town," he said on Wednesday.

But Ramirez has also grown tired of pouring his hard earned money into his red Toyota. In the past few years, he's had to pay to get work done on the clutch, muffler, head gasket, used tires, a master brake cylinder and a tune up. All told, it's cost him well over two grand.

"It's costing me more to keep it on the road, especially since some of the parts (on the car) are hard to find," said Ramirez, who is hoping to trade in his car with an odometer reading of over 260,000 miles for an early 2000 model.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, for one, has a new program – Polluting Automobile Scrap and Salvage (PASS) – for qualifying car owners to receive either \$1,000 in cash or qualify for \$5,000 to go towards the purchase of a cleaner operating car.

The district consists of San Joaquin County and extends as far south to Kern County. Vehicle owners are required to live within this area as part of the qualifications for PASS.

According to Linda Pizana, who is a representative of the air pollution control district, the car owner must have a DMV print out of the vehicle history.

"The car must be registered to the same owner for several years, have a certain amount of mileage and in working order," she said.

PASS, in turn, hopes to send these vehicles failing to meet the key federal air quality standards – or grossest polluters – to the crusher.

Applications can be obtained by calling the district at (877) 900-5865.

Those who qualify for the \$5,000 will be required to keep the cleaner vehicle for at least three years and fill out annual reports.

Other such programs are on the horizon, including the U.S. Car Allowance Rebate System, a federal program recently signed into law by President Obama, and the state's Cash for Clunkers.

The state program is scheduled to begin on April 1, 2010, with drivers possibly getting \$1,000 – or \$1,500 for low income – to turn their car over to a licensed dismantler.

Those living in San Joaquin Valley or Southern California, among the state's two most polluted regions, could be eligible for vouchers – between \$2,000 and \$2,500 – to go towards a new or used fuel-efficient vehicle that's four years old or newer.

Those on low income could use their vouchers for a fuel-efficient car no older than 2001.

More information on the state program can be found at www.cashforjunkcars.net.

The U.S. Car Allowance Rebate System could be made available by July 24.

By then, all of the detailed issues should be hammered out on implementing the regulations. The law would require that all participating car dealers to be registered with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Cars here must be no older than 25 years, getting 18 miles a gallon or less, registered, insured for the past year, and operating.

More information can be obtained by logging on to www.cars.gov.

Ramirez, meanwhile, noted that he's eligible to get \$1,000 to spend as you please for his Toyota from PASS.

But that's not enough.

"I really need a vehicle to get around, one that's fuel efficient, and something good for the environment. But at the same time I need a (safe and reliable) car to help out my family by allowing me to pursue other jobs," said Ramirez, who is expecting to commute for his type of work.

For now, he's continuing his efforts toward qualifying his car for the larger sum.

Sustainable summer series

Reedley College and Reedley native Mark Alvis are hoping to open dialogue about a sustainable future.

By Exponent Staff

Reedley Exponent Wednesday, July 15, 2009

Reedley College held its weekly Free Sustainable Summer Session which included the film "Clearing the Air" on Wednesday, July 8. Air Pollution expert Dr. Phil Martien who is featured in the film, gave a presentation on the causes of air pollution and global warming.

Dr. Martien who works for the Bay Area Air Quality Management District in San Francisco provided the audience with tips on how to improve our air quality. The 30 minute film is an episode of the PBS series "Green Planet" which was produced by Reedley native Mark Alvis along with Jen Davis.

The Sustainable Summer Sessions will be held every Wednesday through August 19 in Reedley College's Forum Hall from 7:00 – 8:30p.m. There will be a different topic each week. Guest speakers interact with the audience and can answer questions on a wide range of sustainable issues. There is free admission and free parking.

On July 15, the "Green Planet" episode was "The Beer That Saved the World" featuring Ken Grossman and the Sierra Nevada Brewery. This company recycles everything and makes its own power. Mark Alvis lead a discussion on how businesses can be environmentally friendly and economically viable.

Next Wednesday night, "The Secret of SIPs" will be shown from the PBS series. It features Eric Habben who built his home out of structural insulated panels.

Eric will be on hand to describe how the house was built and to talk about his new venture called Durasip, a structural insulated panel made from resin skins.

For a complete list of Free Sustainable Summer Session programs go to the Reedley College website at www.reedleycollege.edu or www.alviston.com.

