

# CommuteSmart News

September/October 2012

A SERVICE OF COMMUTESMART.INFO AND YOUR SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION AGENCIES

## Get Ready for Rideshare's Biggest Week

California Rideshare Week starts Monday, Oct. 1, and your rideshare agencies have plenty in store to help you run on-site promotions, including exciting prizes, clever marketing materials and more.

Read on to find out more about the Rideshare Week campaign...and discover how *just one week* can make a big difference in your long-term rideshare program participation...

[Full story »](#)



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- IECS Rideshare Week kickoff
- ACT time management workshop



- PARK(ing) Day

[More Events »](#)

## TIPS AND IDEAS

Take the Rideshare Week marketing materials provided by your rideshare agency a step further by holding contests and events of your own. Some ideas to get you started...[Full story »](#)

## SPOTLIGHT ON...

The Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) is launching its first-ever membership drive and offering member discounts.



## NEWS FOR EMPLOYEES



Get news geared to commuters that you can forward to employees or incorporate into your own rideshare newsletter. [Full Story »](#)

## Free Marketing Materials

Based on where you're located, your county rideshare agency has the tools you need to promote Rideshare Week at your worksite. Here's what's happening...[Full story »](#)



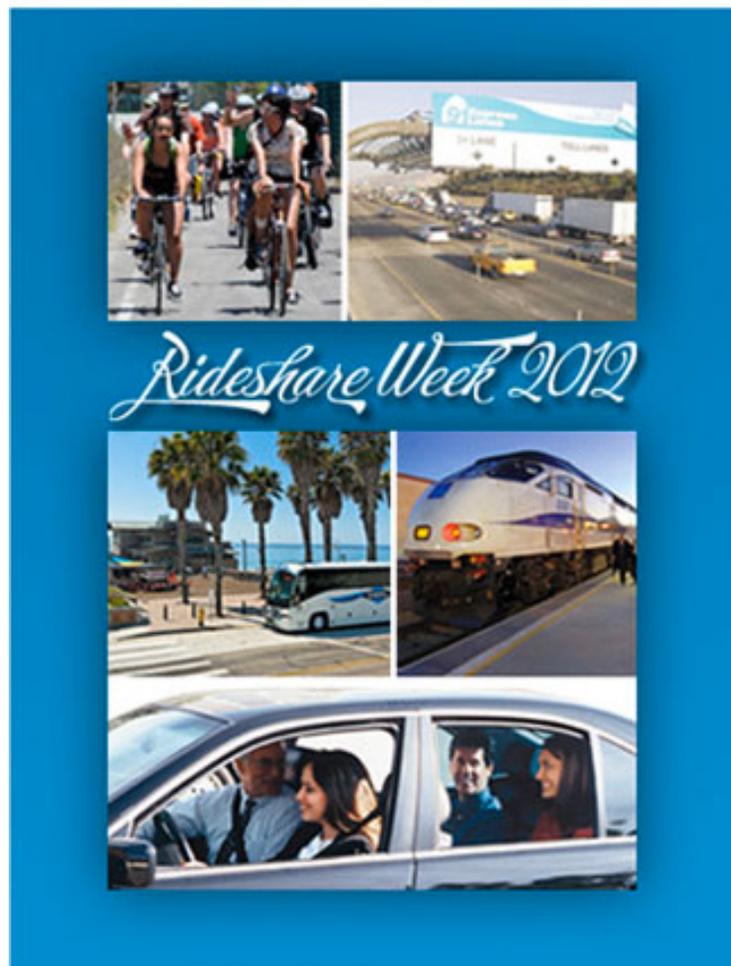
## In Brief



- Carmageddon 2 is coming soon
- VISTA brings back a popular service
- Metrolink now offers rewards
- Before you sign up for FasTrak®, read this...
- Big changes over at Omnitrans



## Get Ready for Rideshare's Biggest Week



California Rideshare Week is coming up Oct. 1-5, and throughout the week, thousands of Californians will make the pledge to carpool, vanpool, ride bus or rail, bike or walk to work. When they do, they'll not only find a better way to get to work, but they'll also qualify to win prizes.

