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The TMA Group—Our Job is Getting You to Yours

# VAN VOICES

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## REPORT ACCIDENT CLAIMS IMMEDIATELY TO:

Synaxis Polk & Sullivan  
615-385-8341  
(Kay Biggs)

-and-

MiMi Lee  
615-790-4005 or  
After Hours:  
615-517-6321

*Van Voices* is a publication of The TMA Group.

For more information about our services and programs, contact us: (615) 790-4005

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## Sleepiness + Driving = DANGER!

Everyone knows that drinking and driving do not mix, but they may not realize that drowsy driving can be just as harmful. Like alcohol, sleepiness slows reaction time, decreases awareness, impairs judgment and increases the risk of an accident. It is estimated by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that 100,000 crashes a year are caused by sleepy or fatigued drivers. According to the National Sleep Foundation's 2005 *Sleep in America* poll, 60% of adult drivers—about 168 million people—say they have driven while feeling drowsy in the past year, and 37% have actually fallen asleep at the wheel.

### How can you tell if you are “drowsy driving”?

Here are some signs to look for:

- Difficulty focusing, frequent blinking, or heavy eyelids
- Daydreaming; wandering/disconnected thoughts

- Trouble remembering the last few miles driven; missing exits or traffic signs
- Yawning repeatedly or rubbing eyes
- Drifting from one lane, tailgating, or hitting a shoulder rumble strip

### Are you at risk?

Before you drive, check to see if you are:

- Sleep-deprived or fatigued (6 hours of sleep or less triples your risk)
- Suffering from sleep deprivation
- Driving long distances without proper rest breaks
- Taking sedating medicines (antidepressants, cold tablets, antihistamines)
- Working more than one job and your main job involves shift work
- Working more than 60 hours a week (increases your risk by 40%)

### Prevention and Planning

Before hitting the road, you should:

- Get a good night's sleep. Sleep experts recommend between seven and nine hours.
- Plan to drive long trips with a companion. Passengers should stay awake to talk to the driver.
- Schedule regular stops, every 100 miles or two hours.
- Avoid alcohol and all medications that may impair performance.

If you are on the road and began to feel sleepy, here are some suggestions:

- Pull over at a safe spot, and take a 15 to 20 minute nap.
- Consume the equivalent of two cups of coffee. Caffeine is available in various forms and amounts. Remember caffeine takes 30 minutes to enter the blood stream.

**Drive Aware and Safely!**

## On the road again and lovin' their commute

Participating in a TMA Group vanpool has many benefits, including saving money and saving time.

Meet the folks that ride The TMA Group vanpool from Franklin to Spring Hill (General Motors), Monday through Friday, in a 7-passenger mini-van. According to Driver Karen Frederick, her van group started with 8 people one year and 9 months ago. We have dwindled to 5 people, including John Russell, Charles Brantley, Shelley Hurt and Brent Henkle and have held at that number for approximately one year now. If you figure the average of 21 ride days per month for the 21 months that we have been riding, and 30 miles per day, that is over 13,000 miles of driving each of us have avoided in our own cars during that timeframe.

Aside from the fluctuation in gasoline prices over the past 21 months and the fuel savings we are able to realize by van pooling, I think we mostly all appreciate the fact that we have access to the TMA service that affords us the ability to minimize the daily wear and tear on our personal vehicles. Also, as we travel against the traffic each day by driving to Spring Hill, we often comment on how grateful we are that we aren't in the heavy line of cars that is heading North. We certainly see the potential for many, many additional TMA riders in those autos that contain a single person. They are missing a good thing!"

Shelley Hurt adds this perspective: "Riding in a vanpool can fill both economical and personal needs. I joined the vanpool initially for the positive economical and beneficial environmental effects it offered. It was not until later that I was forced to "turn in my keys" because of an eye disease. This life change was a bit easier because I already was part of a van full of co-workers that had become my friends."



## Important TMA Van Matters

### VANPOOL TIPS

Recently, The TMA Group's vanpool program has seen tremendous growth. With more than 345 daily commuters taking advantage of the financial and personal benefits the program offers, it is more important than ever that we work in concert to keep The TMA vanpool experience reliable, efficient, and enjoyable for all. Whether you are new to the program or a veteran, here are a

few simple tips:

- 1) **Make timely fare payments.** All fare payments must be post-marked by the 10th of the month.
- 2) **Make timely fuel payments.** Any fuel bill 30 days past due is subject to cancellation of card.
- 3) **Keep in touch.** Communication is the key. Don't leave your fellow van members guessing about your

plans. Also, keep your contact information up-to-date.

- 4) **It's your seat; use it!** A healthy vanpool is a full vanpool.
- 5) **Strive to arrive...early.** Whether you are a driver or a rider, everyone is depending on you to be on time!
- 6) **Lend a hand where you can.** There's no "I" in vanpool. The success of each TMA van is a group effort!

## Vanpool Vacancies



**LIVE IN SPRING HILL/THOMPSON STATION  
AND WORK IN DOWNTOWN NASHVILLE?**

**LIVE IN COLUMBIA AND WORK IN DOWNTOWN NASHVILLE**

**THE TMA GROUP WANTS TO START A VANPOOL IN THESE  
AREAS — CALL MIMI FOR DETAILS**

*If you have vacant seats on your van contact MiMi Lee at  
615-628-0261 or [mimi@tmagroup.org](mailto:mimi@tmagroup.org)*

Our latest information shows seats available on the following vans:

**Cool Springs to Nashville**

Time: 7:30 am—4:00 pm

Call: Raouf Makram (615) 313-4873

**Dickson to Nashville**

Time: 7:30 am—4:00 pm

Call: Vicky Rowland (615) 401-4234

### VAN MAINTENANCE

It is very important that all vans have an oil change as follows:

- ◆ 2006 vans every 5,000 miles
- ◆ All other vans every 3,000 miles

