



Human Resources Rideshare



OC Commuter

Inside this issue:

Incentives for Inland Empire Residents	2
Happy 1st Vanpooling Anniversary	2
Ride Your Bicycle to Work	3
Safety Tips from League of American Bicyclists	3
Parking Your Bike for the Day	3
Commuter Club Winners	4
OCTA Updates	4
Metrolink Update	4
Guaranteed Ride Home Gets You Home in an Emergency	5
Did You Know...	5

Great Reasons to Rideshare

Why drive alone, sit in traffic and pay high prices for gasoline? There is a better way to commute that can be stress free, less expensive and helps improve our environment – it's Ridesharing! Let the Rideshare Program staff help you explore the commuting options as well as introduce you to some wonderful incentives, including:

- The **Commuter Club Program** thanks employees who become members and rideshare at least 5 days per month. Members enjoy discounts from local merchants and receive a special thank you gift each year. They are also eligible to win quarterly gift cards and other special promotions.
- The **Commuter Choice Program** reduces income taxes for transit and vanpool riders. You can purchase Metrolink, OCTA bus or vanpool payment vouchers through the convenience of a monthly payroll deduction using pre-tax dollars up to \$230 per month. This is especially beneficial for long distance commuters, who can save about \$400 a year!
- The **Start-A-Vanpool Program** thanks employees for leasing vanpool vehicles. Consider leasing a vanpool vehicle and filling it with at least three other County of Orange employees. The employee leasing the vehicle will receive a \$300 gift card after the vanpool has been on the road for three months. In addition, the lessee will receive another \$300 gift card after that vanpool celebrates its sixth month of vanpooling.
- The **Try the Train/Bus On Us Programs** let you sample new ways to commute. You'll receive a complimentary one or two-day Metrolink or OCTA ticket. If you like taking the train or bus and sign up for Commuter Choice Program, you'll receive your first month free!

For more information on these and other incentives, visit the HR Rideshare website: www.ocgov.com/hr/rideshare.

Vanpool Riders Needed

Leave: Diamond Bar Area P&R Lot
 Arrive: Santa Ana Civic Center
 Work Schedule:

Week One:	
Mon	7:30 - 5:00
Tues - Fri	7:00 - 4:30
Week Two:	
Mon	8:00 - 5:00
Tues - Thurs	7:00 - 4:30
Fri	Off
Contact rideshare@ocgov.com	

Green Fair 2011 Highlights

The Commuter Assistance Program Team was on hand at the May 19 OC Green Fair. What a great event that drew over 3,000 people. Those who attended received information about the County's rideshare program and incentives and a chance to win some fun prizes with the Spin the Wheel game. Since ridesharing is the easiest way to "go green," and the environmentally-friendly way to commute, it was a perfect venue for showcasing our efforts to help reduce air pollution and our carbon footprint.



The Commuter Assistance Program staff shared rideshare information at the OC Green Fair

Incentives for Inland Empire Residents

If you live in Riverside or San Bernardino County, you may be eligible to receive rideshare incentives funded by Riverside County Transportation Commission or San Bernardino Associated Governments.

Employees who reside in the Inland Empire, and want to try ridesharing by carpooling, vanpooling, riding the bus or taking Metrolink may be eligible to receive \$2 per day for each day they rideshare for the first three months. Employees who rideshare for three months or longer may also be eligible for the RidesharePlus Rewards Program and receive a special Entertainment Book containing more than \$1,000 in premium discount coupons for dining, entertainment and other service venues.

New ridesharers can track their three months of rideshare activity online using the new www.ierideshare.com website. You can also complete the RidesharePlus Rewards application online at www.ierideshare.com. You will need a special code or password that you can request by sending an email to rideshare@ocgov.com. Hard copies of the forms are also accepted and available at the HR Rideshare website: www.ocgov.com/hr/rideshare.



Happy 1st Vanpooling Anniversary

Congratulations to vanpoolers Forrest DeSpain, Angela Renish, Mikhail Busvoic, Wendi Osborne, John Hussey and Kevin Ward! They have vanpooled together for an entire year. The group meets at 4:45 am every morning in Riverside at the La Sierra Metrolink Station then hop on the 91 Freeway using FastTrak to reach their OC Watershed office in Orange.

