

# THE WAY TO WORK

A NEWSLETTER FOR MIDDLESEX AND MONMOUTH COUNTY COMMUTERS

D E A R C O M M U T E R ,



**W**inter driving in New Jersey can be a harrowing task for drivers, who are faced with an unfortunate combination of bad weather, potentially unsafe road conditions and long commutes.

Winter storms began early in the season this year and there are a few months ahead that hold potential for frigid weather. Stay safe on the road in all types of weather by keeping in mind these driving techniques.

### Braking and Skidding

- When applying the brakes on a vehicle equipped with conventional brakes, avoid locking them by pumping.
- For vehicles equipped with anti-lock brakes, apply the amount of brake pressure needed, and don't pump the brakes.
- To avoid skidding, stay within the speed limit, and, in poor weather, slow down. Keep adequate distance between your vehicle and others.
- Slow down before entering turns or bends, steering steadily.
- While on icy or slippery roads, don't brake heavily or jerk the steering wheel.

### Snow, Ice or Mud Conditions

- If your car is stuck in snow, ice, or mud, proceed carefully. Acceleration that is too rapid will spin the wheels and only dig the vehicle in deeper.
- Try to stay calm and turn the steering wheel gently from side to side to clear snow, ice, or mud away from the wheels. Lightly accelerate forward with the wheels straight ahead, alternating with a slow movement in reverse. This may help rock the vehicle out of its rut.
- Be aware that moisture on overpasses and bridges becomes icy more quickly than on ground-level roads, since cold air is beneath these structures.

This is the perfect time of year to investigate ridesharing or mass transit as an alternative for your commute. Contact KMM to inquire about carpool or vanpool matches for your route, and get free mass transit schedules for your area. Why not start commute habits now that will benefit you all year long? For more information about ridesharing options, visit [www.kmm.org](http://www.kmm.org) or call Elyse Previte at (732) 745-4368.

### Driving in Bad Weather

- Carpool: two heads are better than one.
- For every trip, no matter how short, adults and older children should wear safety belts.
- Check weather forecasts and road reports before you leave. Local New Jersey radio stations such as 101.5 FM, 106.3 FM, and 98.3 FM are good sources for up-to-the-hour information.
- Be alert. Don't drive when fatigued.
- Allow plenty of extra time for trips.
- Have alternative routes for how you'll drive from point A to point B. Anticipate worst-case scenarios and prepare for them.
- Consider keeping your cell phone handy or purchasing a phone for use in emergencies.

### Tips for Readyng Your Car

- Keep the gas tank at least half-full when driving in bad weather. You'll be more prepared for periods of slow driving or when traffic stops altogether.
- Keep your wiper blades in excellent condition to ensure good visibility.
- Make sure your tires have good treads.
- Carry emergency supplies in your vehicle, no matter what the weather. A good emergency checklist includes a blanket, window scraper, flashlight, first-aid kit, shovel, jumper cables, flares, and nonperishable snacks.

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KEEP MIDDLESEX MOVING, INC.

Middlesex County's Transportation Management Association

Associated with the Middlesex County Improvement Authority.

# COMMUTER PARKING NEWS

## NJ TRANSIT Approves Park & Ride Expansion:

### 840 New Parking Spaces Coming In 2003; Design For 3,300 More

In November 2002, the NJ TRANSIT Board of Directors authorized \$13 million for a Fiscal Year 2003 (FY03) Park & Ride Expansion program, which will lead to the construction of 840 new parking spaces and initiate design for more than 3,300 spaces at 16 locations. FY03 runs through June 30, 2003.

Over the next two years, NJ TRANSIT plans to add nearly 7,000 parking spaces - a near 8 percent increase of system capacity and a 25 percent increase in the number of NJ TRANSIT owned spaces.

"It's unacceptable that New Jersey residents spend years on waiting lists for parking spaces at our rail stations and bus park/ride facilities," said NJ TRANSIT Board Chairman and State Transportation Commissioner Jamie Fox. "It's not enough that our trains and buses are clean and run on time, or that we provide each customer with a seat. They need access to mass transportation if we're going to take cars off of highways and relieve congestion."

