

VantagePoint

NOVEMBER – DECEMBER 2010

Long Commutes – Short Commutes

Thanks for completing our Commute Times Audit!

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires data for the National Transit Database (NTD). These statistics help with annual reporting requirements for the transit industry nationally. Following are highlights of the audit:

Round trip miles traveled:

Highest: 158 miles

Lowest: 16 miles

Average: 64 miles

Round trip commute times:

Longest: 2 hours

Shortest: 15 minutes

Average: 54 minutes

Watch for New Report Forms

Remember the fare increase for November fares. We will distribute the revised monthly vanpool report forms in mid-November to all volunteer bookkeepers. The revisions reflect the change in personal use miles to 46 cents per mile and removal of the backup driver deduction.

Who you gonna call?

No one, while driving the van.

Safety is our #1 priority. Pierce Transit's policy states that you cannot use your cell phone or any other wireless communication device while operating the van. Our policy is stricter and differs from state law; please adhere to our policies. Let your copilot answer your phone or let it go to voicemail if you are driving. Thanks.



Pierce County Campaign

October-December 2010

Choose an alternative to driving alone and maybe win a RELAXING REWARD! Use a smart commute option at least 24 days and you could qualify to be entered into the Relax Rewards prize drawing. The more days you use a smart commute option, the more prize drawings you'll be entered into! You must commute to a worksite located in Pierce County and log your commute days using the Pierce Trips Calendar. Go to piercetrips.org for more information.



Vantage Point is a publication of Pierce Transit.

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Interview with a Vanpool



Getting to know some of our loyal customers.

Our newest employers served by Pierce Transit vanpools.

Welcome!

- AES Logistics
- Anderson Damon Worldwide
- Cowlitz Indian Tribe
- Demand Media
- Faith Network
- Mikron Industries
- Pier 1
- Puget Sound Partnership
- The Mustard Seed Project
- VMC Consulting



Just as sunflowers turn their heads to catch every sunbeam, so too have we discovered a simple way to get more from our sun.

Featuring Van 7252: Commutes from Tacoma to SeaTac.

How long have you been vanpooling?

Randy M: About 8 years (7 of which I've been the Volunteer Primary Driver).

Tim C: About a year

Jan B: Just joined about a week ago.

Jenny D: 3-1/2 years.

What's the funniest thing that has occurred while commuting in the van?

Randy M: The strangest thing I saw was a driver of a vehicle beating his steering wheel with drumsticks while driving.

Tim C & Jenny D: A certain fellow vanpooler woke themselves up with a snore and asked "did anyone else hear that"!

What do you do while riding in the van?

Randy M: I usually drive so I stay awake and aware.

Tim C: Sleep mostly, surfing the web (ESPN), and chit chat with fellow vanpoolers, in that order.

Jan B: Buckle in, go to sleep and leave the driving to Randy!

Jenny D: Sleep or talk.

What's something interesting you've learned about your fellow vanpoolers?

Randy M: I think the two most interesting things about the other vanpoolers are their backgrounds in that they came from all over the U.S.A. and a couple of foreign countries, but they all wound up in this vanpool; and a few of them have skills that are utterly unrelated to their Boeing jobs.

Tim C: I've learned a little more about their personal lives and made a few new friends in the process.

Jenny D: We hate to drive to work now.

What else would you like to share with other Pierce Transit vanpoolers?

Randy M: That's all; we just drive to work and back.

Tim C: Keep on rolling!

Jenny D: We have fun and all enjoy being in a vanpool.

Daylight saving time begins November 7
Don't forget to change your clock.

Twice a year, when Daylight Saving Time *begins* or *ends*, make it a habit to not only change your clocks, but also do a few other semi-annual tasks that will improve *safety* in your home. Check and replace the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms. Prepare a disaster supply kit for your house (*water, food, flashlights, batteries, blankets*). Once you've created your home disaster kit, use the semi-annual time change to check its contents (*including testing/replacing flashlight batteries*).



