



# NEWS

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## ***Air District and MTC Encourage Commuters to Consider Alternatives During the Bay Bridge Closure*** *Public Transportation and Rideshare Help Alleviate Road Congestion*

**SAN FRANCISCO, October 28, 2009** – With the unexpected Bay Bridge closure, Bay Area residents are facing longer commutes and increased traffic congestion. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission encourage commuters to use public transportation such as BART, ferries, regional bus services or connect with a rideshare, such as carpool or vanpool to ease highway congestion throughout the nine-county Bay Area region.

"The Bay Bridge work is creating longer commutes for all of us in the Bay Area," said Lisa Fasano, Air District communications director. "The unplanned closure is an opportunity for commuters to work together to reduce highway congestion by carpooling, reducing commuting time, freeway congestion and air pollution."

"I urge everyone to plan ahead if you must travel around the Bay Area during the bridge closure," said Scott Haggerty, Alameda County Supervisor and Chair of MTC. "Whether it's carpooling, telecommuting, riding BART, taking the ferry or just working a flexible schedule to reduce peak period traffic, call 511 or visit the [511.org](http://511.org) website to get the information you need to make smart travel decisions."

Commuters who want to begin carpooling can join an organized rideshare using the free [511 RideMatch Service](http://511.org) through [511.org](http://511.org). Commuters can use this quick-match service to view ride options that work for their schedules and follow a few easy steps to connect with other commuters and share a ride.

Another option on [511 RideMatch Service](http://511.org) is vanpooling through [511.org](http://511.org). Go to [511.org](http://511.org) to view a map of the more than 150 free Park & Ride lots to meet up with a rideshare and find available seats in existing vanpools. Or, start a new vanpool or carpool instead of driving alone.

To help provide additional transbay service during the Bay Bridge Closure, BART is running longer trains outside the normal peak hour BART schedule. Visit [www.bart.gov](http://www.bart.gov) for the most up-to-date schedules.

### **About the Bay Area Air Quality Management District**

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (<http://www.baaqmd.gov>) is the regional agency chartered with protecting air quality in the Bay Area.

### **About the Metropolitan Transportation Commission**

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (<http://www.mtc.ca.gov/>) is the transportation planning, coordinating and financing agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area.

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