



The Way To Work

A Newsletter for Middlesex County Commuters

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D e a r C o m m u t e r ,

Each January we make New Year's resolutions and often by early February our resolutions are long forgotten. Whether it's losing weight, getting more exercise, spending more time with loved ones or reading *War and Peace* (well, maybe next year), we set such high goals that inevitably we doom ourselves to defeat.

If you are one of the many people whose resolutions have fallen to the wayside, try making it simple and make one resolution. Just because January has come and gone, doesn't mean it's too late to make just one resolution!

Here at KMM, we suggest that single occupant drivers change the way they commute just one day per month. One day a month – how simple is that? If mass transit is available give it a try. Or, team up with a co-worker who lives nearby and pick a day to carpool.

Don't know what mass transit is available? Can't find a co-worker? KMM can help. We have bus and train schedules for all the routes in Middlesex County. Our free ridematch service can set you up with a carpool pal. And, if things work out and you extend your alternative commuting, you may be eligible for our free Emergency Ride Home program.

In addition to trying a new way of commuting, make sure you are prepared for winter commuting. Snow, sleet and ice make for a more difficult commute and with the winter weather already upon us, stay ahead of the difficult traffic conditions and approach the winter appreciating its beauty rather than the stress it often brings.

In this issue, comprehensive information is given in not only how to prepare your vehicle for the winter weather, but also suggestions on how to commute to work with a partner.

This year, make it easy on yourself. Make a sensible resolution that you can achieve and together with your fellow commuting and mass transit partners, commute in the winter months with a renewed sense of knowledge and get to where you need to go on time!

On behalf of the KMM Board and Staff, Happy New Year and remember, it's never too late to make a New Year's resolution!

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

BE A BETTER COMMUTER



KEEP MIDDLESEX MOVING, INC.

Middlesex County's Transportation Management Association

Associated with the Middlesex County Improvement Authority.

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Winter Driving Tips



Don't be caught out in the cold this winter season. Prepare for Old Man Winter by following a few of these tips:

Get your Car Ready!

- Always keep the gas tank at least half full. Snow covered roads drive much slower and require more frequent breaking.
- Make sure your wipers are in excellent condition so that visibility is clear while you are on the road.
- Schedule a tune-up with your mechanic to give your car a complete look-over, especially focusing on the tire treads.

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- Replenish your emergency supplies. Keep a heavy blanket, window scraper, flashlight, first-aid kit, jumper cables, shovel, flares and some nonperishable snacks handy in the trunk of your car.

Be Aware on the Road!

- Slow down when turning on corners, steering steadily.
- Keep adequate distance between the car in front of you and follow any speed restrictions.
- If you should skid, steer in the direction of the skid.
- Be aware of the traffic moving ahead of you. For example, do not attempt to pass through a green light at an intersection if the cars beyond the light are not moving. Blocking an intersection can be especially dangerous in wintery conditions.

If Only I Thought of that!

- Become familiar with mass transit options.
- Check weather and traffic reports before getting in your car.
- Sign up for KMM's Emergency Traffic Network.
- Log on to www.njcommuter.com for real time traffic updates.
- Allow for extra time when driving to your destination.
- Be alert. Rest if you are too tired to drive.
- Make sure your cell phone is charged and have its charger on hand. If you don't carry a cell phone, carry a few dollars in change.
- Plan an alternate route in case the road you normally take is impassable or congested.

Winterize Your Commute

How do you like snow? Do you rush outdoors when the first snowflake falls? Do you make snow angels? Or, do you maintain a respectful distance, watching the weather through your window as you sip a cup of cocoa in front of a blazing fire?

Snowy, icy roads can turn even those most enamored with Winter into white knuckle drivers. If just the thought of driving in bad weather makes you want to hibernate until Spring, do something about it. Plan ahead. If you live near mass transit, perhaps a bus or train fits your commute plans. Or, find a friend, neighbor or co-worker who is going your way.

KMM's *Winter Emergency Plan* (WEP) provides free ridematching services, mass transit information and traffic alerts to winter-wary commuters. Sign up for the email Emergency Traffic Network using the form on the back page. For real time traffic information, logon to www.njcommuter.com. Arlene Perez is connected to a statewide network of people interested in ridesharing. She can put you in touch with prospective carpool or vanpool partners. And she'll be happy to send you relevant bus and train schedules. Call her at 1-800-245-POOL.

It's easy to Winterize Your Commute. Contact KMM at aperez@kmm.org today.



Benefits of Ridesharing

Many New Jersey commuters who have grown weary of the stress of commuting alone everyday have discovered a more enjoyable way to work through ridesharing. By joining a vanpool or a carpool or taking mass transit, these commuters are able to share driving duties or use their free time on non-driving days to relax and enjoy the ride.

In addition to reduced stress and the ability to relax on the way to work, commuters who rideshare also experience a number of other benefits. Commuters who rideshare are saving money each week both on gas and wear and tear on their cars. Many ridesharing commuters also gain satisfaction from knowing they are doing something to help the environment. By riding together, these commuters are taking vehicles off the road. Less vehicles on the road means less congestion and less pollution, allowing everyone to breathe a little easier.

