

TEXTE

Environmental effects of online shopping can be reduced

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Some companies are already using cargo bikes to make small deliveries.

10 Two-thirds of Canadians have increased their online shopping during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a new report by KPMG. Canada's postal service reports that parcel deliveries increased by more than 24 per cent in the first eight months of 2020. Delivery of all those packages means there are more vans and planes emitting more greenhouse gases contributing to climate change. Companies and consumers can take steps to reduce emissions, says transportation analyst Maddy Ewing of the
15 Pembina Institute, a clean-energy think tank.

In Canada, transportation is responsible for about one-quarter of all emissions. Ewing says that delivery vans going from a depot to a customer's home are responsible for especially high emissions. The request for fast delivery means companies are less able to fill vehicles or use the most efficient route. Ewing suggests consumers pass on the fast delivery option and that they wait until they have a
20 full order before putting through their request for shipment.

Several companies are taking steps to reduce emissions. Some are considering using electric vehicles or even cargo bikes with electric assists. Ewing says companies can offer "green shipping" options or
25 make that kind of option the default. And governments can adopt policies to encourage emissions reduction.

Ewing says that almost half of consumers expect businesses to be accountable for their impact on the environment and she suggests that consumers make that known to the companies they use.
30 "Canadian consumers are powerful drivers of change," she writes. "By educating ourselves on the environmental consequences of different delivery methods and choices, we can help bend the curve on carbon emissions while shopping online."

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Nom de l'épreuve : Anglais	Code : NDRC/ANG/ORAL/OBL	Page 1 / 1