

SEPT/OCT 2009

Cash tolls to increase on October 1

K-TAG fares won't increase

On October 1, cash tolls will increase by an average of 15 percent for passenger vehicles (classes 2-4) and by an average of 5 percent for commercial trucks (classes 5-9).

As a K-TAG customer, you will not see an increase in your tolls!

“These changes in our toll structure are intended to better align our costs of providing service to various customer classes and, at the same time, achieve greater operating efficiencies,” said Michael L. Johnston, President/CEO of the Kansas Turnpike.

A key difference with this increase is that tolls will not rise for users of K-TAG. That reflects the lower cost of serving electronic customers, whose K-TAG allows quick entry to and exit from the Turnpike.

“The current economic environment is the most challenging in the 53 year history of our business,” Johnston said. “Greater use of K-TAG is just one of many steps in our effort to find more operating efficiencies during this challenging economic period.”

In fact, Johnston and the KTA staff have been aggressively working on reducing its operating budget for more than three years. Full-time staff positions have been reduced by 10 percent, since the start of 2006.

Raising tolls is never easy or pleasant, Johnston said, but it is necessary to maintain safe operations and avoid escalating deferred maintenance costs.

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Drive right except to pass

A new Kansas law made lingering in the left lane illegal effective July 1, 2009.

The law makes driving in the left lane of a multi-lane rural highway illegal unless you are passing another vehicle, exiting the highway or are directed by official traffic control devices. One exception to this law is KTA maintenance vehicles while performing official maintenance tasks.

“The intent behind this law is to keep traffic moving and decrease incidents of road rage for those stuck behind someone in the lefthand lane,” said Kansas Highway Patrol Troop G Commander, Capt. John Walters.

This new law pertains to rural areas of highways like the Turnpike and does not include parts of the Turnpike that are inside city limits such as Wichita, Topeka and Lawrence. Where the Turnpike is three lanes wide in each direction between Topeka and Lecompton on I-70, this law applies to the far left lane.

The “Move It” law also went into effect July 1. This law mandates that drivers of vehicles involved in non-injury crashes on highways or Interstates like the Turnpike move vehicles out of the lane of traffic and into a safe location such as the shoulder or nearest exit.

“This helps keep crash victims safe from traffic and prevents traffic from coming to a complete stop in the middle of the road, which is very dangerous,” Walters said.

If vehicles are not driveable, contact law enforcement immediately. Other reasons law enforcement must be contacted include injuries; alcohol or drugs are involved; damage in excess of \$1,000; no proof of insurance; or if one of the drivers leaves the scene.

Motorists will be issued warnings for violating the new law until July 1, 2010. After that time, officers will begin ticketing motorists.

K-TAG KORNER

Retail sales will make adding a K-TAG easier

K-TAGs are now for sale in many Walgreens drugstores along the Turnpike, Dillons stores across Kansas and AAA offices in Wichita, Manhattan, Topeka, Lawrence and Kansas City!

The Kansas Turnpike Authority is partnering with these businesses to begin selling tags in September as a convenience to

travelers.

“Partnering with Walgreens, Dillons and AAA to offer K-TAGs for sale at retail locations — many of which are open and available 24 hours a day — offers the biggest convenience to our customers since the electronic toll collection began in 1995,” Johnston said.

Retail sales of the tags will allow current cash customers to move into the electronic program easier and will allow current K-TAG customers another way to add a tag to their account.

To add a tag, just purchase it at a retail location and then visit the web site at www.myktag.com to register it on your account.

Lawrence EZ GO opening celebrated with ribbon cutting

The Lawrence Service Area EZ GO C-store and fuel retailer reopened in time for the July 4 holiday weekend.

The facility is completely new and much larger than the old store. It features many of the travel amenities customers have come to expect, including additional gasoline pumps and ultra high flow diesel dispensers for commercial truckers.

The opening was celebrated by KTA and EZ GO with a ribbon cutting ceremony on July 23. The KTA also planted a tree in honor of EZ GO’s commitment to building an environmentally friendly and efficient facility.



KTA Board members Paul Dugan, left, KDOT Sec. Deb Miller, Rep. Gary Hayzlett, and Sen. Dwayne Umbarger present EZ GO owner Carey Johnson, middle, with a tree in honor of EZ GO’s “green” efforts with the Lawrence Service Area facility. The tree has been planted at the service area at milepost 209.

Drive as if your life depends on it — because it does!

The ninth annual Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day® is October 10th.

On this day each year, the Kansas Turnpike Authority and partners at the Kansas Department of

Transportation and AAA of Kansas, encourage each driver to drive as if his or her life depended on it — because it does!

Its goal was and remains today to deliver messages to the public about the major causes of transportation fatalities — chiefly highway fatalities — and their avoidance, in an upbeat fashion.

This year, the Kansas committee for Put the Brakes on Fatalities will be participating in a 20-day safety blog to provide important traffic safety information. The Turnpike’s Safety Coordinator Steve Rust will be blogging on October 2. Find the blog at www.ktoc.net.



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