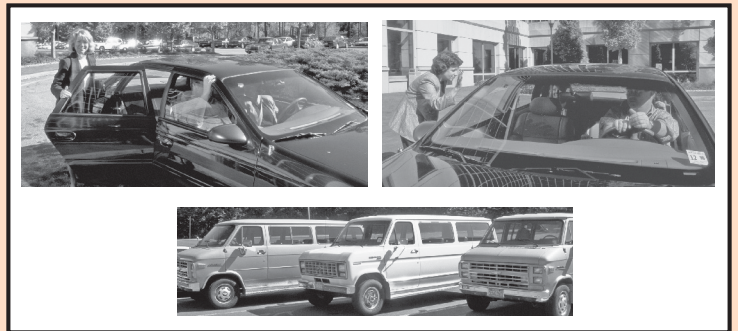
To make ridesharing an even more winning experience, KMM has introduced two programs that provide commuters who rideshare with additional benefits. The Vanpool Empty Seat Subsidy program and the Emergency Ride Home program are free programs available to commuters who have done their part to help reduce congestion by carpooling, vanpooling or taking mass transit.

Commuters both in existing and start-up vanpools are eligible to participate in the Vanpool Empty Seat Subsidy program. This rideshare benefit program is designed to give vanpools a financial boost when they need it, allowing them to stay on the road as long as possible. Vanpools with empty seats that are in danger of disbanding may apply for a \$125 monthly subsidy for a term of up to 3 months. This 3-month

supplement helps defray the monthly costs of the van while members search for new riders.

Commuters who participate in a registered carpool, vanpool, or use mass transit at least once a week are eligible to participate in the Emergency Ride Home program (ERH). The ERH program serves as a safety net for these commuters, ensuring that they will never be stranded at work without a way home. Using program vouchers, ERH members can call for an emergency ride up to 3 times a year in instances of unexpected overtime, a family emergency, a carpool breakdown, or transit service interruption.

These exciting and innovative programs are KMM's way of saying thank you to rideshare commuters for helping to reduce traffic on New Jersey's congested roadways. To learn more about these programs and KMM's other commuter services, please contact our Rideshare Coordinator, Arlene Perez, at (732)-745-4368.



Middlesex County Creates Department of Transportation

Middlesex County grew by 12% during the last decade of the 20th century. If projections are correct, the County will experience an additional 8% growth rate by 2010. More jobs, more homes, and more people are transforming the environment in Middlesex County and will continue to do so at a rate that exceeds statewide averages.

The demands on the County's transportation system are expected to burgeon in the coming years as workers, aging baby boomers, and people with special needs require more convenient and more frequent transit services. In order to meet the needs of County residents and workers, the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders has created a Department of Transportation.

The new department consolidates Area Wide Transportation (AWTS) services, operations planning, and vehicle maintenance into one unit. Previously, these functions had spanned 3 departments. Eventually, vehicle storage and maintenance will be consolidated into one location. Division heads of operations and vehicle maintenance now report to the Director of the Department of Transportation.

Freeholder Director David Crabel said, "The consolidation of services and functions will enable Middlesex County to improve our system, reduce downtime, and improve service for residents."

Following a nationwide search, the Freeholder Board selected Steven R. Fittante to be the Director of the Department of Transportation. Fittante holds a Masters Degree in City and Regional Planning from Rutgers University. He has spent 28 years developing and managing transit services in the private and public sectors, including a stint as Director of the Monmouth County Department of Transportation. Most recently, Fittante worked as the Northeast Region Manager for National Express, a company that provides fixed route and para-transit services throughout the United States.

Fittante, who began work on December 13, said, "My professional life has come full circle. I attended school in New Brunswick and began my career in County government. My primary goal is to develop a system that better integrates our statewide public transit system with the specialized transportation services provided by the County in order to meet the rapidly growing demands for suburban passenger transportation."





The Way to Work
 c/o Keep Middlesex Moving, Inc.
 100 Bayard Street, 2nd Floor
 New Brunswick, NJ 08901



Join the Emergency Traffic Network for Up-to-the-Minute Road Conditions!

KMM has established the Emergency Traffic Network to give you breaking news on emergency road conditions in Middlesex County during normal business hours. If an emergency develops, we will email you a short description of the situation, including the date, time, location, estimated duration and a contact name and number. This free service will help you make informed decisions and select alternate routes when traveling to or from work. To register, fill out the form below and fax it to KMM at (732) 745-7482.

EMERGENCY TRAFFIC NETWORK

Name: _____
 Phone: _____
 Company Name: _____
 Company Address: _____

 EMAIL: _____

Schedule a "Commute Options" Fair for your Worksite!

One of the many services KMM provides is an onsite Commute Options Fair at work sites throughout Middlesex County. These informative lunchtime fairs, hosted by KMM staff, feature an information booth in or near an employee lunchroom or another central area. Those who stop by the booth can find mass transit schedules, carpool and vanpool information, and an overview of KMM's services. In addition, commuters may register in person for KMM's rideshare network and receive a free carpool or vanpool match.

To request more information or schedule a Commute Options Fair, contact Arlene Perez (732) 745-4368 or aperez@kmm.org. We look forward to assisting you!

Rideshare Application Form

If you or someone you know is interested in joining the Rideshare commuter network, please fill out the attached form and either fax or mail it back to us. If you are a current member and would like to update your information, please do so on the attached form.

KMM, 100 Bayard Street, 2nd Floor, New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Fax: 732-745-7482

Please check one:

This is new information *This is an updated application*

Name:
 Home Phone: ()
 Primary Email:
 Home Address:
 Apt.No.:
 City:
 State:
 Zip:
 County:

Mailing Address (if different):
 Employer:
 Work Phone: ()
 Street Address:
 City:
 State:
 Zip:
 County:

I usually arrive at work: ____ AM ____ PM
 I usually leave work: ____ AM ____ PM
 My work hours are: ____ Flex ____ Not flex
 Work days: ____ Mon. – Fri. ____ Other
 I would be willing to:
 ____ carpool ____ as a passenger ____ driver
 ____ vanpool ____ as a passenger ____ driver
 Auto available? ____ yes ____ no