As an employer, you can play an important role in reaching commuters with the Rideshare Week message by distributing materials and holding on-site events.

Here, we answer common Rideshare Week questions to help you get the most out of this exciting campaign.

### What exactly is Rideshare Week?

Rideshare Week is a statewide campaign that promotes alternatives to driving alone. It takes place during the first full workweek of October, which this year is Oct. 1-5. Now in its 26th year, in Southern California the campaign is sponsored by county transportation agencies, which work closely with hundreds of employers to bring Rideshare Week to employees.

### Why should we participate in Rideshare Week?

It's a great chance to draw attention to your rideshare program—and since you can get free posters, prizes and other marketing materials, it's easy to do. Rideshare Week is more than an awareness campaign. It can actually convert solo drivers into ridesharers. Past studies have shown that, of the people who share the ride for the first time during Rideshare Week, 60% *continue* to do so.

### How do I get materials?

It varies based on the county in which your work site is located (read on for details), but all offer posters, prizes, a way for commuters to make the pledge to rideshare, and tips for planning a successful event.

### Do I have to hold an event or contest?

Your work site can participate in Rideshare Week simply by posting and distributing provided materials—but, like many things in life, the more you put into it, the more you're likely to get out of it.

There are many ways to promote Rideshare Week on-site. Hold a rideshare fair, contest or party. Staff a table in the break room and hand out pledge cards. Greet ridesharers with bagels and juice as they arrive. Promote Rideshare Week on a bulletin board, at staff meetings, in your newsletter, via emails, social media, etc. Raffle off prizes in-house. Have your CEO write a letter of support to employees. Hand out awards to your most loyal ridesharers.

### There are only a few weeks until Rideshare Week – isn't it too late to pull together an event?

Wedding planners have a rule of thumb that it takes a full year to plan nuptials, but since the only thing anyone is saying "I do" to at your event is ridesharing, you can absolutely pull it off in a matter of weeks—or even days if that's what you have.

Bring together staff for a brainstorming session. A time-saving tip: Each county has a theme for its Rideshare Week campaign, so it's often easier if your event plays off of that theme. For details on happenings in each county and how you can get marketing materials, [click here](#).

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## Free Marketing Materials

Based on where you're located, your county rideshare agency has the tools you need to promote **Rideshare Week** at your worksite. Here's what's happening...

### Los Angeles County "Miss Traffic—Share the Ride"

Los Angeles Metro's own Miss Traffic reminds commuters that carpooling, vanpooling, riding bus or rail, bicycling or walking is a great way to miss traffic and get to work faster and with less stress.



During Rideshare Week, commuters can [pledge online](#) to share the ride at least one day during the week. When they do, they'll qualify to win prizes including an iPad, Macy's gift cards, gas cards, Disney packages and more.

Download posters—plus get tips for running a campaign at your work site—at [metro.net](#) or call your Metro rideshare representative at 213.922.2811.

[More...](#)

### Orange County "Pledge2Share"

Orange County commuters can experience the joy of a stress-free commute during Rideshare Week, and when they [pledge](#) to share the ride, they can win prizes including Apple iPads, gift certificates and movie tickets.



Employers that attended a kickoff event received posters, flyers and giveaway items. To see if more are available, or to download print materials, go to [octa.net/pledge2share](#), or contact Judy Leon at 714.560.5358.

To encourage participation, Orange County Transportation Authority is also offering prizes of \$500, \$300 and \$200 to the ETCs that get the most pledges from employees.

