

eNEWSLETTER

2013, FOURTH QUARTER



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NEED TRAINING?

Call our office to schedule training at your agency.

1.573.341.6155



3 FREE Training Opportunities

The following trainings are all eligible for reimbursement through Missouri RTAP.

FTA's Substance Abuse Training - Free

January 22, 2014 in Jefferson City, MO at the Jefferson City Police Department, near City Hall at 401 Monroe Street
9:00 AM – 4:30 PM

The seminar is designed to provide essential facts and information to facilitate employers' compliance with DOT's 49 CFR Part 40 (Procedures for Transportation Workplace Drug and Alcohol Testing Programs) and FTA's 49 CFR Part 655 (Prevention of Alcohol Misuse and Prohibited Drug Use in Transit Operators). In addition to a high-level overview of the regulations, the seminar will focus more on the operational side of a transit agency's functions. This is designed as an adjunct to the FTA Drug and Alcohol National Conference. Upcoming dates:

- Austin, TX - Dec. 17 - 18, 2013
- El Paso, TX - Dec. 19, 2013
- Jackson, MS - Feb. 6, 2014
- Durant, OK - Feb. 11, 2014
- Miami, FL - Mar. 20, 2014
- Orlando, FL - Mar. 25, 2014
- San Antonio, TX - May 7, 2014
- San Antonio, TX - May 8, 2014

Register Today

9th Annual Drug & Alcohol

Program National Conference - Free

April 15-17, 2014 in Little Rock, Arkansas

The three-day conference will provide attendees with a substantial background on 49 CFR Part 40 and 49 CFR part 655. It will have sessions tailored to those both new and old to the transit industry.

Register Today

FTA Transit Bus Safety Oversight

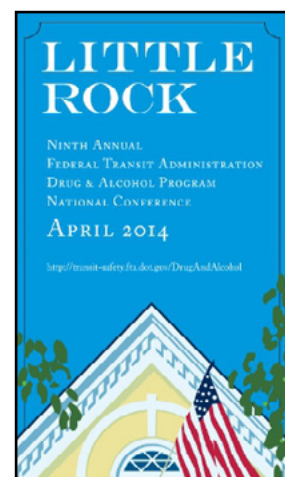
Program Orientation Seminar - Free

February 25, 2014 in Rolla, MO on the Missouri S&T campus at the Havener Center, St. Pat's Ballroom A (click [here](#) for a map of campus). To register, please contact Doreen at MO-RTAP to register by phone, 573-341-6155 or email, harkinsd@mst.edu. See page 6 for more information.

8:30 AM – 4:00 PM (lunch will be provided)

The seminar will cover the following:

- Bus Safety Oversight Program Background, Purpose, and Mission
- Safety Management System Overview
- SMS Bus Safety Part I
- LUNCH provided
- SMS Bus Safety Part II
- Demonstration of Bus Program [website](#)



LETTER FROM THE MANAGER

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The Fine Print

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About RTAP

National RTAP is a program of the Federal Transit Administration dedicated to creating rural transit solutions through technical assistance, partner collaboration and FREE training.

Dear transit friends,

Hello everyone and happy holidays from the entire Missouri RTAP staff. As the year draws to a close, we reflect on our second year of managing the RTAP program. We have had the opportunity to meet many wonderful people involved in transit and expand our services for the rural transit providers throughout the state. In addition to providing training and resources, we also took over the scholarship reimbursement program this past year. Hopefully it was a fairly seamless process. The changes were minimal. The mileage rate changed to \$0.535/mile, and meals are now reimbursed on a per diem rate for travel over 8 hours. Anything between 8 to 12 hours is reimbursed at a rate of \$21.00, and anything over 12 hours is \$42.00/day. It is no longer necessary to submit meal receipts; however, the time of departure and return is required. We have electronic documents of the reimbursement forms that can be downloaded from the MO-RTAP website under the Scholarship Reimbursement tab. These documents should make it easier when completing reimbursement requests. Please don't hesitate to contact Doreen Harkins at 571-341-6155 with any questions when completing the forms. Please note our mileage rate that we use is set by the University of Missouri, so it is subject to change slightly in 2014. We will alert all agencies if this occurs. We don't foresee any significant changes.



