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## 9 N.J. employers lauded as commuter-friendly

By *Teresa M. McAleavy*,  
STAFF WRITER

Nine employers in New Jersey scored high marks Tuesday from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for having commuter-friendly workplace policies.

Verizon and Short Hills-based D&B are among the organizations that made the first Metro NY-NJ-CT Best Workplaces for Commuters list. The list was created by the EPA and a coalition of transportation and business organizations to recognize companies that offer workers incentives to car-pool, use mass transit, or otherwise simplify their commute.

“Commuters in the [New York-New Jersey-Connecticut] metro area spend almost 80 minutes every day or nearly a full week a year getting to and from work,” Jane M. Kenny, EPA regional administrator, said in a statement. “Millions of people every day are sitting in traffic, increasing air pollution, wasting gasoline, and increasing their own stress. The organizations we’re recognizing have made an extraordinary effort to reverse this trend.”

The 63 employers on the list promote more efficient commuting through employer-provided transit passes, van-pool subsidies, bike racks, telecommuting, and on-site day-care programs.

For instance, Verizon, with its state headquarters in Newark, offers its 15,000 New Jersey workers several incentives to share rides and also allows some employees to work from home.

Workers who regularly car-pool but need to get home quickly for an emergency, for example, will have their car service or taxi bill paid for by Verizon up to three times each year, the company said. Those who share rides also get preferential parking. And Verizon plans to help cut pollution by purchasing five hybrid electric vehicles this year for company use.

“We’re grateful for the recognition that demonstrates Verizon is committed to helping protect the environment,” Verizon New Jersey President Dennis M. Boone said. “We’ve committed to reducing fuel consumption, giving our employees ... options to help them save gasoline and reduce emissions.”

In announcing its list, the EPA cited a recent survey in which

half the commuters described their treks to and from work as “unsatisfying or stressful.” The agency also found that more than one-third of all respondents would be willing to take a 10 percent pay cut for a shorter commute.

The EPA and Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> Coalition also said organizations that offer commuting choices have better rates of recruitment, retention, and overall job satisfaction.

For more information, visit [www.bwc.gov](http://www.bwc.gov)

### SIMPLIFYING TREKS

*Companies and groups with a presence in New Jersey that are commuter-friendly:*

- D&B
- Intel Corp.
- John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Meadowlark
- Pfizer Inc.
- Verizon
- TransOptions
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency -
- Edison Laboratory
- Veterans Affairs New Jersey Healthcare System

▲ Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Best Workplaces for Commuters (SM) Coalition