

## Hot Deals for Your Rideshare Program

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[Full story](#)



### CALENDAR of EVENTS

- TDM Technology & Innovation Symposium
- Telecommuter Appreciation Week

#### More Events

### TIPS & IDEAS

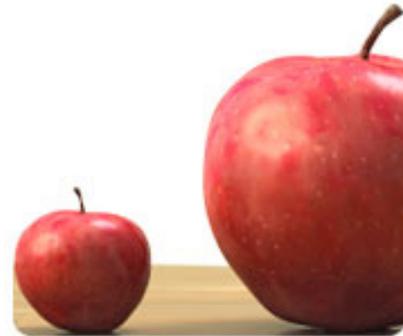
If you want to get the most from your rideshare efforts, sometimes it pays to **"think small."**



## Love Your Job?

It's not always easy getting employees to rideshare, but that doesn't stop many employee transportation coordinators from loving what they do. In honor of Valentine's Day, we asked ETCs the burning question: **"What do you love about your job?"** Here's what they had to say...

[Full story](#)



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## In Brief

- GPS devices can go on windshields... and other new laws
- Gas prices...are they on the rise again?
- OCTA offers guide for new riders
- Metro to expand use of TAP fare card
- Get past issues of *Commuter Smart News*



### SPOTLIGHT ON...

Ways to **get recognition** for your rideshare program & why you'd want to

[Full story](#)



### CommuterSmart News for Employees

Get news geared to commuters that you can forward to employees or incorporate into your own rideshare newsletter.



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### Rideshare Clubs

Rideshare Clubs for commuters who currently rideshare offer discounts at area merchants when participants show their program card (plus in Los Angeles County, they get a \$15 gift card).

- Los Angeles County: Metro Rewards, [metro.net](http://metro.net)
- Riverside County: Club Ride, [rideshareplus.info](http://rideshareplus.info)
- San Bernardino County, Team Ride, [rideshareplus.info](http://rideshareplus.info)



### Incentives

If you have employees that live in the Inland Empire, you may be able to offer them \$2 per day in gift cards for three months as an incentive to start ridesharing.

- Employers with employees in Riverside or San Bernardino counties: 1.866.IECS4HELP, [rctc.org](http://rctc.org) (Riverside), [sanbag.ca.gov](http://sanbag.ca.gov) (San Bernardino)

### Vanpool Subsidies

Your employees that vanpool can earn subsidies toward the cost of their van's lease.

- Los Angeles (\$400 monthly for vanpools with Los Angeles County destinations): 213.922.2811, [metro.net/vanpool](http://metro.net/vanpool)
- Orange County (\$400 monthly for vanpools with Orange County destinations): 714.560.5358, [octa.net/vanpool](http://octa.net/vanpool)
- Riverside and San Bernardino counties (up to \$1,800 over nine months for vanpools originating in portions of the Inland Empire): contact vanpool providers for information, [vanpool.com](http://vanpool.com) (Enterprise), [vpsiinc.com](http://vpsiinc.com) (VPSI)

### Transit Rider Discounts

People can get discounts for entertainment, sporting events, theaters and more when they show their transit pass. Discounts are updated on a monthly basis.

- Metro Destination Discounts: [metro.net](http://metro.net)
- OCTA Destination Discounts: [octa.net](http://octa.net)
- Metrolink (discounts apply on weekends only, when fares are also 25% cheaper): [metrolinkweekends.com](http://metrolinkweekends.com)

### Guaranteed Ride Home

Your employees who rideshare can get free taxi or rental car rides home in case of emergency or unexpected overtime.

- Los Angeles/Orange/Riverside/San Bernardino counties: [CommuterSmart.info](http://CommuterSmart.info), click on "Employer Services"
- Ventura County: 805.642.1591, ext. 119, [goventura.org](http://goventura.org)

### Free Transit Passes

Get free passes to introduce new riders to transit.

- Metro offers a free weekly pass for your new hires plus a Metro travel kit, 213.922.2811
- Metrolink will provide ETCs with a 3-day pass for new riders, contact Metrolink's administrative offices at 213.452.0200



### 91 Express Lanes

Carpools with three or more people ride free with a "transponder" on the 91 Express Lanes in Orange County (except M-F, eastbound, 4-6 p.m. when they can ride at a 50% discount).

- 91 Express Lanes: 951.278.9191, [91expresslanes.com](http://91expresslanes.com)

## Love Your Job?

It's not always easy getting employees to rideshare, but that doesn't stop many employee transportation coordinators from loving what they do. Here, in honor of Valentine's Day, we asked ETCs the burning question: "What do you love about your job?" Here's what they had to say...