Richmond, Chevron and environmentalists continue settlement discussions as workers leave refinery job site

By Katherine Tam, West County Times

In the Contra Costa Times and Tri-Valley Herald, Thurs., July 16, 2009

Settlement talks are scheduled to continue today as the City of Richmond, Chevron and several environmental groups try to reach a middle ground after a court ruling halted construction at the local refinery.

About 1,000 workers have been laid off from Chevron's project to replace its hydrogen plant, power plant and reformer to refine a wider range of crude oil with more sulfur. A hundred workers remain to tie up loose ends and demobilize, said Brent Tippen, refinery spokesman.

Union leaders and workers are urging officials to do what they can to get construction back on track.

"I was thinking there'd be 15 (more) months of work," said Dennis Roos, an electrician from Richmond who was laid off after three months. "I'm used to working and I'd rather work than be on unemployment. I'm hoping that whatever the issues, they can get it worked out."

The groups that sued say they don't want anyone losing their jobs either, but it's important to fully analyze a project's environmental impacts before it's built to ensure it's safe for the public. Jobs and an environmental analysis should not be pitted against each other, they said.

"Jobs and health — our residents know that the future of Richmond depends on both," said Mimi Ho, program director at the Asian Pacific Environmental Network.

The network joined the West County Toxics Coalition and Communities for a Better Environment in a lawsuit against the city and Chevron in September, contending the environmental impact report did not disclose that the project would enable refining of heavier crude that could increase pollution.

On July 2, a Contra Costa Superior Court judge ordered construction stopped until the report is clarified.

Chevron has insisted that its project is about replacing old equipment for safety and efficiency, and that it will keep refining light to intermediate crude oil. The company plans to appeal in state court, Tippen said.

Also on Wednesday, Chevron and the city announced the 19 community groups that would receive \$565,000 under the now-defunct community benefits agreement. The amount is about half the \$1 million the agreement outlined.

Under that \$61 million pact, Chevron was to provide funding over 10 years for city police, job training and other programs, and pay for air quality improvements at its plant. The agreement is contingent on the refinery's construction permits being approved. Because the court ordered permits be set aside, the agreement has ended.

The \$1 million for nonprofit groups this year was being doled out in cycles. Chevron had allotted \$565,000, though it had not been spent, when construction stopped. Tippen said the company will give that money as promised.

The grant recipients are organizations that run job training, school and other programs. Individual grants ranged from \$2,000 to \$117,054.

Catholic Charities of the East Bay received the largest grant, which it will use to provide free classes to English language learners twice a day, five days a week for 10 months, said Lisa Raffel, who heads the Richmond location. Its language center serves 300 students a year.

A committee of city officials, Chevron representatives and community members reviewed 67 applications totaling \$4 million, said Vice Mayor Ludmyrna Lopez, who sits on the committee. She said she hoped funding could resume soon.

"I'm hopeful that the discussions will resolve the outstanding issues," Lopez said. "During these hard economic times, charitable organizations also experience the money crunch and the purpose of this was to provide financial support."

NM company to develop hydrogen power plant

By Susan Montoya Bryan- Associated Press Writer
In the Modesto Bee, Thursday, July 15, 2009

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. -- A New Mexico-based energy technology company announced plans Wednesday to develop in southern New Mexico what it calls the world's first utility-scale, zero-emissions hydrogen power plant.

Jetstream Wind Inc. officials said the \$219 million plant would use electricity from wind, solar and other renewable energy sources to separate water into hydrogen and oxygen. The hydrogen

would then be burned in a turbine - similar to those used by natural gas-fired power plants - to generate enough electricity to power about 6,000 homes and businesses.

The 10-megawatt plant also would be capable of capturing and storing oxygen in liquid and gaseous forms for use in the medical field or other secondary markets.

"Basically, it's a scaled-up model of eighth-grade science," Jetstream Wind CEO Henry Herman said. "In eighth grade we took DC batteries, ran cables into water and produced hydrogen gas. All we're doing is utilizing that on a much larger scale."

The U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Colorado has been experimenting for the past two years with producing hydrogen from solar and wind sources, and it's possible that technology can be transferred to utility-scale projects, said George Sverdrup, the lab's program manager.

Sverdrup and other industry experts said the key is building a plant that's cost-effective, both for the developer and utilities purchasing the power.