We also began publishing a quarterly eNewsletter in 2013. We hope that the transit community has found it helpful and informative. We try to include informative information as well as notices of upcoming conferences, meetings and training opportunities. Our intent is to include more transit related news from around the state. If you have a new facility, someone new on your staff or other news you would like to share, let us know, and we will include it in an upcoming issue.

Please don't forget the additional training that we can provide beyond the classes that are taught by John Rice for RTAP. Some of these additional opportunities include National Training Institute (NTI) courses and Transportation Safety Institute (TSI) related courses. Please see the upcoming NTI and TSI training dates included in this issue. Bus simulator training is also available. Jim and Michele Eastwood with Paducah Area Transit System came to Macon on September 24 and 26 as well as October 1-3 at the OATS Northeast Region facility. They did a wonderful job. Please see the article and video clip included in this newsletter. Your agency can also host one of these unique and useful trainings. 24 individuals can be trained in an 8 hour day. If your agency isn't large enough to fill a training session, contact us, and we can coordinate with surrounding agencies to fill a class. Finally, we are excited to host a FTA Transit Bus Safety Oversight Program Orientation Seminar on February 25, 2014. It will be held in Rolla on the Missouri S&T campus. The workshop is free and lunch will be provided. Plus travel expenses to attend are eligible for reimbursement through the RTAP scholarship reimbursement, so mark your calendar and plan to attend.

We welcome your input at any time. We want to hear from you and feel it is important to offer expanded services that are designed around best serving you our customers. Please feel free to contact me at pickerillh@mst.edu or by phone at 573-341-7637 with any questions, comments or suggestion you have. I hope you enjoy this fourth installment of the Missouri RTAP eNewsletter for 2013. If you know someone who would like to start receiving the newsletter, they can call our office or go to the Missouri RTAP website at www.mortap.com and sign up.

Happy holidays,

A handwritten signature of Heath Pickerill in black ink.

Heath Pickerill
Missouri RTAP Manager

THE EMPLOYEE DEPOT

Jumping Into the Social Media Pool

Social media sites first gained popularity among private users, but over time, local, county, and state government agencies have also jumped into the social media pool.

Social media is defined as a form of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content. Two of the most commonly used social media are Facebook and Twitter. This article discusses some key advantages, disadvantages, and general things to be aware of if your agency chooses to adopt social media, specifically focusing on Facebook and Twitter.

ADVANTAGES

Establishing a social media site in the workplace is an easy, efficient, and quick way to communicate with others outside of your agency. Adopting social media into your agency or municipality could enhance communication between you and your audience.

According to CNN Money, in October 2012 Facebook gained more than one billion users. In December 2012, the American Public Works Association reported that nearly 500,000 users are joining the Twitter world each day.

A large advantage is that signing up to create a Facebook page or Twitter account is free, so it is a communication tool that can help stretch your communication dollars. Another advantage is timeliness. You can post or tweet information concerning announcements, events, meetings, policies, transportation accidents and reroutes, weather conditions, disaster relief procedures, etc., in a timely manner, from anywhere you have access to the internet, using a variety of electronic devices (smart phone, laptop, desktop computer, etc.).

Unlike a traditional webpage, users don't have to go searching for information; they can receive updates and important notices on the go through their mobile devices. Users can provide their thoughts, ask questions, or post additional information back to you by posting a comment on your Facebook wall or tweeting at your Twitter account.