"The Corporation is determined to provide greater access to its transportation services," said NJ TRANSIT Executive Director George D. Warrington. "We remain committed

toward meeting the basic infrastructure and capacity needs of our core system and improving the quality of the commute for bus and rail riders."

Today, there are about 87,000 parking spaces available to NJ TRANSIT commuters on a daily basis. NJ TRANSIT owns 45 percent (24,500) of parking capacity on the rail system, 3 percent of capacity on the bus system and all (2,760) of the capacity on the light rail system. Based on a Park & Ride inventory that was conducted by KMM in November 2002, almost all the lots in Middlesex and Monmouth Counties, specially the ones next to the bus stops, operate at capacity, or in some cases, above capacity.

Construction and land acquisitions for the FY03 program will occur at train stations around the state including Montvale, Hackensack, Towaco, Boonton, Somerville, and Allendale, and bus Park & Ride facilities in Toms River and Washington Township. These initiatives are part of NJ TRANSIT's long-range plan to add between 10,000 and 20,000 parking spaces at various bus and rail facilities in the next five years. Future site expansions will be announced as the project unfolds.

## New Jersey Department of Transportation Assessing Future Parking Needs

Along with the other eight New Jersey TMAs, Keep Middlesex Moving assisted the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) with a complete and comprehensive Park-and-Ride inventory throughout the month of December. This Park & Ride update will allow NJDOT to better serve the needs of commuters by determining the condition and usage at each commuter parking site. Once this information is compiled, it will be easy to see where improvements and expansions need to be made.

Keep Middlesex Moving has been responsible for surveying many sites throughout Middlesex and Monmouth Counties. Staff members have visited 42 different Park & Ride facilities along US 9, US 1, the New Jersey Turnpike, the Garden State Parkway, and various other areas. Each site received an assessment that was forwarded to NJDOT. This inventory will lead to future decisions that will benefit commuters not only in Middlesex and Monmouth Counties, but also those throughout the entire state.

## ANNUAL COMMUTER SURVEY HELPS KMM SET UP NEW PROGRAM

KMM says "thanks" to all the helpful commuters who recently filled out surveys regarding your current commuting habits. This helped us to update our records and begin working on our new Commuter Benefits program, Emergency Ride Home. This program will kick off in Spring 2003.

If you travel to work via carpool, vanpool, or mass transit, you will be eligible to receive a free ride home in emergency situations when you are unable to travel home via your usual arrangements. If you're stuck late at work unexpectedly or

have a family emergency, you may not be able to meet that carpool or vanpool in the afternoon, or make it on time to the bus or train. Now, KMM's new program will be your back-up plan for emergencies. This is KMM's way of saying thank you for using an alternative method of getting to work.

To qualify for this program, you must first fill out a registration brochure. This brochure, along with further details about the program, will be sent to you in the spring. In the meantime, should you have any questions, contact Elyse Previte at (732) 745-4368.





## CONSTRUCTION AT ROUTES 1 / 130 NEARING COMPLETION

If you drive along Route 1/ Route 130 in North Brunswick, you are well aware of the current construction that is underway. This massive construction project is moving ahead of schedule and within the next couple of months, the new overpass will be in full use.

In December 2001, work began on the Route 1 / 130 Circle. Nearly one year later, the \$83 million project, funded through the New Jersey Department of Transportation, is nearing completion - ahead of the original 18-month projection.

While the project will be completed in mid-spring, KMM encourages commuters who joined the Emergency Traffic Network, took mass transit, carpoled, or vanpoled as a result of the construction project to continue to do so even after the project is completed. Your contribution will continue to ease congestion and pollution in Middlesex County.

For construction updates any time of the year, visit our website, [www.kmm.org](http://www.kmm.org).

## KMM OFFERS THE EMERGENCY TRAFFIC NETWORK THROUGH EMAIL!

KMM is proud to announce that the Emergency Traffic Network (ETN) is now being offered through email and is FREE to all participants.