While renewable energy projects have become increasingly cost-competitive with traditional power plants, some experts said the projected per-kilowatt cost of Jetstream Wind's plant is more than four times higher than conventional renewable sources.

"But you have to start somewhere with a lot of these technologies and over time these things decline in costs," said Mike Taylor, director of research and education at the Solar Electric Power Association in Washington, D.C.

Jetstream Wind believes it can provide consistent power to the grid using renewable sources without any of the emissions that come with generating hydrogen from fossil fuels. The potential of renewable-to-hydrogen power plants is being proven through tests like those at NREL, Herman said, and it wasn't until recently that the technologies needed to make it work were even available.

"We're the first company that had the foresight to jump on creating a combinatory system and putting the pieces together to make it viable for the public and for electrical generation," he said.

Citing proprietary concerns, Herman provided few technical details about the inner workings of Jetstream Wind's proposed plant.

The challenge to harnessing the electricity-producing power of the hydrogen molecule is finding a way to store the molecules until they're needed to turn a power plant's turbine, said Mike Smith, president and chief operating officer of Air Liquide Advanced Technologies in Delaware.

"No one, at least at this point, has found a truly cost-effective way to store large amounts of gaseous hydrogen so it can be used for future demand," he said, adding that many scientists are trying to come up with such a solution.

Ground was broken on JetStream Wind's project earlier this month in Truth or Consequences, N.M., but the company expects it will take more than a year to build once the permitting process is complete. The plant is expected to generate about 150 construction jobs and 30 permanent jobs.

The project is being privately financed. Herman would not elaborate on who has contributed.

Aside from the Truth or Consequences plant, two more plants are planned for American Indian pueblos in New Mexico and one is planned for Hawaii. Eventually, Herman said he would like to see renewable hydrogen plants around the world.

Herman acknowledged the challenges to developing such plants, including opposition from competing sources like coal. However, he said his company is interested in partnering with natural gas-fired plants since burning hydrogen is similar to burning natural gas to generate electricity.

"If we have a choice to go to a better system I think very shortly people are going to support a new system that actually is cleaner, better and cheaper for everyone," he said.

Lies cost bayfront oil terminal \$2.5 million

By Bob Egelko, staff writer

S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, July 16, 2009

SELBY -- The owner of an oil products terminal on the San Pablo Bay shoreline has pleaded guilty to lying to air-quality regulators about emissions and has been ordered to pay \$2.5 million in fines and contributions to clean-air projects, federal prosecutors said.

Shore Terminals, whose facility is in Selby north of Rodeo, admitted to committing four felonies in its reports to the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 2005 and 2006. The company had pleaded guilty to a single charge last month but made the additional admissions after continued plea negotiations, said Jack Gillund, spokesman for U.S. Attorney Joseph Russoniello.

Prosecutors said emissions-control devices on the company's fuel trucks malfunctioned in 2003 and were shut down, allowing the release of organic compounds that turn into smog-causing ozone in sunlight. Shore Terminals then falsely told local and federal regulators that it was complying with the Clean Air Act, prosecutors said.

U.S. District Judge Susan Illston fined the company \$1.75 million Tuesday and ordered it to pay \$750,000 to local projects designed to improve Bay Area air quality.

At Wal-Mart, Labeling to Reflect Green Intent

By Stephanie Rosenbloom, staff writer

N.Y. Times, Thursday, July 16, 2009

Shoppers expect the tags on Wal-Mart items to have rock-bottom prices. In the future they may also have information about the product's carbon footprint, the gallons of water used to create it, and the air pollution left in its wake.

As the world's largest retailer, Wal-Mart Stores is on a mission to determine the social and environmental impact of every item it puts on its shelves. And it has recruited scholars, suppliers, and environmental groups to help it create an electronic indexing system to do that.

The idea is to create a universal rating system that scores products based on how environmentally and socially sustainable they are over the course of their lives. Consider it the green equivalent to nutrition labels.

Rather than a retailer or a product supplier's focusing on only a few sustainability goals — lower emissions or water conservation or waste reduction — the index would help them take a broader view of sustainability by scrutinizing and rating all sorts of environmental and social implications.

Did this T-shirt come from a cotton crop that was sprayed with pesticide? Was excessive packaging used to ship these diapers?

Wal-Mart's goal is to have other retailers eventually adopt the indexing system, which will be created over the next five years.