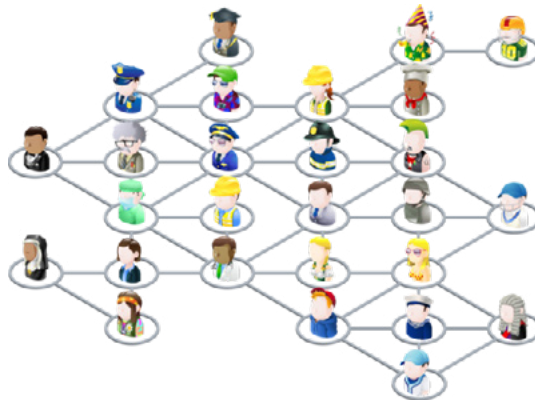
Because social media can target a large number of people, it is useful for reaching out to new members. New members simply click "Like" on your agency or municipality's Facebook page or click "Follow" on your Twitter account. Allowing who likes or follows your social media page can be approved by whoever is monitoring your social media site(s). You can approve new members before they can post or see your page under your account's privacy settings. Approved members can re-post Facebook posts by your agency to their page or retweet your tweets to their Twitter page.

DISADVANTAGES

A disadvantage with adopting a social media site for your agency is the potential for followers, or even employees, posting or tweeting negative comments on your page, or posting inappropriate images. Additionally, some social media users have hundreds or even thousands of connections called "Friends" on Facebook or "Followers" on Twitter. Seeing your posts on a friend's newsfeed on Facebook can get lost or overlooked due to other's posts. (A Facebook newsfeed is the center column of your home page that is constantly updating new posts from all of one's Facebook friends.) On a Twitter home page, too many updated tweets can lead to the same issue; tweets overlooked due to sheer volume. Another possible disadvantage is getting people to access your page. Many companies, both private and government, limit access to social media sites from work computers.

HOW TO CONTROL YOUR PAGE

Facebook and Twitter accounts provide several options for managing and controlling your page through various privacy settings. If your agency decides to establish a Facebook account you can choose who can post on your page and allow who sees these posts. On Facebook you can control who sees your posts by using the audience selector tool. You can also control who sees posts when they are posted by other people under the "who can see what others post on your timeline" setting. Both of these are found under timeline privacy. If your agency adopts a Twitter account you can click on "protect my tweets" beside "tweet privacy" under your account settings. The Twitter options to protect your tweets are the public tweets and protected tweets settings. If you choose the public tweets setting anyone can see them regardless if they have a Twitter account. If you choose the protected tweets setting your tweets can be viewed by Twitter followers you approved.



QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a great communication tool when properly used as part of an overall public relations/marketing and customer service strategy. There are, however, several items to consider to see if social media is a good fit for your agency. Some questions to ask are:

Should your agency establish the use of social media?

Think about your target audience. Are they using social media? How often do they use it? Do they access it on their smart phones, or work and/or home computer? continued...

THE EMPLOYEE DEPOT

Jumping Into the Social Media Pool *(continued)*

Does your agency have a social media policy?

Before you begin using social media, make sure your agency has a written policy outlining your rules and processes.

Who will be responsible?

Setting up a social media page may be easy, but with no strategies and goals in place your page may not be successful. Also, do not give the responsibility of monitoring your agency or municipality's social media page to every employee; this could get messy. When adopting a social media page give the responsibility to one or two people who have good communication skills and are aware of your audience. Let them control posts, tweets, and responding to outside members.

How much time will you invest in your social media page?

Remember, you should post new events, announcements, pictures, videos, etc. and spend the time reviewing and reposting to comments and questions from your followers.

How are you going to respond to negative feedback from followers and maybe even employees?

While any agency would rather get positive recognition and feedback, negative feedback is sometimes even more valuable. How will negative feedback be addressed? Privately or through an open message? Will the message be deleted? Will you ignore it? Does the message pertain to a safety issue? In which case, you definitely don't want to ignore it and want to make sure the appropriate person(s) and department(s) are made aware of the issue and it is appropriately addressed. Remember that one of the benefits of social media is the two-way communication it provides.

