

Crary Huff Law Firm: Supporting Employees Who Bike to Work

SUMMARY

Thanks to the commitment of the Crary Huff Law Firm, more than 30 employees now have access to facilities that support and encourage healthy and active lifestyles. With the addition of two showers and changing facilities, indoor secure bicycle parking and storage locker room, tire pumps, and even a beautiful kitchen and dining area, employees who choose to bike to work or exercise during break times can now shower and change clothes at work making it easier and more comfortable for employees choosing to be active during the day.



CHALLENGE

The rate of obesity continues to climb across the country and the incidence of obesity in lowans isn't any different. According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's County Health Rankings, 32% of Woodbury County, IA adults report a BMI of 30 or more compared to 30% of lowans. One factor contributing to the rise in obesity rates is the lack of physical activity. With many individuals spending one-third or more of their day in the workplace and less than half of adults getting the recommended amount of daily physical activity, encouraging biking to and from work and providing environmental supports in the workplace is a great way to bridge the two. Doing so will help businesses increase productivity, improve employee satisfaction, and help contain health care cost because employees will be happier and healthier.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IS KEY

Providing simple amenities like an outdoor bike rack or indoor bike parking, a shower and a changing room, or simply a tire pump can reduce worker's compensation claims, sick time, and turnover. Discuss these ideas with your CEO, Human Resources Director, or Wellness Coordinator and visit www.healthsiouxland.org for more information on ways you can become a bike friendly employer.

"Providing facilities that would support employees just seemed like the right thing to do and we have seen behaviors change as a result."

- Cody McCullough

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SOLUTION

In an effort to help support employees in being more physically active, when Crary Huff Law Firm leased a new office space, they decided to build in amenities that would support employees commuting to work by bike. As building plans were being developed they included two shower/changing rooms, indoor bike parking, and storage lockers that were strategically located at a separate entrance near the elevator so employees would not have to bring their bikes through the reception area. In addition to these environmental features, they also provide fresh fruit and a kitchen for healthy eating options.

RESULTS

Building in the environmental supports which encourage and support employees who choose to bike to and from work has not only made it easier for the avid bike commuters, but it has also changed the behaviors of other Crary Huff employees. They have seen an increase in the number of recreational riders who have biked to work, biked during lunch, and even more employees are exercising during their lunch hour because they have a place to shower and change clothes. In fact, at their old office building one employee infrequently biked to work and at least ten employees use the new facilities in varying capacities (some for commuting and others for working out during lunch or after work). When asked about the facilities, Attorney Mick Connealy states: "It's life changing, and that is not overstating it. The simple addition of a locker room and showers has elevated what I am able to accomplish during my day."

SUSTAINING SUCCESS

Crary Huff Law Firm is working to increase the number of employees who bike to work on a regular basis now that they have the facilities that make it easier to do so. This year, for the first time, they organized a Bike to Work day event and provided t-shirts and water bottles to all employees who participated. Doing so helped to not only reach the avid riders but it expanded the audience and included even those that rarely or who have never biked to work. Events, similar to this, will be done at least annually so they can continue to increase the percent of employees biking to work. Crary Huff is also committed to bringing awareness to bike commuting by encouraging other businesses to change their environment and by participating in local advocacy organizations and coalitions.

Crary Huff Law Firm was awarded the Bike Friendly Employer award from the SIMPCO Bicycle-Pedestrian Roundtable in May 2017.