"What I love about my job is helping people find solutions to their transportation dilemmas. If I can help just one person become more aware about the downside of driving alone, then I have made a difference. It snowballs from there."—**L. Sue Clemons, IKEA Burbank**

"I love helping people, and in my line of work I get to do that on a daily basis."—**Sonia Reading, Verdugo Hills Hospital**



"Giving out the ridesharing rewards/prizes. Everyone gets so excited, and it's a great feeling seeing others smile."—**Zelie Dember-Slack, EMC Mortgage Corp.**

"I love working in anything that is employee relations like picnics, holiday parties and employee contests (e.g. pumpkin carving for Halloween and Christmas office decoration)."—**Leila Medina, Beverly Hills Hotel**

"When I help someone get a ride to work when their vehicle breaks down, and they realize ridesharing can be fun."—**Paulette R. Henson, South Coast AQMD**

"Solving problems and being helpful. My vanpool from Palmdale was stranded in Pasadena due to the recent snowstorm. By utilizing my TDM connections, I was able to get a special rate on hotel rooms and a discount for dinner at a local restaurant. I even sent them off with duffle bags and toothbrushes from my rideshare prize drawer."—**Elaine Natale, Operating Engineers Trust Funds**

"When a die-hard 'converts' to transit and then becomes an advocate for rideshare to his/her fellow co-workers."—**Astrid B. Logan, CSU Northridge**

"I love the aspect of my job that is like putting together pieces of a puzzle to match employees with rideshare opportunities."—**Terrie Castillo, Wesco Aircraft Hardware Corp.**

"Making Mother Earth happy, while making our employees happy (when they receive a gas card), too!"—**Ivan Lopez, Anthony Doors**

"What I love about my job is the people I work with every day—they make the difference."—**Denice Laramie, Avery Dennison**

"When I'm interacting with a student, staff or faculty member across an information table, explaining to them the best alternative way to commute here based on their needs, I l-o-v-e it when I see that metaphorical compact florescent bulb light up above their head, the exact 'yes' moment it sinks in that they can do this!"—**Charles Carter, UCLA Transportation**

"I love when I get a call from our employees to tell me that they are carpooling now—awesome feeling!"—**Lillian Huerta, Angelus Sanitary Can Machine Co.**



"Being an ETC is just part of my job in the HR department, but it's a very nice part. I give out great prizes or free lunch tickets for sharing a ride, so it brings lots of smiles to people, which I love."—**Sally Rector, Huntington Library**

## In Brief

### ● GPS devices can go on windshields...and other new laws

As of 2009, motorists are allowed to mount portable Global Positioning Systems (GPS) devices in a 7-inch square in the lower corner of the windshield on the passenger side of the vehicle, or in a 5-inch square on the driver's side. These are the only two locations on a windshield where a GPS device can go, according to the California Highway Patrol. Other transportation-related laws in effect as of the first of the year:

- **Carpool lanes**—Under new definitions for motorcycles, fully enclosed, three-wheeled vehicles may now use carpool lanes, regardless of occupancy.
- **Clean air stickers**—It is now an infraction to sell or buy genuine or counterfeit "clean air stickers," which allow motorists to drive solo in carpool lanes.

For more information, go to [chp.ca.gov](http://chp.ca.gov)



### ● Gas prices...are they on the rise again?

"The end of the trend is official"—so says the Automobile Club of California about the fact that the fall in gas prices appears to be over. "Prices reversed course in the middle of December in response to an upswing in California wholesale gasoline prices," said Auto Club spokesperson Jeffrey Spring. "The increases have pulled California up once again to have one of the most expensive statewide gas price averages in the US, behind only Alaska, Hawaii and New York." While prices aren't expected to hit the \$4-plus a gallon highs they did in July, experts are speculating they could top \$2 a gallon nationwide by spring. For more information, go to [aaa-calif.com](http://aaa-calif.com)



### ● OCTA offers guide for new riders

"How do I find a bus route?" "Do I need exact fare?" "How do I signal to a bus that I want it to stop?" To take the worry out of riding, Orange County Transportation Authority now offers an online guide that answers new riders' questions about traveling by bus. Check it out at [octa.net](http://octa.net)



### ● Metro to expand use of TAP fare card

Metro's Transit Access Pass (TAP)—a card that reads the fare when a rider taps it against a fare box or station validator before boarding—is replacing paper weekly monthly passes (although cash is still accepted). You can reload the cards online or at a ticket vending machine at Metro Rail and Orange Line stations and locations that sell TAP. For more information, go to [metro.net](http://metro.net)

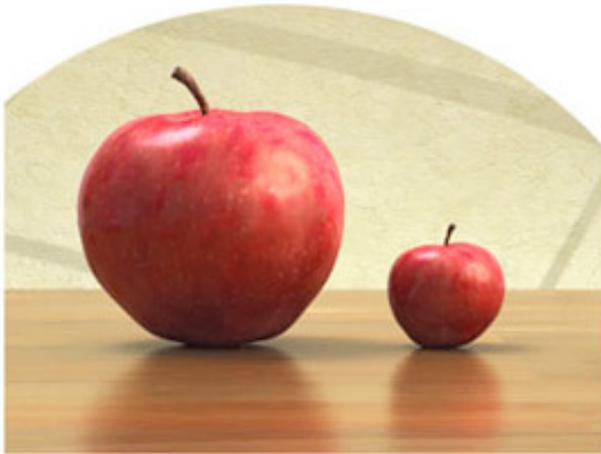


### ● Get past issues of Commute Smart News

If you missed a past issue of *CommuteSmart News*, you can view it online. Just click on the "Previous Issues" icon at the top of this page.



