

Timberland helps workers buy hybrid cars

STRATHAM, N.H. – A company known for its hiking boots is helping workers hit the road in environmentally-friendly cars.

Timberland Co. is offering its 6,000 workers \$3,000 toward the purchase of hybrid cars that combine electric motors and gasoline engines. Currently offered by Honda, Toyota and Ford, the cars generate fuel economy ratings that in some cases exceed 50 miles per gallon.

Timberland will allow its employees to put the money toward any hybrid vehicle that meets Internal Revenue Service and Environmental Protection Agency standards.

"We want to make this as attractive as possible to our employees because we want to make a significant difference in the amount of carbon dioxide produced when our employees drive," said Terry Kellogg, who oversees the multinational company's environmental programs.

Betsy Blaisdell, who works with Kellogg, said environmental stewardship and community involvement are part of Timberlands corporate culture.

"We are all outdoorsy people who want to preserve the places we like to enjoy," Blaisdell said. "It is part of our belief system."

Adam Markham, executive director of the Portsmouth-based **Clean Air-Cool Planet** organization, worked with Timberland to start the grant program.

"You put more than 22 pounds of carbon into the atmosphere for every gallon of gas you burn," Markham said. "For the average American driver, that comes to more than seven tons of (carbon dioxide) a year."

About 700 people work at Timberland's headquarters in Stratham, but new cars aren't expected to fill the parking lot anytime soon, however.

"Most dealers we've talked to say there is a minimum wait of two to three months before someone can take delivery," Kellogg said.