If an emergency road condition occurs in Middlesex or Monmouth County during normal business hours, participants will receive an alert via email with a short description of the situation including date, time, location, estimated duration, contact name and phone number.

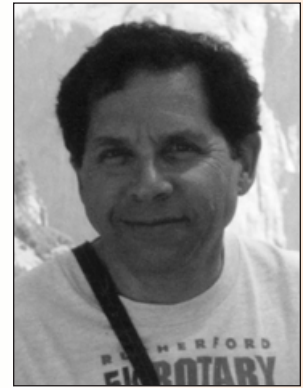
Currently, over 300 businesses and municipalities from across Middlesex and Monmouth Counties receive the ETN alerts. If you are interested in receiving the ETN alerts at your office, please call KMM at 732-745-5903 or email us at [kmm@kmm.org](mailto:kmm@kmm.org).

For more information about this program, please call Cristina C. Fowler at 732-745-4318.



## KMM SENDS A COMMUTER TO DINNER AND THE MOVIES!

KMM's second Commuter Story "Dinner and a Movie" contest was another great success, thanks to creative commuters who sent us the stories of their trials, tribulations, and triumphs on New Jersey roads. The winning contestant this time was Stan Cohen, who won a date for two at Chili's restaurant and the movies.



Stan Cohen, Contest Winner

Initially, Stan, like many others, wasn't sure if carpooling would be the right fit for him, but once he got started, he was pleasantly surprised. Today, nearly two years later, Stan still rides every day with two commuters he found through KMM's ridesharing network, who he now refers to as his "carpool buddies."

Here are some excerpts from Stan Cohen's Commuter Story, "The Carpool":

"I'm a devoted convert to carpooling. I'd recommend ride sharing to anyone. But it took me a long time to decide to share the ride from my apartment in Clinton to my job in New Brunswick. In 1995, Keep Middlesex Moving sent me the names of two guys in an existing carpool. It wasn't until six years later that I joined them."

"Commuting was a real drag. Every day, through rain and snow, head and cold, I made the 1 1/4 hour trip each way... It was March of 2001 when I couldn't take it any longer. I decided that, if I was going to commute to work, at least I could share the pain with others."

"Bill, Al and I have been carpooling for almost two years now. We ride share a few days per week on average because of changing schedules. Mostly only two of us carpool at a time. The commute seems to go by much faster now with my carpool buddies. There's less wear and tear on my car and I've saved some gas and toll money. The best part is being a passenger instead of a driver."

"I guess commuting to work is a necessary evil - part of life. Either you accept it or go crazy. One thing's for sure - driving 2 1/2 hours a day (both ways) is a lot easier with Bill and Al at my side."

Stan, thanks for doing your part to help reduce road congestion by carpooling. We are glad it is working out well for you!



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 THE 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: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

### Could Mass Transit Work for You?

Have you ever wondered whether mass transit is a viable alternative for your commute? If you're curious about the availability of a bus or train for your ride to work, contact KMM, and we'll investigate your options. If you already know about mass transit routes in your area, choose a day and do a transit "trial run." If you can live without your car for one day, you may be able to break the solo driving habit for good!

Contact Elyse Previte at 732-745-4368 or [eprevite@kmm.org](mailto:eprevite@kmm.org) for free bus and train schedules, route information, and Park and Ride locations.

## RIDESHARE APPLICATION FORM

If you or someone you know is interested in joining the Rideshare Program, 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

\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

Apt. No. \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address (if different from above) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Current Mode of Travel \_\_\_\_\_

I usually arrive at work : \_\_\_\_ AM \_\_\_\_ PM

I usually leave work: \_\_\_\_ AM \_\_\_\_ PM

Work days: \_\_\_\_ Mon.-Fri. \_\_\_\_ Other

My work hours are \_\_\_\_ Flex \_\_\_\_ Not flex

I would be willing to:

\_\_\_\_ carpool \_\_\_\_ as a passenger \_\_\_\_ driver

\_\_\_\_ vanpool \_\_\_\_ as a passenger \_\_\_\_ driver