"We have to change how we make and sell products," Michael T. Duke, Wal-Mart's president and chief executive, plans to tell about 1,500 of the company's suppliers and employees on Thursday at a "sustainability meeting," according to a copy of his prepared remarks. "We have to make consumption itself smarter and sustainable."

The only thing less likely than a Wal-Mart meeting that sounds as if it were dreamed up by liberal-arts environmentalists may be that a number of scholars and environmental groups say that Wal-Mart is the only entity capable of making "sustainable consumption" a retailing reality.

"Nobody else could pull this off," said Michelle Harvey at Environmental Defense Fund, one of the groups involved in the creation of the index.

The question, of course, is whether even Wal-Mart can make it happen.

"I think it's going to be a lot of work for a lot of people," said Jon Johnson, a professor in the Sam M. Walton College of Business at the University of Arkansas, whom the company asked to help create the index, along with Jay Golden at Arizona State University. "But obviously we're optimistic about the prospects."

Joe Cavaliere, a senior vice president for customer development at Unileve, a big Wal-Mart supplier, called the indexing idea "a great move forward for the industry."

Wal-Mart's sheer size has long enabled it to create ripple effects throughout corporate America whenever it adopts new ways of doing business.

For instance, Len Sauers, the vice president for global sustainability at Procter & Gamble, recalls that a few years ago, when his company and a few others began selling concentrated laundry detergent that uses 50 percent less water — and allows for a smaller container using less plastic — that version was slow to catch on.

In 2007, Wal-Mart decided it would sell only the concentrated detergents.

"Because of Wal-Mart's leadership in that area, they were able to set a standard for the entire industry," Mr. Sauers said. "That opened the door to allow it to progress very, very quickly."

Procter & Gamble said sharing the new sustainability index across the industry was important.

"The last thing a supplier really wants is when you're doing a separate index for every retailer," said Tim Marrin, associate director of external relations for Procter & Gamble. "Wal-Mart has invited the Targets, the Costcos, the Tescos of the world," he said, "to come up with a solution so that there are not 5, 10, 15, 20 different standards that retailers are implementing in their markets."

But creating a single set of measurements for the entire retailing industry will be complicated. For one thing, some suppliers have concerns about their proprietary information.

And environmentally sustainable production and distribution methods will not necessarily be cheap.

"The first question is always, 'It's going to cost more,'" John E. Fleming, Wal-Mart's chief merchandising officer, said in an interview this week. "But you know, I think we've demonstrated time and time again, if you reduce packaging, if you reduce energy, the costs go down."

Wal-Mart plans to begin by asking its more than 100,000 suppliers around the world to answer 15 simple questions about the sustainable practices of their companies. Questions include "Have you set publicly available greenhouse gas reduction targets? If yes, what are those targets?"

The largest United States suppliers will be asked to respond by October. Deadlines outside the United States have not been set.

Wal-Mart said suppliers that choose not to participate would not be penalized, but warned, "then they're probably less relevant to us."

Whatever grumbling the index might create, Wal-Mart executives said that more and more consumers, especially those born from 1980 to 2000, will be making purchasing decisions based not only on price but also on which products do the least harm to the environment and the people, often in poorer countries, who produce them.

"These younger consumers, they care deeply about this regardless of what happens in the economy," Mr. Fleming said. "When I go around to colleges and universities to recruit, sustainability is tops on their list. So I think this will help us build a better business model."

If successful, the index could compel manufacturers and suppliers to create more sustainable products.

"If we could take a snapshot of products today in the store and then fast forward 10 years from now," said Matt Kistler, Wal-Mart's senior vice president for sustainability, we would see "dramatic changes."

U.S., China try to reach accord on reducing greenhouse gas emissions

By David Pierson and Jim Tankersley, staff writers
L.A. Times, Wed., July 15, 2009

Reporting from Washington and Beijing -- U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu and Commerce Secretary Gary Locke are in Beijing this week to talk about climate change with Chinese leaders. The hope is to open the nation's market to American clean technology products while nudging China toward committing to hard targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

They have their work cut out for them.

Although China is rapidly expanding its use of alternative energy to curb dependence on fossil fuels, it's favoring its own wind and solar manufacturers over foreign suppliers. And despite recently surpassing the United States as the world's largest emitter of carbon dioxide, China has stated repeatedly that the U.S. and other industrial powers must take the lead on cutting emissions.

