

HOW I'M SAVING MONEY

*A weeklong look at how Chicagoans
are coping in a rough economy*



Carl Westberg cut his car costs hundreds of dollars a month by turning to I-GO, a car-sharing service. | JOHN H. WHITE~SUN-TIMES

Car sharing avoids agony at the pump

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Between paying \$50 a month for parking in his Rogers Park neighborhood and shelling out more money for maintenance, Carl Westberg was spending about \$400 a month on his paid-for 1995 Ford Taurus.

But it was the hurt the gas pump was putting on his wallet — about \$35 for each fill-up — that pushed the 53-year-old department store worker to get rid of his car and use a car-sharing program.

Westberg figures he now spends about \$80 to use I-GO Car Sharing service one to four times a month. It has two cars parked across the street from his apartment and another nine within a 10-minute walking distance.

“I’ve never wanted to go somewhere and didn’t have a car available,” Westberg said.

Car-sharing services require monthly or annual fees and charge by the hour, but the service pays for gas and insurance.

Chicago has services run by Massachusetts-based Zipcar Inc. and not-for-profit I-Go. Both said they’ve seen business rise along with gas prices.

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