## Tips & Ideas— if you want to get the most from your rideshare efforts, sometimes it pays to "think small"



When it comes to strategies for your rideshare program, bigger isn't always better. Here, the marketing experts at CommuteSmart.info offer tips on how to make the most of your rideshare efforts by *thinking small*:

**Break down goals.** Once you set your rideshare program goals for the year, don't just focus on the final results: break them down into smaller steps. For example, if you know you need to sign up 50 participants, by looking at it in terms of getting one new ridesharer a week or

four per month, you can make the goal seem less overwhelming.

**Hold little events between major ones.** Marketing experts say it takes at least three exposures to a message before it sinks in, so if you have one or two big events planned for the year, make sure you have smaller promotions as well to keep ridesharing in employees' minds. In addition to a Rideshare Week fair, hold monthly raffles, or organize informal rideshare get-togethers for other occasions. You'd be amazed how many employees will show up to hear what you have to say for as little as some cookies and coffee in the conference room.

**Keep the message brief.** A text-heavy brochure may include all the information you want employees to know, but it probably won't get read—who has the time? Instead, stick to what's absolutely essential. If you pique someone's interest, at that point they'll be receptive to hearing more.

**Target your market.** Don't "scattershot" every marketing message to every employee. Instead, select a smaller, specific audience that's right for what you have to say. There's no point in giving a flyer about vanpooling to employees who live close enough to the office to walk—and if they constantly hear from you about services that don't apply to them, they may eventually tune out the ones that do.

**Roll out new programs on a small scale.** If you hesitate to offer a new strategy like telework or guaranteed ride home because you're not sure how to do it on a large scale, consider starting with a pilot project. That will allow you to work out any kinks with a smaller group of employees so that when you are ready to expand, you'll have a much better chance of success.

**Don't underestimate the value of small prizes.** Sure, your employees would like to win a big cash prize or a trip to Europe in the rideshare raffle, but if your budget doesn't allow for that, don't worry. Even more modest prizes (a \$20 gift card, a free lunch at the local deli) can generate excitement and good will. Another idea: Instead of a prize drawing, think *really* small—like candy or tiny toys—so your funds will stretch far enough to award something to everyone.



## Spotlight On... ways to get recognition for your rideshare program...and why you'd want to

Just as Hollywood has the Golden Globes and the Oscars, the rideshare world has plenty of ways to honor outstanding performances by employers in rideshare programs (see inset box, right). Here, we talk to Donna Blanchard, who helps run the annual Rideshare Diamond Awards, to learn about the many ways to get recognition for your rideshare program.

### Tell us a bit about rideshare awards

"Employers do such an important job in promoting ridesharing at the work site, presenting awards is our way to give them a pat on the back and in a sense say, 'Keep up the good work!'"

### How can an employer get an award?

"It varies, but for most of the awards, you need to nominate yourself or your program."

### What do you say to someone who doesn't want to go through the effort of the nominating process?

"I'd tell them it's not that hard! We aren't looking for a college-level thesis—we just want to hear what makes your program special."

### Why apply for an award?

"If somebody is doing great job, I think they should be recognized for it. To have the chance to come to an awards ceremony and be with other people who are just as excited about being an ETC as you are, it's an incredible experience. Plus, receiving an award can give you more clout at work. It shows your bosses that the outside world appreciates what you do—and that can inspire them to place more value on the rideshare program."

### What types of programs win awards?

"It runs the gamut. I think there's a misconception out there that you have to have a big budget and offer lots of incentives to win an award. The truth is, we're looking for clever ideas, new ways of doing things, and that can come in any price range. Especially in this economy, rideshare and clean-air agencies are eager to showcase ETCs that manage to get the job done on a shoestring. If you've worked hard on your rideshare program, you owe it to yourself and your company to seek out the recognition you deserve."



