



## Ridesharing Helps Commuters Find Seasonal Savings

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OAKLAND, Calif., Nov. 9 /PRNewswire/ -- With gas prices jumping 16 cents per gallon in only two weeks, 511 Rideshare (<http://rideshare.511.org>) encourages Bay Area commuters to examine the cost-saving benefits of commuting via carpool or vanpool. Immediate gains come from a reduced gasoline bill and free bridge tolls.

San Francisco residents who are continuously burdened with the nation's highest fuel costs are feeling the painful pinch of oil price hikes. Higher gas prices give Bay Area consumers significant reasons to limit their spending just before the peak holiday buying season. With gloomy economic news of mortgage finance problems and rising airline fares, holiday shoppers are stretched thinner during a season traditionally marked with amplified spending on gifts and food.

As a solution to rising gas prices and traffic congestion, 511 Rideshare (<http://rideshare.511.org>) offers Bay Area commuters a free RideMatch service (<http://rideshare.511.org/ridematch>). Commuters can visit the Rideshare Web site by going to [511.org](http://511.org) and clicking "Rideshare" to obtain a list of commuters seeking carpool partners who live and work nearby. Additionally, people interested in starting or joining a vanpool can find information on the Web site.

Long-time carpooler David Rolley, who travels weekdays from his home in Suisun City to work in Contra Costa enjoys the benefits and encourages others to rideshare. "By splitting the cost of gas and free bridge tolls, my commute costs are dramatically reduced. This saves me money that I can use on other household expenses," says Rolley. "We are all good friends and it is one of the highlights of my day," he adds.

Ridesharing can also make a long commute interesting and enjoyable. Lola Ferguson, a seasoned vanpool driver, enthusiastically shares her cost-saving experience. "I've been in a vanpool for many years, and I've saved a lot of money and a lot of time." Ferguson belongs to a vanpool that drives from Fairfield to Richmond in which all participants work for the same employer. "We really have a great time sharing amusing stories about our family and friends," adds Ferguson.

To figure the savings, Rideshare's own online Commute Calculator (<http://rideshare.511.org/calculator>) shows that a commuter, who drives alone 30 miles one-way to work, spends an average of \$1,270 a year. This calculation is based on a five-day work week, gas at \$3 per gallon, plus maintenance, repairs and tires. (This figure does not include potential savings on parking or tolls.) The calculation also assumes that the vehicle gets 24 mpg. When insurance, licensing and registration, as well as taxes and depreciation are included, the total annual commute cost is about \$4,241. (Source: AAA).

About 511 Rideshare:

With a RideMatch service database of more than 14,000 San Francisco Bay Area people, 511 Rideshare helps commuters find other drivers to carpool or vanpool together. 511 Rideshare also advises and assists Bay Area companies in planning and formulating customized employer-organized commute programs. Its mission is to reduce traffic congestion, clean the air, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

511 Rideshare is a free Web and phone service funded by grants from the Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and county congestion management agencies. Qualifying carpools can cross Bay Area toll bridges (<http://rideshare.511.org/incentives/bridges.asp>) free of charge during commute hours. For more information, visit the Rideshare page at <http://www.511.org>.

SOURCE 511 Rideshare

/CONTACT: Kit Powis, Communications and Public Relations Manager of 511 Rideshare, +1-510-273-3650, cell, +1-510-220-0364, [powis@rideshare.511.org](mailto:powis@rideshare.511.org)

/Web site: <http://www.511.org>

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