WINTER DRIVING



WINTER SAFETY TIPS

Keep the van clear of snow and ice. Remove snow from the lights, windows, roof and hood.

When entering the vehicle, kick as much snow off your feet as possible. Snow tracked inside the vehicle can contribute to fogged windows.

Increase your following distance in inclement weather. Brake gently to avoid skidding. If your wheels start to lock up, ease off the brake. It takes longer to stop in adverse weather conditions.

Do not use cruise control when driving on any slippery surface (wet, ice, sand).

Keep your gas tank at least half-full to avoid gas line freeze-up.

Do not pass snowplows or sanders, and do not follow them too closely.

Drive slowly. Everything takes longer on snow-covered roads. Accelerating, stopping, and turning - nothing happens as quickly as on dry pavement. Give yourself time to maneuver by driving slowly.

Practice chaining up. All Pierce Transit vans are equipped with tire cables. Maximum speed with chains is 25 mph. It's important to learn how to install your chains before bad weather strikes. Please properly clean and store them once removed.



Holiday Parking

Remember to move your van if you do not park at home or TDS

If your van is not in operation during the holidays due to time off and/or a plant closure, please make sure your van is parked in an approved overnight location. Vans not currently parked at a volunteer vanpool driver's home must relocate to a volunteer vanpool driver's home during the holiday period. Please let us know where the van will be parked if your overnight parking location changes. Note: Vanpools currently approved to park at the Tacoma Dome Station (TDS) may remain at TDS. We will provide those van numbers to TDS Security so they do not issue parking citations.



ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS

Stay home. If you really don't have to go out, don't.

Even if you can drive well in the snow, not everyone else can. If you don't have somewhere you have to be, watch the snow from indoors. The best advice for driving in bad winter weather is not to drive at all, if you can avoid it.

However; if you decide not to run the van on a snowy day, have an alternative transportation plan in place. We encourage groups to create a vanpool roster with phone numbers so you can communicate necessary information. Refer to page 22 in the Vanpool Participant Reference manual for a sample form.



2010 Reminders



VANPOOL

24/7 Emergency
253.381.3762

Direct Line
253.983.3377
7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Fleet Maintenance
235.905.5306
7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Vanpool Fax
253.984.8227

Vanpool@piercetransit.org

RIDESHARE

1.888.814.1300

RideshareOnline.com

PIERCE TRANSIT

Customer Services
253.581.8000

Toll Free
1.800.562.8109

TDD Customer Services
253.582.7951

piercetransit.org

CHECKED YOUR CLEARANCE?

Things that go bump on the roof.

Did you know bumping a clearance sign/bar in a parking garage, car wash or drive thru could cause roof damage to our vans? Most people do not think to check the roof but our mechanics do and we will now add it to our Van Issuance/Return process too. Just a little bump or rub against the sign everyday adds up to significant damage in the long run. Our fleet of vans has varying heights. Check the owner's manual for exact height. Contact your vanpool coordinator if you are unable to locate the information.



DECEMBER PLANT CLOSURE

Does your company shut down for a period of time in December?

To qualify for a fare reduction based on a planned plant closure, refer to page 61 of your Vanpool Participant Manual for specific details. At this time, we know the following companies have planned plant closures and **do not** qualify for a fare reduction: Boeing, Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and Kenworth.

SEATBELT SAFETY

Do you know how to use your seatbelt?

Seatbelts are the most effective means of saving lives and reducing serious injuries in traffic crashes. It's also the law to wear your seatbelt at all times. When adjusting your seatbelt, make sure the lap belt is as low on your hips as possible, and snug. Ensure the shoulder belt comes across your shoulder without cutting across your neck. You may need to adjust your seat to help. Some vehicles allow you to adjust the height of the shoulder belt pivot point, making it more comfortable. Never wear the shoulder belt under your arm – that's a big No-No. Remember it is Pierce Transit policy that everyone in the van properly wears his or her seatbelts. Do not even begin to drive if one of your passengers is not belted in properly.

Seatbelts can save your life.



SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM US TO YOU!