Resource: <http://wvltap.wvu.edu/Summer2013.pdf>



SURVEY SAYS...

Federal Lands Partnership Assessment

Western Transportation Institute at Montana State University is conducting a study to inventory transit systems that do, or could provide service to federal lands and their potential eligibility for the new Federal Lands Access Program. They are requesting participation in completing a short online survey of rural transit agencies in our state. Below is a link to a brief description and a link to the survey (only 9 questions and should take less than five minutes to complete). They would greatly appreciate your participation in order to get as much information as possible. The results will be shared with FTA, the Federal Highway Administration Federal Lands Highway Division, and with the Federal Land Management Agencies with the goal of expanding partnership and funding opportunities for transit to and around federal lands.

Please follow this link for more information and to complete the survey:

[Federal Lands Partnership Assessment](#)

Thank you for taking time to complete the survey, and please feel free to contact them with any questions.

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TRANSIT ON THE MOVE

Transit Access, Information Helps Keep Seniors Mobile

Our nation is undergoing a significant demographic shift. By 2050, the number of Americans aged 65 and older will more than double, while those 85 and older could increase fivefold. This population can face challenges that include increased poverty, isolation, and difficulty accessing medical care.

DOT has long been committed to helping older Americans continue to live with dignity in urban and rural communities alike by making a special effort to meet the transportation and mobility needs of America's seniors.

A key point of collaboration is the Federal Interagency Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM), which is chaired by Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. In recent years, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has worked with our CCAM partners to award grants in more than three dozen states and territories to install one-call, one-click access to transportation, with a special focus on military veterans and their families, many of whom are seniors.

For example, patients at the VA clinic in Lee County, Florida, will be able to arrange for rides using a computer kiosk installed on-site.

To get the most out of taxpayer dollars, we're also helping improve coordination among local transportation resources that already exist.

Working with Easter Seals and other industry partners, the FTA has launched a new National Center for Mobility Management that will, among other things, develop a database of best practices to help seniors access transportation. Mobility management improves customer service by encouraging partnerships among transportation,

both public and private, at the local level.

In FY2012, FTA provided over \$40 million for mobility management projects, a 4% increase over FY2011. Today there are more than 400 mobility managers nationwide, and over half of the states are planning one-call centers.

The budget forecast for mobility support is mixed. On the one hand, MAP-21, our current authorization, enhances funding and services for seniors and others. It increases spending for rural transportation by 25%, which will benefit some of the nation's lowest-income and

most transit-dependent seniors. And, importantly, MAP-21 allows the FTA to combine our own investments with matching funds drawn from other federal programs such as Medicaid and Head Start.

But FY 2013 appropriations, the sequester, and continuing resolutions have left FTA unable to fund even modest technical assistance for grantees, reducing our ability to improve transportation coordination at a time when it is needed most.

Despite these and other challenges, we must continue helping communities fill the gaps in transportation for seniors. Oftentimes, seniors don't know the options that are available to them or how to connect with them. We need to continue supporting mobility managers and similar initiatives across the country to foster even greater connectivity.

Written By: Therese McMillan, Deputy Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration.

Resource: <http://www.dot.gov/fastlane/aging-well-transit-access>



Bus Simulator Training a Success!

Bus simulator training was held in Macon, MO on September 24 and 26 and October 1, 2 and 3 at the Fall Driver Meetings at OATS Northeast Region. Paducah Transit received great feedback from the drivers who participated, and Sheree Webb, Northeast Regional Director, reported that the training went very well. She said that Jim and Michele Eastwood of Paducah Transit Authority were a pleasure to work with throughout the five days. Approximately 95 drivers participat-

ed in the program. Some of Sheree's office staff even had the opportunity to take a "test drive". OATS Northeast contacted the media letting them know about the event. One local news team sent a reporter out to get the story. Click on the [link](#) to watch the video.

