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Encourage your employees to take the Commuter Challenge

Each year, our employer outreach specialists host hundreds of commuter fairs across the Twin Cities and answer questions about smarter ways of getting to work. The Commuter Challenge is an easy way to encourage your employees to drive alone less often and try healthy transportation choices instead.

Anyone can take the Challenge by replacing a drive-alone trip and instead ride the bus or train, bicycle, carpool, walk, telework or vanpool. We can help you promote the Commuter Challenge at commuter fairs that you schedule at your worksite this spring.

Your employees can sign up at mycommuterchallenge.org starting April 1 for a chance to win iPads, Netbooks and Kindles. This year's Challenge ends June 30.

How your company can participate

At the free events listed below, we'll provide information on ways employers can participate in the Commuter Challenge and update you on other transportation initiatives.

Anoka County Transportation Summit

Tuesday, April 5

Registration: 11 a.m.

Lunch and program: 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Anoka County Sheriff's Office Community Room
13301 Hanson Boulevard NW, Andover

RSVP by phone: 763-862-4260 or e-mail: Renee.Sande@co.anoka.mn.us. Deadline is Friday, April 1.

State of the Commute 2011

Wednesday, April 6

Registration: 11 a.m.

Lunch and program: 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Best Buy Corporate Campus

7601 Penn Ave, Richfield

RSVP by phone: 612-749-4494 or e-mail:

melissa@494corridor.org. Deadline is Friday, April 1.

Contact your [representative](#) today for more information about this year's Commuter Challenge.

Manage your Metropass program the easy way!

If you are the administrator of the Metropass program at your organization, we're helping to make your job easier.

Thanks to enhancements to our [web portal](#), you can manage your Metropass program online! The system still allows you to order replacement cards, cancel cards and view active rider reports, plus we've added these features:

- Add stored value to your employees' Metropasses using pre-tax dollars
- Create more reports to track active riders, current suspended and deactivated cards, and stored value
- Suspend cards for one to three months

Please note that we will be switching to complete online administration by mid-year. New customers can still visit one of the Metro Transit stores or Commuter Connection if your company does not submit employee ID photos.

Contact Metropass staff [here](#).

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A reminder about our new ridematching system

In late January, we transitioned to an improved ridematching system, powered by GreenRide, that will help make finding carpool and vanpool matches even easier.

The change to the new system requires that all previous account holders have to confirm their registration information by creating a [new account](#).

Once that's finished, you'll have instant access to potential carpool matches and other rideshare

services in your area. If you don't find a match at first, check back often. The number of potential matches grows every day as new accounts are added.

Guaranteed Ride Home program. Watch for news later this spring about how we're making it easier to get reimbursed for emergency bus or train rides for commuters enrolled in our Guaranteed Ride Home program. Instead of getting coupons for bus and train rides, we'll add value to your Go-To Card. The cab fare reimbursement process will stay the same.

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EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT



VA Medical Center

For many employees at VA Medical Center in Minneapolis, taking transit or sharing the ride in a carpool or vanpool is a popular way to get to work.

More than 20 percent of its 2,700 employees take the bus or train to work. In addition, employees have formed 29 carpools and three Van-GO! vanpools.

Light rail service, which is within steps of the campus, has also benefited employees and patients.

"We have employees who live in St. Cloud and, after accepting a position here, take the bus to Big Lake, ride a Northstar train to downtown Minneapolis and then take light rail to the hospital," said Sammi Hollinger, a human resources specialist at VA Medical Center.

Employees enjoy several commuter benefits options, including bike racks and lockers, close-in parking for car- and vanpoolers and a transit subsidy. Promoting these options is good for the environment and helps cut down on parking pressures at the VA, Hollinger said.

"When fewer employees drive alone to work, more parking spots are available to our veterans," she said.

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