[More...](#)

### Riverside/San Bernardino Counties "Rideshare to Paradise"



Ridesharing in the Inland Empire can take you to work—and all the way to paradise. Commuters who pledge to rideshare during Rideshare Week qualify for more than 90 prizes, including Apple iPads and packages to Palm Springs, Las Vegas and more. Pledge cards and promotional materials will be sent only to those employers that have requested to participate. There is a choice of paper, pdf or an online link to a pledge card. (If you didn't request materials, you can do so by calling Inland Empire Commuter Services at 1.866-432-7443.) Forms will also be available on [IE511.org](#)

later this month.

Get marketing tips—plus stock up on promotional giveaways and prizes—at a [kick-off event](#) on Sept. 13.

For more information, call 1.866.IECS4HELP.

[More...](#)

### Ventura County "Go Team Rideshare"

Ventura County Transportation Commission is putting some "rah" into ridesharing, offering prizes worth cheering about, such as an Apple iPad, Nook and gift cards—to commuters that pledge to share the ride during Rideshare Week.

They've recently mailed pre employers to help run Rideshare Week programs at the work site. If you haven't received one, materials are [available online](#).

Simply distribute and collect pledge cards included in the kit to qualify employees for prizes. If you're one of the first five companies to turn pledge cards in to VCTC, you'll also get \$100 gift card for an on-site pizza party.

For more information, go to [goventura.org](#) or call Alan Holmes at 805.642.1591, ext. 119.

[More...](#)



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## In Brief

### Carmageddon 2 is coming soon

The second 10-mile closure of the I-405—popularly known as "Carmageddon"—is scheduled for Sept. 29-30 as part of a freeway improvement project. Motorists are urged to plan ahead, avoid the area, use Metrolink or Metro Rail, or stay close to home.

On Friday, Sept. 28, ramps between the I-10 and US 101 will begin to shut down as early as 7 p.m. Closure of individual freeway lanes will begin at 10 p.m.

The closure is scheduled to continue until 5 a.m. Monday morning, Oct. 1 (which also just happens to be the first day of California Rideshare Week).

For updates, go to [metro.net/405](http://metro.net/405).



### VISTA brings back a popular service

As of Sept. 1, VISTA bus riders will again be able to pay their fares using VCTC's popular Go Ventura Smartcard. This allows riders to use one pass for both VISTA and the partner transit providers: Gold Coast Transit, Simi Valley Transit, Thousand Oaks Transit, Camarillo Area Transit and Moorpark Transit.

Due to the sudden notice regarding the previous bus contractor's bankruptcy, Smartcard equipment had been quickly removed from VISTA vehicles. VISTA has since worked to reinstate it on interim buses.

For details, go to [goventura.org](http://goventura.org) or call 1.800.438.1112.

### Metrolink now offers rewards

Metrolink riders can now get discounts on goods and services at businesses near its stations, thanks to the Metrolink Rewards program. Current discounts are posted at [metrolinktrains.com](http://metrolinktrains.com), and riders can redeem them by presenting a valid Metrolink ticket at the time of purchase.



### Before you sign up for FasTrak®, read this...

The first Metro ExpressLanes will open this fall on the I-110 Freeway, and they'll be toll-free to motorcycles and carpools/vanpools that meet occupancy requirements, and available for a toll to solo drivers. All ExpressLanes users must have a valid FasTrak in their vehicle, which monitors usage of the lanes and, if applicable, deducts tolls from their FasTrak account. For a limited time, AAA is offering members a 20% one-time discount when signing up for FasTrak—to get the discount, go to [metroexpresslanes.net](http://metroexpresslanes.net) and click on the AAA logo or go to a AAA Branch office and click on the AAA logo.

### Big changes over at Omnitrans

Omnitrans—bus service for the San Bernardino Valley—recently launched a new look for its buses, a new slogan ("Connecting Our Community"), a retooled web site and Flyer Xcelsior 40-foot transit buses that have three-bike capacity racks (vs. two) to meet increased bicycling demand. Even Buster the mascot got a makeover! See the changes at [omnitrans.org](http://omnitrans.org).



