

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION NEWSLETTER

September 2, 2005

New Commission Members

Since the last newsletter was published, we have undergone a change in our Commission members. They are as follows:

- Chairman – Kevin White, Tampa
- Vice –Chair – Rose Ferlita, Tampa
- Brian Blair – County Commission
- Ken Hagen – County Commission
- Tom Scott – County Commission
- Rick Lott – Plant City
- Frank Chillura – Temple Terrace

12 Additional Taxicab Permits

Based upon the new population estimate for Hillsborough County (1,131,452) and using the 1 taxicab permit for every 2000 formula, the number of authorized taxicab permits has increased from 554 to 566 (12 new). Following the PTC meeting on September 14, 2005, we will begin accepting applications for taxicab certificate/permits for one month. Following the procedures outlined in the PTC Rules, approved applicants will be eligible for the random drawings to distribute the 12 new permits.

Next PTC Meetings

- September 14, 2005 - 9:00 a.m.
- October 12, 2005 – 9:00 a.m.
- November 9, 2005 – 9:00 a.m.
- December 14, 2005 – 9:00 a.m.

Emergency Fuel Sur-Charges

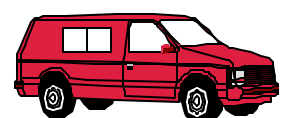
In a special meeting today, the PTC passed an emergency rule that allows the taxicab operators to charge a \$1.00 fuel surcharge. The wrecker operators are permitted to add a \$10.00 surcharge to their final invoices for a tow. This emergency rule only lasts until the September 14 PTC meeting when the Commission will address the rates once again through the rule change process.

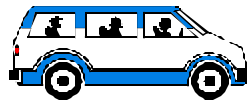
Annual Inspections and Renewals

You should have received a schedule for annual vehicle inspections and also invoices for your certificate and permit renewal fees. After December 30, 2005 only 2001 model year vehicles or newer will be allowed to be put on for the first time. As always, once a vehicle has been put into service, it may stay on until it reaches 10 model years so long as it passes inspection.

Rule Workshop/Adoption

We have held two workshops to develop possible rule changes for the Commission to consider at the September 14, 2005 PTC meeting. While most of the changes are expected to be minor administrative changes, we do anticipate addressing rates changes to assist with the increasing fuel costs. The September PTC meeting will be a public hearing where those from the audience desiring to comment may do so. Contact the Office of the PTC if you desire any information regarding these changes.





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PTC Staff Member Change

Inspector Harry Pasquale has been selected to be a Lieutenant with Hillsborough County Schools Security Program. He is being replaced by Inspector Mario Tamargo, formerly with the Sheriff's Office for over 30 years.

Wrecker Clean-Up

We have been receiving complaints from vehicle owners and law enforcement agencies that some wrecker operators are cleaning debris, to include oil soak and glass, from accident scenes and dumping it into the vehicle. This practice not only adds damage to the vehicle but greatly hinders law enforcement investigations. Those who continue this practice may face suspension from law enforcement rotation lists.

Vehicle Permit Usage

There are numerous companies that have developed the practice of "leasing" their vehicle permits to independent vehicle owners. While this is not unauthorized by PTC rules, there are some restrictions. Anyone who operates a vehicle using a company's (certificate holder's) permit must operate under that company's certificate, in name and in practice. This "leasing" practice was designed to allow a certificate holder to bring in an independent vehicle owner and put them to work under his/her company name not to "lease" permits to other companies in need of permits.

Worker's Compensation Insurance

All wrecker companies have been informed that they must provide proof that they are carrying worker's compensation as required by Florida Statutes or a statement explaining why they are not required to carry workers compensation insurance (i.e. number of employees). Any wrecker certificate holder who has not produced either of these will not be inspected this annual renewal period until one or the other is provided to the Office of the PTC. Failure to be inspected could result in a suspension of the Certificate.

Taxicab Orientation Class

Many of you have already learned this but, for you that don't know, every taxicab operator is now required to attend a one-time two-hour class when first issued a public vehicle driver's license or upon renewal of a public vehicle driver's license. This class is presented at the Office of the PTC and covers a variety of topics to include PTC rules, driver responsibilities and tips to improve individual taxicab operator's business practices. There is no cost for this class.

**Gregory B. Cox
Executive Director**

