

## **Press Release**

### **ECO-DRIVING TEST OFFERS 'QUICK WIN' FOR LOWER CARBON EMISSIONS**

The simple measure of making 'eco-driving' a compulsory part of the driving test could save up to 378,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) per year by 2010, new research from the UK Energy Research Centre is suggesting.

As well as reducing drivers' carbon emissions by up to 10%, it could also save the average driver up to £85 a year in petrol costs.

The research, outlined a new short report from the UK Energy Research Centre (UKERC), is the first in a series of 'Quick Hits' that are due to be released that show how simple measures could make a useful contribution to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2010.

To achieve the emissions cuts, the Quick Hit proposes including assessment of energy-efficient driving ability in the practical driving test, as well as strengthening the assessment of good practice and adding more information on alternative fuels and vehicle efficiency to the theory test. A similar scheme in the Netherlands brought average efficiency improvements of 10% amongst drivers who received the training.

Earlier this year, the Government said in its new Climate Change Programme that the UK was not on course to meet its target of a 20% reduction in 1990 levels of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2010, and would probably reduce them by only 15-18%. Transport is the only sector of the UK economy in which carbon emissions have increased since 1990, rising by 10% between 1990 and 2004.

Implementing the proposals on eco-driving would support the statement in the UK 2006 Energy Review released in July, in which the Government said that it intended to raise awareness of transport and develop initiatives on eco-safe driving. The inclusion of eco-driving within the driving test was also backed by the House of Commons' Environmental Audit Committee in its report, Reducing Carbon Emissions from Transport, released in August.

Dr Brenda Boardman, the director of the Demand Reduction theme of the UKERC, said, "The testing of eco-driving is a simple measure that would produce clear environmental benefits, as well as benefiting drivers financially. By using measures such as this, we could help close the gap between the original emissions target for 2010 and what is currently predicted."