



from the Office of Research Services

News: To Use!



May 1998, Issue No. 11

IN THIS ISSUE:

- [Employee Parking Questionnaires](#)
- [Mail Services Branch NEWS](#)
- [Medical Arts & Photography Shopping](#)
- [Farewell ICD, Hello IC](#)
- [Parking Decals](#)
- [Division of Public Safety NEWS](#)
- [Travel NEWS](#)
- [Division of Safety Online](#)
- [Attention Motorcyclist](#)
- [FAX us a Line](#)

Employee Parking Questionnaires:

Results and Future Plans

The Office of Research Services has completed the tabulation and analysis of the parking questionnaire results. We have summarized the results and outlined our proposals for the next steps in the campus transportation and parking management strategy. We would also like to use this opportunity to promote commuting alternatives by providing you with comprehensive transportation information. You can find more information on many of the parking and transportation subjects in this article on the Internet at www.nih.gov/od/ors/parking/parking.htm

Employee Demographics

We received a total of 1,950 responses to the questionnaire. That number represents 10% of the campus population and 5% at the leased facilities in Bethesda and Rockville. Respondents were proportionally distributed through the 24 ICs, the various series and grades, and the different buildings. The majority (64%) of the respondents reside in Montgomery County; 7% in Prince George's County; 6% in the District; 9% in Virginia; 4% each in Frederick and Howard County; and small percentages at greater distances. Approximately 15% of the respondents participate in some form of Alternative Work Schedule (AWS) or telecommuting.

Employee Transportation Statistics

The information about employee arrival and departure times confirms the peak hour traffic counts that we have been conducting on campus since 1992. The peak arrival hour is 8:00-9:00 a.m. (42%), with 32% arriving 7:00-8:00 a.m. The peak departure hour is 5:00-6:00 p.m. (36%), with 25% departing 4:00-5:00 p.m.

The respondents' commuting choices remain similar to previous employee survey findings. On average, 75% drive alone, 12% carpool, 8% use public transportation, 3% walk or bike, and 2% drive to satellite lots or fell into an "other" category. Helicopter?

Of the respondents who have NIH parking permits, 80% are general. Although 56% of the respondents use the NIH shuttle, only a third do so in connection with satellite parking or the Metro. The majority use it to travel between buildings on- and off-campus.

Attendant Assisted Parking

The NIH employees gave their vote of approval to the assisted parking system in place on campus since last Fall. In fact, 57% of the respondents would like to see the system expanded to more campus parking facilities. Some of the questions raised about the system had to do with tipping, damages, security and safety, and the liability of the parking contractor.

Here are some brief answers. While tipping is not encouraged, it is not prohibited in special situations. Colonial Parking is responsible for damage to vehicles left in their care. Security at these facilities has been enhanced by the presence of parking attendants who are on duty until 7:00 p.m., and one attendant who remains until 1:00 a.m.. For more details, visit our website.

NIH Shuttle Buses

Several recommendations were made regarding improvements to the shuttle system, including more direct routes, express shuttles, and increased frequency. As a first step, several suggestions are being implemented immediately. Schedules have been posted at the bus stops, and plans are in place to improve driver courtesy. All shuttle schedules are on our website.

A rider survey is being developed to better evaluate the points of origin and destination of shuttle riders. This will then allow us to proceed with necessary route modifications and schedule enhancements.

Express Buses



Although 20% of the respondents expressed interest in express buses to the campus, no clear route patterns emerged. Currently, there are two express buses to the NIH campus: the Ride On #70 from Germantown and the Metrobus J9 from Lakeforest Mall in Gaithersburg. Both have travel times of approximately 30 minutes to the Medical Center Metro Station. For more information on this service, please visit our website.

Efforts are nearing fruition on another express bus route from Tyson's Corner Mall in Virginia to Bethesda and the NIH campus. NIH is also working with Montgomery County on a potential route from the eastern part of the County near the intersection of I-95 and

I-495. Details about both routes will be announced as soon as they are available.

Ride Bank/Donor Day

Almost 30% of the respondents expressed interest and willingness to participate in one of these two programs that are currently under consideration. These initiatives could free up several hundred parking spaces on campus on any given day. See the article on page 6 of this newsletter for a description of each program.

