

# The Fleet Express

A quarterly publication for Agency Transportation Officers



## OFMS KEY STAFF

### MICHAEL BISOGNO DIRECTOR

michael.bisogno@dgs.virginia.gov

### GARY JOHNSON PLANNING AND DEPLOYMENT MANAGER

gary.johnson@dgs.virginia.gov

### KEVIN CRAIN FLEET SERVICES MANAGER

kevin.crain@dgs.virginia.gov

### CARL LOVELAND BUSINESS MANAGER

carl.loveland@dgs.virginia.gov

### CONNIE BECK VMCC PROJECT MANGER

connie.beck@dgs.virginia.gov

## Fuel Prices On the Rise Again

As I am writing this article, gasoline prices on the state contract are nearing \$3.50 a gallon and retail prices in Virginia are well over \$3.80. While high prices are never welcome, it is the sheer volatility that often affects us operationally. Your budget fuel line will almost certainly be underestimated for FY11. A dramatic spike, like the one we are currently in, is impossible to plan for on timing or magnitude. Even though there is nothing we can do to control these costs, there are a few things that we can do to make sure we are not paying more than we should.

### Check Your Tires

Although it seems like a drop in the bucket, ensuring the tires on vehicles are properly inflated can help save money on fuel. A Department of Transportation study showed 60 to 80 percent of cars were operating with tires that were under-inflated by at least 10 percent. If a vehicle is running a single tire under-inflated by 10 psi, the resulting loss in fuel economy is 3.3 percent. With a 15 gallon tank and \$3.50 per gallon, this is approximately \$1.75 per fill up. Multiply that number by the thousands of state-owned vehicles and we begin to realize a considerable savings.

### Clean Out the Trunk

I have seen plenty of vehicles come through our facility that look more like storage units than cars. It may not happen over night, but for many drivers things tend to accumulate in their cars. One quick figure to remember is; every

additional 100 lbs will reduce fuel economy by 2 percent.

### Vehicle and Fuel Card Abuse

Although it is hard to suspect someone of stealing fuel or abusing driving privileges, it does happen and often with more frequency when fuel costs are extremely high. This is a very important time to closely monitor fuel purchases and driving patterns. OFMS is here to assist you with this effort. If you need additional information on a particular vehicle, do not hesitate to ask.

### Carpool / Reduce Travel

Reducing travel is often one of the more difficult methods to accomplish in active organizations. Many workers are on the go, and getting the job done is priority. This does not mean, however, that we cannot look for ways to carpool and reduce travel. Look for ways to hold more teleconferences, webinars and combine trips if you must travel.

### Drive 'Green'

'Green' driving is getting more attention lately and can often lead to dramatic fuel savings. This effort has more to do with you, the driver, than your vehicle. It means, avoiding jack-rabbit starts and sudden stops. Be smooth on the throttle at all times. Use cruise control where possible and follow the speed limit!

All of these measures only net marginal savings, but when combined and multiplied by the thousands of state vehicles, we begin to notice very substantial reductions.

## ATO WEBINAR: SAVE THE DATE

The OFMS Annual ATO Webinar will be held on:

**June 23, 2011**

We will be discussing:

- New minimum mileage requirements
- OFMS Form 1 updates
- Policy Manual Changes
- VMCC Update

Watch your inbox for additional details.



### Warm weather is here!

Now that the warm weather is here, it is time to make sure your car is ready for the heat. We talk about these things every year because it never hurts to remind ourselves of some basic checks to increase our vehicles safety and reliability.

**Check your tires:** The change in ambient air temperature will affect the pressure in your tires. The leading cause of tire blowouts in the summertime is improper pressure. Low air pressure will cause increased heat and the possibility of catastrophic failure.

**Air conditioner:** Does your AC blow cold air? It may not be time to use it yet however, now is the best time to check it and have it repaired. Hot days are not the time to find out that the AC is inoperable. Additionally, parts are in low demand and available now.

**Inspect your belts and hoses:** We don't expect you to be experts however; a novice often knows when something doesn't look right. If you look under your hood and your hoses are bulging, changing colors or cracked they may need attention.

**Brakes:** Please don't remove your tires or crawl under your vehicle to check your brakes. However, now that the weather is

good enough to roll down the windows, please listen for unusual noises. Additionally, the sight of fluid could be the sign of a problem and should be reported ASAP.

**Wiper blades:** Winter weather causes your wipers to work extra hard moving snow, ice and road grime. A visual and operational inspection will reveal damaged blades. Do they clear the rain off the windshield without streaks? Are they cracked or ripped?

**Unusual noises:** The weather is getting good enough to finally roll down the window and enjoy the wind and the warm weather. Listen for noises in the suspension, exhaust or any other part of the car that were not present the last time the windows were down.

When performing these checks, if you find problems please call the VMCC at 866-857-6866. They will schedule an appointment for you to have your vehicle serviced.

Additionally, this is a good time of year to clean your vehicle thoroughly. While this is not only aesthetically pleasing it can help remove harsh road salts and other grime.

---

### Message from the Director

I have been receiving an increase in citizen complaints lately, mainly concerning aggressive driving and speeding.

I would like to use this as an opportunity to remind everyone on the importance of safe and defensive driving. State vehicles are very visible to the public and the manner in which we drive them is a reflection on citizens' perception of state employees.

A few policies that have the most visibility and are often the most violated are:

- Speeding
- Aggressive Driving
- Cell Phone Use / Texting
- Personal Use / Residential Parking

A copy of the OFMS Policies and Procedures Manual can be found at [www.dgs.virginia.gov/fleet](http://www.dgs.virginia.gov/fleet)

Drive Safely.