



Welcome to World Focus, the purpose of this new section is to expand our knowledge in local, state, national and global events. How people in different parts of the nation or globe are working to improve the environment, work place and how suggestions to help the financial crisis are being shared.

Many people have been talking about Alternative work schedules which help reduce congestion, pollution and most importantly “STRESS”, which is the number one killer of the human race in the 21st century. Medical science has known that stress related disease is a major factor in almost all medical conditions and because of the pharmaceutical company’s making billions, they have convinced the public that magic pills are being developed to cure the ailing bodies and minds. The truth is this quick fix is Nonsense and untrue. Medical costs are reaching unimaginable levels and our political minds are holding on to the belief that our medical programs are the best in the world! NONSENSE! We the people know that this theme is not true or realistic, but yet we continue to follow the rhetoric and pour millions of dollars into a belief that is an illusion. Why is it that other towns and cities can look into alternative work schedules and actually find the benefit and we can’t? a picture tells a million words. Our leaders are short sighted and afraid. Yes! Afraid, they wonder how wonderful people will feel and enjoy their time and that is something that is not acceptable. We love misery and discontent that is the American industrial way. NOT! Lets wake up and smell the real roses and standup for what is Right!

The following article is provided to see how other places are working with the Alternative idea.



Report From Scientific American: Should Thursday Be the New Friday? The Environmental and Economic Pluses of the 4-Day Workweek

From The Scientific American, July 24

As government agencies and corporations scramble to cut expenses, one idea gaining widespread attention involves cutting something most employees wouldn't mind losing: work on Fridays. Regular three-day weekends, without a decrease in the actual hours worked per week, could not only save money, but also ease pressures on the environment and public health, advocates say. In fact, several states, cities and companies across the country are considering, or have already implemented on a trial basis, the condensed schedule for their employees.

The economic downturn started the trend, as companies looked to avoid laying off employees, notes John Langmaid, organizer of an upcoming symposium on the issue for the Connecticut Law Review. Firms soon realized that when they closed on Fridays they could save money without having to reduce weekly hours. Indeed, Langmaid remarks, the idea of a four-day, 40-hour workweek "has been out there for quite some time as a response to environmental issues, commuting pressures, as well as work-family balance."

Local governments in particular have had their eyes on Utah over the last year; the state redefined the workday for more than 17,000 of its employees last August. For those workplaces, there's no longer a need to turn on the lights, elevators or computers on Fridays—nor do janitors need to clean vacant buildings. Electric bills have dropped even further during the summer, thanks to less air-conditioning: Friday's midday hours have been replaced by cooler mornings and evenings on Monday through Thursday. As of May, the state had saved \$1.8 million.

Perhaps as important, workers seem all too ready to replace "TGIF" with "TGIT". "People just love it," says Lori Wadsworth, a professor of public management at Brigham Young University in Provo. She helped survey those on the new Working 4 Utah schedule this May and found 82 percent would prefer to stick with it.

The environment seems to like it, too. "If employees are on the road 20 percent less, and office buildings are only powered four days a week," Langmaid says, "the energy savings and congestion savings would be enormous." Plus, the hour shift for the Monday through Thursday workers means fewer commuters during the traditional rush hours, speeding travel for all. It also means less time spent idling in traffic and therefore less spewing of greenhouse gases and other pollutants. The 9-to-5 crowd also gets the benefit of extended hours at the DMV and other state agencies that adopt the four-day schedule.

An interim report released by the Utah state government in February projected a drop of at least 6,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually from Friday building shutdowns. If reductions in greenhouse gases from commuting are included, the state would check the generation of at least

12,000 metric tons of CO₂—the equivalent of taking about 2,300 cars off the road for one year.

Still, not everyone thinks a four-day workweek is good news. Some voice concerns that longer days in the office might lead to increased exhaustion and sickness, less time for working out as well as more frequent stops at fast food restaurants. So far, however, surveys suggest otherwise. "Utah employees actually show decreased health complaints, less stress and fewer sick days," Wadsworth says, noting previous research finding that fatigue is typically triggered by workdays over 12 hours. Early results from another multicity survey indicate that just 20 percent of respondents said they felt they ate more fast food and only 30 percent said they worked out less. In fact, 30 percent said they exercised more. Anecdotal evidence from Utah also points to an unexpected benefit: increased volunteerism.

As the yearlong experiment with this new model nears its end next month, employees of the cities of El Paso, Tex., and Melbourne Beach, Fla., among others, are following Utah's lead with their own TGIT trials. Struggling automakers have also spotted the potential savings. Starting August 10, General Motor's plant workers in Lordstown, Ohio, will work four 10-hour days a week. (It was the car industry—Henry Ford, in particular—that made the five-day 40-hour workweek standard back in the 1920s and 1930s. Organized labor also helped drive federal legislation that in 1940 locked in a 40-hour week from what had commonly been more than 50 hours, and also banned child labor.)

New York, a state with higher energy costs and a workforce approximately 10 times larger than Utah's, might especially benefit from a four-day workweek, according to Michael N. Gianaris, a Democratic member of the New York State Assembly. Dealing with a "massive budget deficit," the state continues to look for "innovative ways to save money without causing pain to existing programs and raising taxes," says Gianaris, who introduced legislation to test the schedule among state employees. He sees growing momentum for the idea, which boasts "very little downside and a whole lot of upside."

"As we move further into the 21st century, governments need to look for ways to become more efficient. Moving to a four-day workweek should be at the top of the list," Gianaris says. "It helps the environment. People like it. It's a no-brainer."