

Edmonton Transit System (ETS)



DECEMBER 16, 2013

1. ETS News

ETS Every Day Way to Donate A Ride

ETS is pleased to announce that Councillor Dave Loken is the new Chairperson for the DONATE A RIDE program this year.

Program information and donation envelopes will be out on the buses in mid-December. The actual campaign runs from December 31, 2013 to January 31, 2014. The official kick off is at City hall on Monday, December 30.

This special program continues to provide valuable service to the community, supporting 69 local charities this year. To date, DONATE A RIDE has distributed over \$1.8 million to local community agencies.

The only City of Edmonton, City Council initiated charity, DONATE A RIDE is a unique partnership of private businesses, municipal government and charitable organizations. Donations can be made by asking your bus operator for a donation envelope, by mail or phone to the United Way, through the ETS Online Store at www.takeETS.com or at the DONATE A RIDEn kiosk on the platform of Churchill LRT Station.

Pick Up Your Winter U-Pass this Month

Post-secondary students at University of Alberta, MacEwan University, NAIT and NorQuest College are encouraged to pick up their Winter Term 2014 U-Pass sticker from their institutions prior to leaving for Christmas break.

The Fall Term 2013 U-Pass sticker expires December 31, 2013. The Winter Term U-Pass sticker is valid January 1 – April 30, 2014.

Winter U-Pass sticker distribution will start in December at the Institutions. Details about U-Pass sticker pick up can be found on institution websites. Students in participating U-Pass institutions are responsible for having the valid U-Pass sticker on their student identification card when traveling on ETS, St. Albert Transit and Strathcona

County Transit services.

Take Transit for Free on New Year's Eve

ETS and our neighbouring transit system, St. Albert Transit and County of Strathcona Transit, are offering FREE service on New Year's Eve, and encouraging people not to drink and drive.

ETS free service starts at 6 p.m. on December 31, continuing until 3:30 a.m. on January 1.

Service information for the system you'll be using is available from the ETS trip planner on www.takeETS.com, St. Albert Transit at 780-418-6060 or Strathcona County Transit at 780-464-7433. Money collected in ETS fare boxes on New Year's Eve is given to the DONATE A RIDE campaign. Have a Safe and Happy New Year!

ETS Christmas Holiday Service

Our ETS holiday service hanger contains all the information you'll need to know for your transit travel over the Christmas and New Year periods. It's available on both buses and LRT vehicles in mid-December.

Although schools and major centres such as the University and many government offices are closed during the Christmas holiday period, a number of businesses remain open. We've adjusted our service levels to meet these reduced travel requirements.

Our ETS hanger contains information on service from December 23 to January 3.

We've included school service information too. Remember, school passes are accepted on ETS every day of the week.

The ETS Customer Service Office, including Commendations & Concerns and Lost & Found will close at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 24. On December 25 and 26 and January 1 the office will be closed. Tuesday, December 31 office hours will be 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Regular hours apply for all other days during the holiday.

Call Buslink at 780-496-1600, text 31100 or see www.takeETS.com for current holiday route and schedule information.

Transit information is available from 311 during the holiday period. If calling from outside Edmonton, phone 780-442-5311. Happy Holidays from all of us at ETS. We look forward to serving you in 2014.

LRT Disruptions this Month

As ETS continues with the testing and system upgrades for the start of service on the Metro Line to NAIT, there will be service disruptions on a number of weekends this month. On some Sunday mornings until noon, LRT will be replaced by buses for a portion of the line.

Most of the work will be located in the Health Sciences/Jubilee area at the tail track, and just north of Churchill Station at the junction for the track leading to NAIT.

ETS Christmas Lights Tours

As part of our annual holiday events ETS staff, their families and friends volunteer their time to host our popular evening Christmas Lights Tours on two weekends in December. Tours are available December 6, 7, 8, 13, 14 and 15.

There are four tours on Saturday and Sunday at 5:45 p.m., 6 p.m., 6:15 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Tours leave from the north side of City hall at 99 Street & 101A Avenue eastbound at bus stop #1123.