Please don't forget that your agency can host one of these exciting events in 2014. Contact the MO-RTAP office if you are interested in bringing bus simulator training to your agency.



SAFETY PROGRAMS

FTA Bus Safety Program Orientation Seminars Overview

The Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Office of Safety and Oversight is responsible for guiding the development and implementation of programs and initiatives to continually improve transit safety for transit passengers, employees, and communities. A cornerstone in meeting this mission is the re-engineered and revitalized Transit Bus Safety Program. The purpose of the Bus Safety Program is to disseminate safety guidance and technical assistance resources to address the needs of transit bus agencies regardless of their size, level of funding, or service requirements.

The Bus Safety Program was developed to support bus transit agencies in implementing safety programs through:

- + Bus Program orientation seminars
- + A technical assistance [website](#)
- + Workshops, training and outreach
- + Presentations at conferences

Critical to advancing this Bus Safety Program is informing state DOTs and bus transportation agencies about the Program. FTA

does this by offering free, one-day Bus Safety Program Orientation Seminars in partnership with state DOTs and transit associations.

What takes place during an Orientation Seminar?

- An explanation of the background and an overview of the Bus Safety Program
- An explanation of Safety Management Systems (SMS)
- Guidance provided to bus transit systems in:
 - o Identifying elements of transit bus safety excellence
 - o Identifying strategies for SMS implementation
 - o Identifying gaps and needs in existing safety programs
 - o Utilizing the Bus Program website to locate and download information that will fill identified safety program gaps

The seminar scheduled in Missouri is set for February 25, 2014. See page 1 for registration information.

Poster Series Available to NSC Members

The National Safety Council (NSC) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to save lives by preventing injuries and deaths at work, in homes and communities and on the road through leadership, research, education and advocacy. NSC advances this mission by partnering with businesses, government agencies, elected officials and the public to make an impact where the most preventable injuries and deaths occur, in areas such as distracted driving, teen driving, workplace safety and beyond the workplace, particularly in and near our homes.

This year's safety theme, "Safety Starts with Me," was inspired by the pillar of Leadership and Employee Engagement from the Journey to Safety Excellence. Successful organizations engage everyone in safety and create a culture where people feel a personal responsibility not only for their own safety, but for that of their coworkers, family and friends. While leadership from the top is important, creating a culture where there is a sense of ownership of safety by all, makes everyone in the organization a safety leader.

NSC members can download posters and safety materials to share with your employees. The posters cover topics like: Carbon Monoxide Kills, Cold Weather Affects Driving Conditions and Cold Weather PPE. You can also download five-minute safety talks to share at your safety meetings. Topics include: Carbon Monoxide, First Aid Training, Parking Lot Safety and more.

Resource: www.nsc.org



AVAILABLE TRAINING PROGRAMS

The following is a list of the training programs and a course description of each that are currently available to rural transit providers through Missouri RTAP. Requests for training can be made by contacting Doreen Harkins, MO-RTAP Program Specialist, at harkinsd@mst.edu or 573-341-6155.

Defensive Driving

Makes sure all your drivers know how to develop safe, defensive driving habits and attitudes. This program covers essential defensive driving techniques that can reduce collision-related injuries and fatalities and can help

you reduce insurance claims, lost work time and vehicle repairs by decreasing the number of collisions. This program also includes student course guides with a certificate of completion.



Passenger Assistance/Mobility Aid Securement

Provides classroom and hands-on training to demonstrate proper assistance techniques and mobility aid securement.

Emergency Procedures

Discusses how transit drivers should handle emergency situations such as breakdowns, collisions and transit passenger vehicle evacuations.

Drug Abuse Awareness in Rural Transit

Educates transit drivers about the hazards of both illegal and legal drugs and alcohol. Various drug-testing regulations are also discussed.