Parking Permit Management

Of the parking management alternatives proposed in the questionnaire, the idea of issuing parking permits by lottery resulted in a resounding 88% AGAINST. Moving contractor parking off-campus received a 71% vote of YES. Construction contractor parking has already been moved off-campus to a leased lot.

Finally, the suggestion of issuing different off-campus parking permits was well received by the vast majority of the respondents. It appears that this is the only way to clearly identify and assess the impact to campus parking by visiting off-campus employees. Therefore, new permits will be issued for all NIH employees who work in off-campus facilities. Notification letters will be sent out shortly, and the transfer of permits will be conducted at the leased sites to minimize any inconvenience to those employees. They can continue to park in regular employee spaces on campus with the new permits. Use of our extensive shuttle system, however, continues to be encouraged.

Employee Recommendations

The most predominant recommendation by the respondents was the expansion of AWS schedules and telecommuting. Currently, these programs are administered at Branch and Division levels at the discretion of individual supervisors. We will continue to promote these alternatives to NIH and IC management in a broader, more consistent manner, although it is clear that not all jobs are well-suited to these arrangements.

Expanding and increasing TRANSHARE were the next most requested improvements. Recently, TRANSHARE was expanded through legislation that had been proposed by NIH to include fellows, IRTAs and other employee categories. However, increasing the subsidy amount does not appear feasible at this time.

Several recommendations focused on parking policies and enforcement. Monitoring carpool spaces to prevent their misuse was a particular emphasis.

Quality of Life Recommendations

The numerous suggestions we received in this area are being tabulated and evaluated separately. We will communicate those results to you at a later date.

Conclusions

The information and input we received from the questionnaire was extremely useful in assessing and planning future parking and transportation initiatives. In summary, the near future of Transportation Management includes the following steps:

- distribute separate parking permits for off-campus employees to assess impact on campus parking
- assess NIH shuttle routes and schedules: implement changes
- pursue proposed express bus routes ; promote awareness of these services;
- develop implementation strategies for Ride Bank/Donor Day;
- pursue expanded Ridesharing with Navy Medical and Suburban Hospital;
- discuss expansion of AWS and telecommuting with various levels of NIH management;
- investigate expansion of assisted parking at other facilities on campus; and
- consider incentives to increase use of satellite lots.

The current supply of parking spaces on campus is expected to remain constant through the fall of this year. As the Clinical Research Center construction goes into full gear later this year and other scheduled projects continue to take their toll on our parking lots, we will be faced with a further shortage of available spaces. No single step of those outlined above can solve the problem. However, as part of a comprehensive, coordinated plan, each initiative can contribute to managing parking demand by maximizing parking capacity as well as offering feasible and convenient transportation alternatives. Additional short-term solutions are also being investigated to address specific shortages during construction.

Once again, we would like to thank all those who provided us with valuable input on our parking and transportation initiatives. We will continue to update you on our progress with each plan. Please check our website for more detailed information as well as updates:

<http://www.nih.gov/od/ors/parking/parking.htm>

Information
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Mail Services Branch NEWS



Employee Change of Address: Important in Prevention of

"Addressee Unknown" Syndrome

Mail is sometimes delivered to a mail stop with a proper address for an employee, but he or she is no longer there. This is not considered misdirected or mis-sent mail. It is mail that was sent by someone who does not have the employee's current address. When it is returned to MSB, every effort is made to locate and forward mail to NIH employees. A large volume of this mail is returned to sender unnecessarily.

Normally it takes MSB employees an average of three minutes to perform directory service on a single piece of mail. That process is dependent upon whether or not the NIH locator database, telephone directory, and/or mail stop listings are up to date.

It is very important for NIH employees whose status is changing to complete and submit **NIH Form 433, "Request to Change NIH Directory Information."** Doing this enables MSB to expeditiously identify and forward mail within a reasonable time period. Failure to do so can and does result in mail not reaching the addressee.

In addition to submitting NIH Form 433, it is extremely important for employees to notify all known correspondents of any new mailing address to expedite future mail delivery.