Your highlights include downtown, Candy Cane Lane, Whyte Avenue and Saskatchewan Drive as well as our regular stop at the Alberta Legislature. Tour details are available on www.takeETS.com

Tickets are \$5. Everyone on the tour requires a ticket. You can purchase a maximum of 8 tickets. Each tour can accommodate two wheelchair/scooter positions. Please advise if you require a wheelchair position when you purchase your ticket. All proceeds go to the DONATE A RIDE program.

Tickets are sold in advance only, through Tix on the Square (9920 – 102 Avenue). You can purchase tickets in person, online at www.tixonthesquare.ca, or by calling 780-420-1757. There is a \$1.50 charge per transaction when buying tickets by phone or internet, and you can pay with Visa, Master Card or American Express. Tickets will not be held without payment and all sales are final – no refunds or exchanges.

Tickets must be picked up in person prior to your tour, during Tix on the Square business hours (9:30 a.m. – 6 p.m. Monday to Friday and 9:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Saturday).

2. DATS NEWS

Eligibility and Accessibility

As of fall 2013, all new applicants to DATS have been participating in the updated application process. Overall, we have received very positive feedback about the new application form documents, as well as generally positive feedback regarding the In-Person Interviews.

DATS has also been busy providing information related to the new process to both applicants and to healthcare professionals; including in-services to the Glenrose Recreation Therapy Team as well as the Edmonton Zone Day Program Managers. Formal contacts have also been established with the University of Alberta, Royal Alexandra Hospital, Home Care, and the Primary Care Network in addition to numerous contacts with individual healthcare professionals.

DATS applicants who participated in the updated process will begin to receive their new DATS Registrant Photo ID cards shortly. As existing registrants re-certify, they will receive photo identification cards. Re-certification will begin in 2014; certification will be valid for a period of five years.

DATS Stats November

- DATS carried 80,050 trips in November with an average of 3,312 customers carried during the weekdays and 1,018 customers carried on the weekends. Year-to date, DATS has carried 863,912 trips. This total is 2,552 less than the 2012 year-to-date total (866,464). This is likely due to the additional weekday (Feb. 29) during the leap year in 2012.
- DATS achieved an overall on-time performance of 90.76% in October (93.80% year-to-date).

- Since the implementation (Sept.1/13) of the change in the cancellation notice required (to two hrs before a trip – increased from 30 min.), there were a higher number of No Shows (3.00%) in November 2013 as compared to November 2012 (2.19%). However, this was only the third month for this change and we anticipate the percentage of No Shows to return to the previous levels experienced.
- The trip accommodation rate in November was 98.46%%. The 2013 year-to-date- accommodation rate is 99.1%, an improvement from the 2012 accommodation rate of 98.9% (year-to date).

Christmas Lights

Once again, DATS is offering our own version of the popular ETS Christmas Lights Tours (December 9-16, 2013). Dozens of volunteers including DATS operators, inside staff and management (and their family members) will help to deliver 14 tours of Edmonton's best and brightest Christmas light displays, including Candy Cane Lane, Churchill Square, the Legislative Grounds and more. All proceeds collected (\$3.00 / rider) will be given to the Donate-A-Ride program which provides basic transit needs for low-income families to get to their employment, educational and social services they need to improve their lives. Groups get picked up at their residences and the tours last approximately two hours.

Mobility Choices Customer Training

Reminder Upcoming Transit 101 – January 7: an *Introduction-to-Transit* class designed for customers with mobility challenges who are new to transit or who need assistance in learning the basics on how to use ETS buses in a safe and effective manner. Next class is on January 7.

3. OCTOBER Statistics

Transit Ridership Information for October 2013	
Ridership	Total Year to Date
2012	66,928,172
2013	70,765,088
Change from 2012 to 2013	3,836,918
Percentage Change	5.73

4. Minutes from Council and Committees of Council

ETS budget approved the week of December 2, 2013.

Councillor Budget Binder.

There were no Transportation Committee meetings in November.