We asked Forrest DeSpain, the primary vanpool driver, what he likes best about vanpooling. "I'm happy to hear a great group of snoring co-workers every morning!" said Forrest. "That's the best part because that means they trust me and feel safe and secure with me driving them to work." Forrest leases the vanpool vehicle and collects fares from each of the riders.

When we asked his riders what they liked best about vanpooling, they all agreed that getting that extra hour to snooze on the way to work was something they could not give up – and of course the great driver that makes them feel safe!

In just a little over one year, they have logged 15,003 miles on their vanpool vehicle. What that means is that here are 15,003 fewer miles and less wear and tear and maintenance on each of their personal vehicles and less pollution in the air. And, they are saving money. Not a bad deal.

When we asked what they didn't like about vanpooling, they looked at each other and laughed. It seems one of the group forgot to

pick up the books-on-tape that they were going to listen to on the way home!

To learn more about leasing a vanpool, contact a vanpool service provider such as [Enterprise](#) or [VPSI Commuter Vanpools](#). You can also attend a vanpool information meeting hosted by the Rideshare office. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for October of this year.



OC Public Works Vanpool Group



Ride Your Bicycle to Work

Think about it. Riding your bicycle to work is a great way to get exercise, save money and decrease your carbon footprint all at the same time! Why not try bicycling to work, even just once a week.

Frank Hernandez, with the Orange County Health Care Agency, enjoys riding his bike to work when he can. A Health Educator with Health Promotions since 1998, he tries to live by example. He is an accomplished tri-athlete, and bikes to work as often as he can. A recent foot injury

partially sidelined him, but he still does make his 13 mile (one-way) bike trip at least three times per month. "It's not something you have to do every day in order to see the health and environmental benefits," said Frank.

He explained that biking to work just takes a little extra planning. He leaves home about 30 minutes earlier than usual, takes his work clothes in a backpack, carries an extra bike tire, bike pump, water then he's on his way.

The best thing about riding his bicycle to work, said Frank, is that when he arrives, he has already put in a 35-45 minute workout and doesn't feel the need to load up on coffee to get his heart pumping!

We also asked if he has any tips on staying safe while biking to work. He stated that he is pretty bike savvy, but does obey all the traffic rules, especially when he gets into the heavier traffic areas in Santa Ana.

Safety Tips from League of American Bicyclists

- Ride on the right-side of the road with the flow of traffic. You should not ride on the sidewalk, because it is dangerous for you and pedestrians. Make sure to give yourself room to maneuver around any hazards.
- Yield to traffic in busier lanes. Use signals to indicate your intentions to switch lanes, and look behind you to indicate your desire to move and to make sure it's safe to do so.
- Traffic in your destination lane has the right-of-way, so you must yield. Signal and make sure you change lanes early, to avoid making a quick, last-minute change. Making eye contact with the drivers lets them know you see them.
- Position yourself in the furthest right lane that goes in the direction of your destination. This will keep you safer in narrow traffic lanes.
- Position yourself relative to the speed of other traffic. The furthest left lane is for the fastest moving traffic, and the furthest right lane is for the slower traffic. Yield to faster moving vehicles by staying to the right of the lane.
- Other good, safe bike riding information is available from the [Orange County Bicycle Coalition](#). Their Street Smarts and Traffic Skills 101 classes teach you how to make cycling easier, less stressful and safer.

Parking Your Bike for the Day

Once you get to work, you'll need to park your bicycle. At the Civic Center, we have located the following bike racks and lockers:

- Santa Ana Library's bike rack holds four bicycles.
- Courthouse/Library parking structure has bike lockers for six bicycles.
- Stadium parking structure's bike lockers hold eleven bicycles.
- Osborne/Gates Twin Towers has a bike rack in the breezeway between the two buildings.
- HCA first floor parking structure has bike racks for six bicycles.



If you know of other bike racks or lockers located at any County facility, please send us an email at rideshare@ocgov.com with the location, type of rack or locker and the number of bicycles it holds, and we will include it in the bike resource guide we are now creating.

Commuter Club Quarterly Winners!

The Commuter Club is a reward program for County of Orange employees who commit to rideshare at least once a week. Commuter Club members receive discounts from local merchants, a one-time sign up bonus, an annual thank you gift and are eligible to participate in quarterly drawings for gift certificates. To sign up complete and return an [All-In-One](#) form and we'll send you a welcome packet.