The issue is pitting industrial countries against the developing world over what role each should play in slowing potentially devastating global warming. At the Group of 8 summit meeting in Italy last week, China and other emerging powers declined to commit to specific goals for slashing heat-trapping gases by 2050. They said their rise from poverty shouldn't be derailed by the rich nations responsible for most of the damage.

The participation of the U.S. and China is essential to building a global consensus heading into next year's United Nations conference on climate change. Any accord that doesn't include these two polluting superpowers would largely be considered a failure. But carbon caps are proving a point of friction between the trading partners.

"The United States and China have developed a very strong, advantageous relationship because of the economy, and by and large, it's been mutually beneficial," said Dan Dudek, chief economist for the Environmental Defense Fund. "But when it comes to climate change and energy, that simple equation starts to break down. What they're looking for now is a path to similar interests."

Obama administration officials, and the president himself, are peddling cautious optimism in Washington about Chinese efforts on global warming. In an interview with energy reporters late last month, Obama sounded a cooperative tone about working with China and India to reduce emissions.

"We're going to be able to take a look at what they're doing," he said, "and to the extent that they are taking steps within their own economies to make progress, I think we're going to be able to help leverage even greater gains internationally."

The mood is decidedly more combative on Capitol Hill, particularly among Republicans, many of whom insist that China must act aggressively on emissions before the U.S. will.

China's response to climate change has been "complex and contradictory," Sen. Richard G. Lugar (R-Ind.), one of the few GOP senators that Democrats believe could eventually support a climate bill, said at a committee hearing last month.

He added: "The American domestic debate on the issue will be profoundly influenced by perceptions of China's willingness to set aside doctrinaire positions and agree to verifiable steps to limit greenhouse gas emissions."

China is in the throes of massive urbanization that will add 350 million residents to its cities in the next 20 years -- a migration of rural dwellers that will require dramatic increases in energy capacity. Those new urbanites will want access to air conditioning, cars and electronics that developed nations have long enjoyed.

"Why can't these people have the same rights as Americans?" said Hu Tao, program coordinator of the United Nations China Climate Change Partnership Framework. "With a cap [on emissions], that means in the future we won't have the right to use these things. That's not realistic."

Recognizing the growing environmental crisis, Beijing has launched its own set of domestic policies to reduce pollution while resisting international accords on emissions that they believe will interfere with determining their own destiny.

Beijing has committed \$462 billion to scaling up renewable energy by 2020. China has increased wind power by 100% each of the last three years. And although still modest in scope, China plans to boost solar power capacity tenfold in the next decade. Meanwhile, smaller and more inefficient coal plants are being phased out.

China's wind farms can be seen in the far-flung West on the outskirts of desert cities such as Urumqi. Towering turbines are also being installed offshore near Shanghai. And China boasts millions of inexpensive, solar-powered household water heaters. The nation is the world's top producer of solar photovoltaic panels, although 95% of them are exported.

But China remains highly dependent on dirty coal, building coal-fired power plants at a breakneck pace. Some of China's chief polluters ignore laws to use clean technology because it's cheaper to pay a fine.

Still, China considers its efforts to battle climate change superior to those of the U.S., which did not sign the 1997 Kyoto Protocol and awaits a vote by the U.S. Senate on the Waxman-Markey climate bill.

"In the past eight years the U.S. has done nothing to contribute to [combating] climate change," said Jin Jiaman, executive director of the Global Environmental Institute, a Beijing-based nonprofit. "They should try to compensate now."

Secretaries Chu and Locke plan to lay the framework for greater cooperation leading up to President Obama's visit to China later this year. The two men of ethnic Chinese backgrounds are well regarded here; Chu for his Nobel Prize in physics and Locke for his family, which is celebrated in its ancestral home of Taishan in Southern China as an immigrant success story.

Chu addressed a packed audience this morning at his parents' alma mater, Tsinghua University.

"What China and the U.S. do in the future in large part will determine the fate of the world," he said.

Chu said he respected the argument that developed nations were responsible for most emissions to date. But he said that if China continued on its path, in 30 years it would have equaled all the carbon pollution the U.S. has ever released.

"We're all in this together," he said.

Among the topics Chu and Locke are expected to discuss with their Chinese counterparts is technology transfer. The U.S. relies on coal for 22% of its energy needs and has know-how in carbon capture that would benefit the Chinese.

