

MTA to Expand Rideshare Incentive Programs in LA County

By GARY WOSK

(May 23, 2001) Two successful MTA rideshare programs – Rideshare Rewards and Club Metro – will now be offered in all areas of Los Angeles County.

At a time when gasoline prices are skyrocketing, employees of participating companies will be offered gift certificates and discount coupon books in exchange for their efforts to ease traffic congestion and improve air quality. To date, participants in the two programs have earned more than \$450,000 in incentives.

More than 4,000 employers with fewer than 250 employees have enrolled in Rideshare Rewards and Club Metro. Since their inception, the rideshare programs have demonstrated significant annual increases in participation rates.

The state-funded programs were developed as part of an effort to encourage the county's smaller employers to voluntarily provide ridesharing programs.

Stores redeem certificates

Rideshare Rewards, designed for drive-alone, offers up to \$120 in gift certificates redeemable at Target retail stores, Ralph's supermarkets, or Unocal gas stations.

Participants who rideshare a minimum of five times per month during a three consecutive month period earn \$2 a day for each day they rideshare. Ridesharing includes carpooling, vanpooling, riding the bus or train, walking, bicycling, or telecommuting.

Club Metro is an incentive program for employees who have been regularly ridesharing for six months or longer. Club Metro rewards participants with an entertainment discount book, offering great savings at a variety of restaurants and entertainment venues located throughout Southern California.

Launched in 1998, Rideshare Rewards (formerly known as Rideshare 2000) and Club Metro have reduced traffic congestion by 870,000 one-way vehicle trips and more than 13,000,000 vehicle miles.

The programs also have improved air quality by eliminating 108,000 pounds of vehicle emissions. With the expansion of the programs, MTA hopes to eliminate an additional 20 million vehicle miles and 180,000 pounds of emissions over the next 4 1/2 years.

"The Rideshare Rewards and Club Metro programs benefit employers, employees, the community and the environment," said Regional Planning Program Manager Cosette Stark. "Employers win because the programs are free and easy to administer. Employees benefit because they enjoy a less stressful ride to work and are financially rewarded for their efforts. And, of course, fewer cars translate into less congestion and cleaner air for the community and the environment."



Rideshare Funding

Programs are funded, developed and implemented by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority with additional funding from the Regional Transportation Agencies Coalition and the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee.

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