Every quarter we randomly select eight Commuter Club members who each receive a \$25 gift certificate. This quarter's winners are:

- **Robert Binz**, Sheriff/Coroner
- **Elizabeth Carter**, County Executive Office
- **Michael Gallegos**, Sheriff/Coroner
- **Juan Gomez**, Social Services Agency
- **Nathaniel Houston**, PA/PG
- **Cindy Long**, Superior Court
- **Hatien Nguyen**, Social Services Agency
- **Mal Peralta**, OC Public Works



Congratulations – your electronic gift certificates can be exchanged at GiftCertificates.com for original gift certificates from hundreds of popular stores, restaurants and much more!

OCTA Updates



On June 12, 2011 OCTA made a few minor bus service changes. The majority of them are to accommodate additional beach-related traffic along Pacific Coast Highway during the summer months, to provide replacement service for the discontinued Buena Park Metrolink shuttle and to accommodate closure of the 7th Street Bridge in Long Beach during reconstruction. For a complete list of affected routes, go to www.octa.net/bus-june11.aspx.

OCTA has new eBusbooks, replacing the printed Bus Books. With the eBusbook feature, you can create a customized book with the bus and train routes that you use. You can even include information on fares, riding tips and connecting transit information. And you can view it online, print it or even share it with friends. To create your own eBusbook, go to www.octa.net/bus-ebook.aspx.

Metrolink Update



Starting July 1, Metrolink will be offering a Weekend Pass for only \$10. This pass allows you to ride anytime, anywhere system-wide from 7 p.m. on Friday through midnight Sunday. It includes free transfers to connecting rail or bus. Ticket sales will begin at 7 p.m., July 1. Press "Special Ticket" on the TVM screen and then "\$10 Weekend Pass" to purchase.

Friends and Family 4-Pack will no longer be available as of July 1, 2011. In addition, Monthly Pass holders can ride Metrolink trains for free from 7 p.m. Friday through midnight Sunday. Ride anywhere in the Metrolink system all weekend for no additional charge. For more details, go to www.metrolinktrains.com.

Guaranteed Ride Home Program Gets You Home in an Emergency

The Guaranteed Ride Home Program is the ridesharing employee's safety net in the case of an emergency. This has helped several County of Orange ridesharing employees find a quick way home in an emergency. If an emergency occurs on a day that they rideshare, a County of Orange employee can download and complete the [Guaranteed Ride Home Authorization](#), and call the number listed on the form. The caller will be given an approval code and phone numbers of a pre-selected taxi service provider depending on the employee's location. The service is free to the rideshare participant.



Did You Know...

- You can be the first to know about the latest rideshare related events by accessing our new webpage, entitled [Rideshare Events](#) on the HR Rideshare website. It lists all the events with links to the agencies/groups planning them. Be sure to check it often for updated events and activities.
- **Metrolink Loves Angels Fans** - Metrolink is running special trains to all of the Angels' weekday home games. They start at 7:05 p.m. Why fight traffic or pay for parking when Metrolink can take you to and from the game? Fares are only \$7 roundtrip, \$6 for senior/disabled, \$4 for youth (ages 6-18), and free for children 5 and under with paying adult (up to 3 children). The \$4 youth passes (ages 6-18) can be purchased online, via phone at (714) 560-5932 or at the OCTA Store in Orange. The train takes you directly to the stadium's parking lot so you're just steps away from the stadium. Go to www.octa.net/angelsexpress.aspx for more information.
- **Direct Bus Service to the OC Fair Returns!** - OCTA is bringing back the popular [OC Fair Express](#) bus service. Beginning Friday, July 15 through Sunday, August 14, you can catch one of five bus routes that will take you directly to the yellow gate at the Orange County Fair --- \$1.50 each way.

Depending upon your department's internal policy, the social media links (Facebook and Twitter) may or may not be accessed or viewed

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The OC Commuter Newsletter is published by the Commuter Assistance Program Office managed by the Human Resources Department. Our mission is to distribute commuter information to all County of Orange employees so that they can make informed decisions about how they travel to work. For more information about the Commuter Assistance Program, please go to the web site.