## Rideshare Awards

Contact these agencies for application information:

- AQMD clean air awards are held annually in October, [aqmd.gov](http://aqmd.gov)
- Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) awards are presented in the fall in conjunction with the international conference, [actweb.org](http://actweb.org)
- ACT Southern California awards are presented at the Southern California chapter conference, [act-southernca.org](http://act-southernca.org)
- Diamond Awards will be held May 19 and honor outstanding rideshare programs and ideas in Los Angeles, Orange and Ventura counties; applications are now being accepted until March 27, email [blanchardd@metro.net](mailto:blanchardd@metro.net)
- For information on any upcoming awards available for Riverside or San Bernardino county employers, contact your rideshare representative at Inland Empire Commuter Services at 1.866.IECS4HELP or look for announcements in future issues of CommuteSmart News.

## Calendar of Events

### EVENTS

**The Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Technology & Innovation Symposium** is Feb. 5 at 9 a.m. at the Metro offices in downtown Los Angeles. The event will explore TDM issues in Los Angeles County and how applying new technology plays a role. To register, go to [metro.net/tdm](http://metro.net/tdm)



**Telecommuter Appreciation Week** is March 1-7, sponsored by the American Telecommuting Association, 800.ATA.4YOU, [yourata.com](http://yourata.com)

**Rule 2202 informational session**, hosted by the South Coast Air Quality Management District, is March 11 from 9 a.m. to noon at the AQMD offices in Diamond Bar.; for information go to [aqmd.gov](http://aqmd.gov) or call 909.396.3285



**Bike to Work Day workshop** is March 18, sponsored by the Association for Commuter Transportation and Metro and hosted by the City of Long Beach. This is an AQMD marketing certificate event; contact [ddeming@lawa.org](mailto:ddeming@lawa.org)

**Diamond Award applications** are due March 27 for rideshare programs in Los Angeles, Orange and Ventura counties; for more information or a nomination form, email [blanchardd@metro.net](mailto:blanchardd@metro.net)

**Association for Commuter Transportation Annual Public Policy Update and Regional Conference on Global Warming** is April 2-3 (location to be determined). This is an AQMD marketing certificate event; contact [ddeming@lawa.org](mailto:ddeming@lawa.org)

**A Metro marketing workshop** was incorrectly listed in last month's *CommuterSmart News* for April 14; the workshop will be held April 21. Please note it on your calendars or contact [blanchardd@metro.net](mailto:blanchardd@metro.net) with any questions.

### NETWORK MEETINGS

**Coachella Valley ETC Network** meets bi-annually; call 1.866.IECS4HELP.

**Glendale TMA** meets regularly; call 818.543.7641.

**Orange County Network** meets regularly; call 714.560.5358 or email [commuterconnection@octa.net](mailto:commuterconnection@octa.net)

**Pasadena TMA** meets every other month; call John Miranda at 818.354.7433.

**Riverside County ETC Network** meets tri-annually; call 1.866.IECS4HELP.

**San Bernardino County ETC Network** meets tri-annually; call 1.866.IECS4HELP.

**Santa Monica ETC Network** meets regularly; call 310.458.8956.

**South Bay/Westside TMA** meets monthly; contact Christina Corrales at 310.642.0066, email [christina\\_corrales@equityoffice.com](mailto:christina_corrales@equityoffice.com)

**Torrance Transportation Network** meets regularly; call Kim Fuentes at 310.784.7902.

**Warner Center TMO** meets monthly; call 818.716.5520.

### TRAINING

**Metro Commute Services** requires employers to attend a briefing 60 days prior to their AQMD submittal date. Upcoming briefings are Feb. 11 from 1-3 p.m., March 11 from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. and April 8 from 1-3 p.m. For more information or to reserve a space, email [blanchardd@metro.net](mailto:blanchardd@metro.net)



**South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD)** offers one-day ETC training for \$64.23. Upcoming sessions are Feb. 12 and March 12 at AQMD offices in Diamond Bar, Feb. 25 at the Howard Hughes Center in Los Angeles and March 19 in Irvine. Contact Lisa Van Sornsen, [vansornsen@aqmd.gov](mailto:vansornsen@aqmd.gov) or the AQMD's training program at [etctraining@aqmd.gov](mailto:etctraining@aqmd.gov) or visit [AQMD.aqmd.gov](http://AQMD.aqmd.gov)



### COMMUTESMART NEWS

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For subscription information or to change your COMMUTESMART NEWS e-mail address, contact your representative at the rideshare office nearest you.

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Business: 213.922.2811

#### OCTA's Commuter Solutions

550 S. Main St.,  
Orange, CA 92868  
Mailing address:  
PO Box 14184  
Orange, CA 92863  
Business: 714.560.5358

#### Ventura County Transportation Commission

950 County Square Dr.,  
Ste. 207,  
Ventura, CA 93003  
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ext. 119

#### Inland Empire Commuter Services

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PO Box 51540  
Riverside, CA 92517-2540  
Business: 1.866.IECS4HELP  
(1.866.432.7443)

#### Commuter Information

1.800.COMMUTE (266.6883)  
[commutesmart.info](http://commutesmart.info)

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