Intel tops EPA commuter-friendly list, 8 more valley-based firms rank high

Intel Corp., tops the list of commuter-friendly employers in the nation, according to a report released this week by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Seven of the top 11 Fortune 500 companies on the EPA’s top-20 list are in the Bay Area, and three are in Santa Clara.

The companies were lauded for providing such benefits as subsidized transit vouchers under the Commuter Check program, van pools that range as far as Vallejo, a shuttle from BART and Caltrain stations, stipends, and telecommuting.

The EPA says commuter benefits are becoming an imperative for companies, because they attract top employees along with helping the environment.

In order, the firms in the top 20 were:

1. Santa Clara-based Intel (NASDAQ:INTC)
2. Redmond, Wash.-based Microsoft Corp. (NASDAQ:MSFT)
3. Mountain View-based Google Inc. (NASDAQ:GOOG) and Redwood City-based Oracle Corp. (NASDAQ:ORCL) tied
4. San Diego-based Qualcomm Inc. (NASDAQ:QCOM)
5. Sunnyvale-based Yahoo Inc. (NASDAQ:YHOO)
6. San Jose-based Cisco Systems Inc. (NASDAQ:CSCO)
7. Santa Clara-based Sun Microsystems Inc. (NASDAQ:SUNW)
8. Dallas-based Texas Instruments Inc. (NYSE:TXN)
10. Seattle-based Safeco Insurance Co. (NASDAQ:SAFC)
11. Texas-based Reliant Energy Inc. (NYSE:RRI)
12. New Jersey-based Wyeth Pharmaceuticals Inc. (NYSE:WYE)
13. Cupertino-based Apple Computer Inc. (NASDAQ:AAPL)
14. New York-based International Business Machines Corp. (NYSE:IBM)
15. Sunnyvale-based Advanced Micro Devices Inc. (NYSE:AMD)
16. Tie between Massachusetts-based EMC Corp. (NYSE:EMC), Texas-based El Paso Corp. (NYSE:EP), and Washington-based Nike Inc. (NYSE:NKE)
20. New Jersey-based **Schering-Plough Corp.** (NYSE:SGP)