More Mail for Your Money

Mail is something we all take for granted—until there's a glitch and we are reminded of how much we rely on mail in our personal lives and in our business environment. The ORS Division of Support Services, Mail Services Branch is glad to work with every customer to provide the best mail service at the lowest price.

Every day the MSB moves a mountain of mail: 30,000 pieces of mail to 21,000 customers at 900 different mail stops! The MSB Customer Service Team, all of whom are experienced mail technicians, can provide guidance on the simplest to the most complex mail project with the objective of getting your mail delivered in the required time frame.

Bulk and other special mailings are ideal for a consultation with MSB staff. Be aware that NIH ICs frequently use contractors to assist with bulk mailing projects, and contractors generally mark mail Priority or First Class regardless of urgency. In many cases the mail can be sent at the Standard or Special Standard rate and still reach its destination on time.

Using Standard or Special Standard rates is significantly less expensive than Priority or First Class. For example, a large mail project sent at the Priority rate for \$100,000 could be mailed at the Standard rate instead for approximately \$75,000. And if that mailing qualified for the Special Standard rate it would cost approximately \$51,000— thousands of dollars in savings on a single mailing!

Another cost saving tip is to avoid using envelopes or labels preprinted with Priority or First Class designations, unless the mailing is time-critical. Be careful with preprinted envelopes. Do not use a preprinted First Class envelope just because it is convenient. Any piece of mail with this preprinted endorsement must be sent at that rate. Therefore, a one ounce letter mailed in a preprinted Priority envelope will cost \$3.00, but the same letter mailed without the endorsement will only cost \$.32.

Additional cost savings can be gained by consolidating mail going to the same address, which always costs less than pieces sent individually.

The next time you are planning a large mail project, make sure you get more mail for your money: consult the Mail Services Branch Customer Service Team before you get started. Let them guide you to quality mail service at the best price.

Information

Mail Services Branch Customer Service Team: 6-3586

Medical Arts & Photography: Change to One-Stop Shopping

Technology has an affect on every area of work, it seems, even the work of art and photography. With technological improvements, lines between different kinds of jobs became blurred and duties overlapped. Therefore, the Medical Arts & Photography Branch (**MAPB**), decided to make changes that make sense for **MAPB** staff as well as their customers.

MAPB staff designs visual arts such as posters and slides, and they provide video and photography services. The department is located in the B2L area of the Clinical Center. Before the recent changes that are outlined below, a customer would have had to visit three separate offices to handle assignments involving slides, videotape, and a poster. Now, with the new organization of **MAPB**, it's one-stop shopping!

Reception and pick-up for all medical arts and photography services have been centralized in one convenient and time-saving location.

Changes as of May 1:

- Routine jobs such as photo or slide reproduction, poster titles, and videotape copies will be received and coordinated by a centralized professional staff member.
- Customers will receive a copy of their request before they leave the MAPB reception area.
- Completed jobs will be stored in one location until customers pick them up.
- **New Hours for central reception:**

Monday through Friday
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Completed jobs can be picked up
until 5:15 p.m.

What will not change:

- Appointment scheduling—appointments will still be scheduled by appropriate MAPB staff.
- Phone numbers
- Jobs sent over the Internet
- Drop-off box located in 31/3B23

Information
MAPB Staff 6-3221

Farewell ICD, Hello IC

Technology strikes again! Since the establishment of the Center for Information Technology, there are no longer any divisions that report directly to the NIH Director. **Thus, the term `ICD' became obsolete.**

Please use the acronym `IC' as the official NIH organizational term to refer to all research institutes, the National Library of Medicine, and the centers that report directly to the Director of NIH.

More News for You to Use:

Visit the ORS Website

Although the **ORS** website address has long been included on the last page of News: to Use!, Internet use has increased so dramatically in the past year that a reminder is in order.

The **ORS** website contains information about a wide range of subjects, including construction project updates. On page 8 of this newsletter, there is an article highlighting some publications that can be found by clicking on "Division of Safety," which is listed with other **ORS** divisions under Organizational Information on the **ORS** home page.