Blood Borne Pathogens

Covers various problems that may be encountered when having to deal with a body fluid spill on the bus and stresses protection for the driver and other passengers.

Operation Lifesaver – Highway-Rail Crossing Safety

Covers the importance of safety when utilizing a highway rail crossing. Laws and regulations for commercial drivers are emphasized.

Basic First Aid

Stresses the importance of calling 911. It is a program by the Red Cross that is a refresher course for CPR and rescue breathing.

Backing Safety

Reduce the number of backing collisions. The program is designed by the National Safety Council.

Reversing the Trend – Backing Safety

Emphasizes components of the Smith System Defensive Driving Institute defensive driving strategies to reduce backing collisions.

Winter Driving Safety

Covers safety tips and techniques for handling the hazards of winter driving. Topics cover pre-season preparation, pre-trip procedures, and on-the-road issues such as anti-lock brakes and obstructed views.

Fatigue Awareness for Drivers

This program covers: fatigue, signs and symptoms, factors that affect it, sleep, effect on family and social life and strategies and countermeasures.

Driven to Extremes

Covers the myths and realities of aggressive driving.

Entry Level CDL Driver Training

Meets DOT requirements for new CDL Drivers.

Diversity & Awareness Training - Providing Quality Customer Service for Transportation Passengers who have Disabilities

Learn how to provide quality customer service and support for passengers with disabilities. As a result of this training you will have an enhanced understanding of disability and diversity, improved ability to communicate respectfully and effectively with people with disabilities and increased ability to provide needed transportation accommodations.



Safe & Secure Proper Infant and Child Seat Installation

Provides information for safely installing and securing a car seat for children.

NATIONAL TRANSIT INSTITUTE

The National Transit Institute is pleased to announce the following upcoming training sessions. Click on each course title for more information on the course or to register:

Procurement Series III -

RFPs and Competitive Contract Negotiations

- January 14-16, 2014 - Anchorage, AK

Project Management for Transit Professionals

- January 14-15, 2014 - Philadelphia, PA

Procurement for Small and Medium Transit Systems

- February 24-25, 2014 - Columbus, OH
- April 30-May 1, 2014 - Columbia, SC

Comprehensive ADA Paratransit Eligibility

- March 18-19, 2014 - New York, NY
- April 30-May 1, 2014 - Salt Lake City, UT

Management of Transit Construction Projects

- March 3-5, 2014 Colorado Springs, CO

Procurement Series I -

Orientation to Transit Procurement

- March 11-14, 2014 - St. Petersburg, FL
- March 25-28, 2014 - Salt Lake City, UT

National Transit Database

- March 19-20, 2014 - Newark, NJ

Understanding ADA

- April 11, 2014 - Oklahoma City, OK

Transit Academy

- May 19-23, 2014 - Dallas, TX

RESOURCES

Links

National RTAP – Rural Transit Assistance Program

<http://www.nationalrtap.org/>

National Transit Institute

<http://www.ntionline.com/>

Transportation Safety Institute – Transit Safety & Security Training Division

<https://www.tsi.dot.gov/Transit.aspx>

Federal Transit Administration – Rural Transit Assistance Program Page

http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants/grants_financing_3554.html

Kansas RTAP – Kansas University Transportation Center

<http://www.kutc.ku.edu/cgiwrap/kutc/rtap/index.php/index.html>

Transportation Research Board's (TRB) Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP)

<http://www.tcrponline.org/>

Upcoming Events

**FTA Webinar: Construct, Alter, Repair, or
Rehabilitate Your Capital Assets-Don't Forget ADA**
Jan. 16 @ 2-3:30PM

NTI Webinar: Transit Trainers' Workshop
Mar. 30 -April 1; Long Beach, CA

**FTA Webinar: 9th Annual Drug and
Alcohol Program National Conference**
Apr. 15-17; Little Rock, AR

**RIBTC: 21st National Conference on
Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation**
Oct. 26-29; Monterey, CA