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November 2008

## A Season of Sharing

The holiday season is upon us, and your Southern California transit agencies have organized toy and canned food drives to help those in need. Here's how you can get involved:

**Antelope Valley Transit Authority** invites residents and local businesses to "Stuff a Bus" full of toys, new clothing and non-perishable food to be donated to local charities. The bus—decked out in holiday lights—collects items Nov. 23 - Dec. 16. Contact: 661.729.2222, [avta.com](http://avta.com)



**Metrolink Toy Express** pulls into a station near you starting Nov. 22. Decorated with 50,000 twinkling lights, it features life-sized decorations, a live stage show—plus a chance for the kids to meet Santa. Bring a new, unwrapped toy to donate to children's programs. Contact: 1.800.371.LINK, [metrolinktrains.com](http://metrolinktrains.com)

**Norwalk Transit** will put a special holiday bus on all routes—decorated with festive artwork and visiting public venues in December—to collect new, unwrapped toys and clothing for local charities. Contact: 562.929.5550, [ci.norwalk.ca.us](http://ci.norwalk.ca.us)



**Omnitrans** will collect new, unwrapped toys to donate to the Spark of Love Toy Drive on Dec. 5 at Ontario Mills Mall and Dec. 13 at Wal-Mart in San Bernardino. Contact: [Omnitrans.org](http://Omnitrans.org)

**Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus** is accepting donations of non-perishable food to benefit the West Side Food Bank at drop-off locations throughout the city. Contact 310.451.5444, [bigbluebus.com](http://bigbluebus.com)



## In Brief

### No more texting on the road

Starting Jan. 1, 2009 a new law will go into effect where writing, sending, or reading a text-based communication while driving will be against the law for all drivers in California. Fine will be \$20 for a first offense and \$50 for each subsequent offense. For more information, go to [dmv.ca.gov](http://dmv.ca.gov)



### OCTA reduces tolls on the 91 Expressway

Orange County Transportation Authority recently reduced tolls by 50 cents on the 91 Express Lanes during numerous periods throughout the day. The peak toll of \$10 dropped to \$9.50 and 13 other time slots were adjusted as part of OCTA's pricing policy, which sets fees based on traffic demand. To view the new toll schedule, go to [octa.net/91tolls](http://octa.net/91tolls)



### Huell Howser on traffic

Huell Howser, host of PBS's *Visiting and California's Gold*, pens a regular blog about transportation in Southern California – check it out at [CommuteSmart.info](http://CommuteSmart.info)

