

Subject HCIJO Green Tip: Greener flying

Dear friends,

Flying is one of the most polluting ways of traveling, but nearly all of us need to fly sometime. There are, however, ways to reduce the environmental impact of those unavoidable flights, including these simple ideas from the book *Green Living for Dummies*.

- **Take direct flights or those that make fewer stops en route.** Taking off and landing use far more fuel than long-haul cruising, so a trip that includes two or more legs results in more greenhouse gas emissions. Though the flight may be cheaper, it's more costly to the environment.
- **Fly airlines that use newer model planes.** Not surprisingly, newer planes tend to be more fuel-efficient.
- **Choose daytime flights.** Jet contrails (the condensation trails produced by aircraft engine exhaust) can contribute to warming the atmosphere because, as they disperse, they can trap heat radiating up from Earth. Night flights are more polluting because during the day, contrails partially offset their own heat-trap effect by radiating light from the sun away from Earth.
- **Pack light.** Every pound of weight that a plane carries increases the amount of fuel it burns, so reducing luggage weight helps reduce the flight's ecological impact.
- **Choose economy class over business/first class.** Most of the fuel usage on a flight is determined by the airplane's weight. Carrying more passengers distributes this fixed cost among more people. The more people the aircraft carries, the less fuel is burned per person. When you choose an economy seat over a roomier option, it's not only less expensive; you are also responsible for fewer emissions.
- **Purchase carbon offsets.** You can lessen or neutralize the environmental damage done by your unavoidable flights by purchasing "carbon offsets" - shares in projects that capture greenhouse gases or generate energy from renewable resources. In choosing offset providers, it is important to research their programs thoroughly to ensure that their projects meet certain recognized standards. More information about carbon offsetting can be found under "Transportation/Travel" in the Climate Change Resource section of the HCIJO website: www.holycrossjustice.org.

We hope these suggestions help you to fly a little greener. Thanks for all that you are doing to preserve and protect Earth.

In peace,
Mary