"This is a rapid and dynamic area where there are huge opportunities for both sides," said Qi Ye, head of the Energy Foundation's Beijing office. "Putting roadblocks [in transfers] is not going to help."

The Chinese bristled at a stipulation in a recent U.S. climate bill that calls for tariffs on green exports from nations that fail to sign emission caps. It's been interpreted in Beijing as a way to restrict Chinese imports and protect American manufacturers and jobs at a time when both have been gravely affected by the economic crisis.

China wants industrialized nations to reduce their emissions by 40% below 1990 levels by 2020. By comparison, the bill still to be decided in Washington calls for a 4% reduction over the same period. Any agreement on short-term and mid-term targets between the two sides may have to meet closer to the middle, observers say.

The Environmental Defense Fund's Dudek said that, despite the modest targets in the U.S. bill, the Chinese would welcome its passage and consider it a sign that the U.S. would lead the pair out of their impasse.

"It's hard to come to the table and talk tough with the Chinese when we don't have national controls or legislation on the books," Dudek said.

[L.A. Times editorial, Thursday, July 16, 2009:](#)

Energy: the next frontier

Like the race to the moon, the challenge to replace fossil fuels is not simply a pie-in-the-sky idea.

Roughly 240,000 miles above this blue rock is a metal plaque bearing the words, "Here men from the planet Earth first set foot upon the moon July 1969, A.D. We came in peace for all mankind." Today, as we memorialize the launch of the mission that put it there 40 years ago, we should also remember the mission's central lesson -- that given the political will, there are few things this nation cannot achieve.

Proposing to send human beings to the moon and back by the end of the decade, as President John F. Kennedy did in 1961, seemed as unlikely a prospect then as, say, weaning the United States off foreign oil by 2020 is today. Fortunately for Kennedy, he had fear on his side. NASA had been created in 1958 in response to the launch of the Sputnik satellite by the Soviet Union, which led to the terrifying realization that superior U.S. air power could be nullified by superior Soviet missile technology. NASA was technically in charge of civilian space programs, and the Advanced Research Projects Agency handled military programs, but it seemed to Cold Warriors on both sides that the winner of the moon race would also be the winner of the quest to militarize space.

As it turned out, the U.S. was the winner in consumer technology as well. Government-sponsored research and development into manned spaceflight led to thousands of new discoveries and products. Baby formula, springy athletic shoes, fireproof materials and cordless tools are among the results (but not, surprisingly, Tang, which was developed independently by General Foods in 1957).

The lessons of 1969 are not lost on President Obama, who referred to the moon landing in a speech before the National Academy of Sciences in April. He was promoting an ambition less lofty than Kennedy's but a good deal more pressing in terms of humanity's future -- replacing fossil fuels with cleaner sources of energy, what Obama called "this generation's great project."

As Obama acknowledged, this time around there is no Sputnik moment to rally political and popular support. Instead, there are computer-generated climate models of questionable reliability, glacier studies in far-flung places, killer heat waves on the other side of the world in Australia, alarming charts on the increase in average global temperatures to date and other evidence of interest to eggheads. It's convincing stuff to those open to new ideas, but it hardly focuses the mind like the threat of a Soviet ICBM targeted at downtown Los Angeles.

It's worth remembering that the space race brought with it a renaissance in American education and scientific research that paid dividends above and beyond the propaganda value of beating the Soviets to the moon or the spiritual value of witnessing the smallness and fragility of Earth as seen from another world. For all the grumbling over the economic costs of fighting climate change, it will have similar benefits, not the least of which will be leaving a planet for our children that's as green as the one we inherited from our parents.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses a vehicle replacement program in Mexico offering a 15,000 pesos subsidy. For more information, contact Maricela Velásquez at \(559\) 230-5849.](#)

Ayudará gobierno a comprar auto nuevo

Silvia Garduño, Agencia Reforma
El Diario, Thurs., July 16, 2009

Distrito Federal—Ante la afectación del sector de la industria automotriz en México por la crisis económica, el presidente Felipe Calderón anunció ayer un programa de renovación vehicular para aumentar la demanda de unidades nuevas.

“He decidido poner en marcha el programa de renovación vehicular que ayudará a levantar la demanda de la industria automotriz”, dijo el mandatario.

“La idea es que los propietarios de vehículos de 10 años o más de antigüedad puedan obtener un subsidio, una transferencia directa de 15 mil por parte del Gobierno federal en la compra de un vehículo nuevo en el país”.