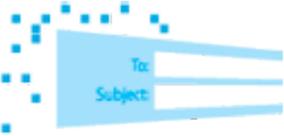
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## Tips & Ideas

Take the Rideshare Week [marketing materials](#) provided by your rideshare agency a step further by holding contests and events of your own. Some ideas to get you started...

	Los Angeles Theme: Miss Traffic	Orange Theme: Pledge2Share	Inland Empire Theme: Rideshare to Paradise	Ventura Theme: Go Team Rideshare
<b>Party or other event</b> 	Have a staff member greet arriving ridesharers dressed in crown and Miss Traffic sash	Take employees on a lunchtime field trip by OCTA bus or Metrolink to show how easy it is to ride transit	Hold a luau with tropical music, leis, food and a (fake) stuffed "luau pig" that features a sign, "Don't be a road hog - rideshare"	Host a tailgate party out of the back of a vanpool van
<b>Contest/activity</b> 	Ask employees to submit videos describing their favorite ways to miss traffic; let staff vote for best	Staff a table with computer where you can do on-the-spot carpool/vanpool matching and transit routing	Host a rideshare scavenger hunt, challenging employees to get photos of themselves at key spots, i.e., carpool parking spaces or nearby bus stop	Create a "scoreboard" and pit departments against each other to see who can get the most ridesharers
<b>Giveaways/prizes</b> 	Present awards to your most loyal ridesharers in the shape of crowns or sashes	Contact local shops and restaurants to ask if they'll donate freebies for a raffle	Offer the prize of a day's "vacation" from work	Raffle gift cards to a local sports store or sports pub
<b>Sample email subject line</b> 	"Find out how you can Miss Traffic and win prizes!"	"Pledge2Share... Great Chances2Win!"	"Want to turn your commute into a trip to paradise?"	"Join the winning team for a chance to win an Apple iPad!"
<b>Pledge card promotion</b> 	Forward the <a href="#">Metro pledge card link</a> to employees and offer a small gift when they email you to confirm they've pledged	Forward the <a href="#">OCTA pledge card link</a> to employees and offer a small gift when they email you to confirm they've pledged	Offer a reward (such as a gift card for a smoothie) to the first 20 employees that turn in completed pledge cards	Create a "finish line" that staff can cross to turn in pledge cards (first five employers to <a href="#">send pledge cards into VCTC</a> get a pizza party)

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## Calendar of Events

### EVENTS

**IECS Rideshare Week Kickoff** is Sept. 13, 9 a.m. at Pechanga Resort and Casino in Temecula and will include games, prizes and bags of goodies to take back to use in your own promotions; call 1.866.IECS4HELP.

**Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) time management workshop** featuring guest speaker executive coach Tina Barry is Sept. 13; for registration information, go to [act-southernca.org](http://act-southernca.org).



**PARK(ing) Day**—an annual event in which participants worldwide for one day transform land for autos into a place for people—is Sept. 13; more information plus free posters are at <http://parkingday.org>.

**Rideshare Week** is Oct. 1-5.

### 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 [sharetheride@octa.net](mailto:sharetheride@octa.net)

**Pasadena TMA** meets every other month; call John Miranda at 818.354.7433 or Judi Masuda at 626.744.4111.

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

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

### NETWORK MEETINGS (cont'd.)

**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** upcoming briefings—where Los Angeles area employers can learn about the transportation survey process and services Metro has to offer—are Sept. 12, 9:30-11:30 a.m. and Oct. 17, 1-3 p.m. For more information or to reserve a space, email [garciama@metro.net](mailto:garciama@metro.net)



**South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD)** offers one-day ETC training for \$160.75. Upcoming sessions are Sept. 13 and Oct. 11 at AQMD offices in Diamond Bar, Sept. 27 in Culver City, Oct. 25 in West Covina and Nov. 8 in Costa Mesa. Contact the AQMD's training program at [etctraining@aqmd.gov](mailto:etctraining@aqmd.gov) or visit the AQMD at [aqmd.gov](http://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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HWDS-09/12