Agregó que el programa ayudará a sustituir el parque [vehicular deficiente o contaminante](#).

El programa consiste en entregar 15 mil pesos a la persona interesada en renovar su vehículo a cambio de la unidad obsoleta.

Los propietarios tendrán que llevar sus autos a las propias agencias o a los centros de reciclaje para que sean destruidos.

Este programa aplica únicamente para aquellos vehículos que se hayan ensamblado en nuestro país, en países con los que México tenga un tratado de libre comercio, o bien, que sean vendidos por fabricantes establecidos en territorio mexicano.

En México sólo las empresas General Motors, Ford, Chrysler, Volkswagen, Nissan Honda y Toyota ensamblan vehículos en el País.

Eduardo Solís, presidente de la Asociación Mexicana de la Industria Automotriz (AMIA), dijo que es un programa piloto y que los fabricantes aún no tienen un estimado de cuantos vehículos adicionales se podrían vender con este programa.

“Hago un llamado a los gobiernos estatales porque son finalmente los beneficiarios de la recaudación tanto del impuesto de tenencia como del impuesto sobre automóviles nuevos sería muy importante que armadoras y gobiernos locales también hicieran su parte”, dijo Calderón Hinojosa.

Durante la clausura del Séptimo Congreso Internacional de la Industria Automotriz, el Presidente manifestó que quienes accedan a este beneficio podrán comprar automóviles con un valor comercial de hasta 160 mil pesos.

Afirmó que el programa arranca con un presupuesto de 500 millones de pesos, mismo que podría ampliarse a mil millones una vez valorada su efectividad.

Calderón Hinojosa conminó a armadoras y gobiernos locales a hacer su parte para apoyar a la industria automotriz del país.

Las ventas de autos nuevos registraron una caída de 31 por ciento en junio y en países como Brasil, Estados Unidos, Alemania y Francia, los estímulos a las ventas de autos han sido mucho mayores que en México.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Shanghai reducing vehicle traffic in preparation for EXPO 2010. For more information, contact Maricela Velásquez at \(559\) 230-5849.](#)

Shanghai reducirá tráfico para EXPO 2010 por número matrícula como en JJOO

El Periódico de México, Thurs., July 16, 2009

Shanghai (China), (EFE).- La ciudad oriental china de Shanghai adoptará el mismo sistema de control de matrículas que aplicó Pekín en los Juegos Olímpicos de 2008 para [reducir la contaminación](#) y el tráfico de la ciudad, en los seis meses de la Exposición Universal 2010.

En principio la norma se aplicará, como poco, durante la primera semana del evento, a partir del próximo 1 de mayo, y no se ha decidido todavía cuántos días podría extenderse su aplicación ni en qué momentos de la Expo podría imponerse de nuevo, lo que dependerá de los resultados observados durante esa primera semana.

Según anunció hoy el diario oficial "Shanghai Daily", cuando se ponga en marcha, en cualquier caso, sólo se permitirá la circulación de coches con matrícula par o impar, de manera alternativa

cada día, en las calles del centro de la ciudad a ambas orillas del río Huangpu, en torno al cual se articula el recinto de la Expo.

Las autoridades locales esperan alcanzar una media de visitantes diarios de 400,000 personas durante el evento, por lo que consideran una tarea vital reducir el tráfico en lo posible, según concluyó en una reunión ordinaria el Comité del Partido Comunista de China en Shanghai.

También se prohibirán las obras de construcción en el centro urbano durante los seis meses de la Expo, lo que reducirá una de las principales fuentes de polución ambiental en el corazón de la ciudad, que suele verse afectada por el polvo de centenares de obras simultáneas y de la demolición barrios antiguos en pleno centro.

Además se trabaja para crear plazas de aparcamiento gratuitas durante esos seis meses en los alrededores de los estadios del centro de Shanghai.

En Pekín, donde estos días se presenta una exposición sobre la Expo para el público de la capital, el presidente chino, Hu Jintao, hizo un llamamiento para que el evento tenga cierto efecto revitalizador en la economía del país.

"La Expo de Shanghai es el segundo gran evento en nuestro país después de los JJOO de Pekín. Organizar un evento exitoso es muy importante para promover nuestros intercambios y nuestra cooperación con otros países y regiones de todo el mundo", declaró Hu en su visita a la muestra, que ya han visto 2.3 millones de chinos.