The other prominent section is Service Information, which includes such topics as biomedical engineering resources, the apprenticeship program, telecommunications, the NIH Library, and lots more, including **News: to Use!** issues.

Information: www.nih.gov/od/ors

Tree Removal has Happy Ending

Despite some controversy, a very old tree had to be removed for a greater good, namely, the construction of the new Clinical Research Center. The tree, which was found to be 180-190 years old rather than the often-reported 300, was removed, enabling construction to proceed efficiently on a building where scientific and medical research will contribute to future generations' improved quality of life and health.

The tree came to a dignified end after all. One cross-sectional piece is being preserved properly and saved for a future display. The Navy took the rest of the mighty oak to the Charleston Navy Yard where it will be used to refurbish the USS Constitution. Another mature white oak tree was removed as well, and it will be used by the National Park Service to refurbish an 1820 landmark—the Pierce Mill—located in Rock Creek Park.

Division of Public Safety



ANNOUNCEMENT

Rear Window Decals No Longer Required

Additional Information Provided for Motorcycle and Bicycle Use

Effective immediately, the Division of Public Safety (DPS) is implementing a change in the NIH Parking permit system. The issuance of the rear window decal is being discontinued. Therefore, the parking permit will consist of the front mirror hanger only.

This change has been made to further streamline the operations of the Employee Transportation Services Office (Parking Office) in DPS and increase customer service and satisfaction.

Expiration dates will still be based on the employee's last name and are shown on the parking permit. The window hanger must be visible through the front windshield.

Fines: Those vehicles parked in employee parking lots and not displaying a valid hanger or authorized temporary dashboard permit may be issued a traffic ticket that has a \$30.00 fine.

To obtain a parking permit, employees are reminded that they must present a valid NIH identification card, a current state driver's license, and a vehicle registration card for up to three vehicles.

Note: All previously issued rear window decals can be removed from your vehicles immediately.

Each Employee Can Still Register up to Three Vehicles

Employees can continue to register up to three vehicles, but will receive only one hanger that can be switched between each of their registered vehicles.

Rental and Borrowed Vehicles do not Require Registration

Employees will no longer need to register a rental or borrowed car for occasional, short-term use. They only need to remember to transfer the hanger to that vehicle. This will reduce the number of trips employees must make to the Parking Office for temporary parking permits. As a result, employees should notice shorter lines and decreased waiting times.

Reminder: May Parking Permit Renewal and TRANSHARE Renewal

May is the month for renewal of GENERAL Parking Permits for individuals whose last names begin with H, I, and J, and TRANSHARE renewal.

Motorcycle Information:

Improved weather brings more motorcycles to the NIH campus. Employee parking for these vehicles is authorized only in spaces designated for motorcycle parking. Eighteen additional spaces have recently been established in the multi-level parking garage #8 (MLP-8), located at the intersection of convent Drive and Lincoln Drive. Motorcycles do not need to have a parking permit affixed to them. For more information on the exact locations of the additional motorcycle spaces, see the back page of this newsletter.

Bicycle Information:

Employees are reminded that user guidelines indicate that both the bicycle racks and lockers are available on a first come, first served basis. Cyclists must provide their own lock and remove that lock at the end of each day. The bicycle racks and lockers are not to be used as a storage facility. When using the racks, it is recommended that a combination of two types of locks be used to provide greater security.

Bicycles should be registered with the NIH Police. In this way, a record can be established for the bike. Should it ever be stolen and later recovered, the records can be matched and the bike returned to the correct owner. For information on registering your bicycle, please contact the NIH Police Branch non-emergency number at 6-5685, or report to the Police Desk in Building 31, Room B3B17 between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m..

Division of Public Safety NEWS



www.nih.gov/od/ors/parking/parking.htm

Bicycle Thief Apprehended



On Monday, March 23, NIH Sgt. Lawrence Brown was on patrol and noticed a suspicious activity near Building 5. A man carrying large bolt cutters was dismantling a bicycle. Despite the man's protests that it was his own bike and that he had forgotten the key to his lock, Sgt. Brown persisted in questioning him. In the meantime, the true owner of the bicycle came out of the building and identified himself to Sgt. Brown.

The suspect, who had no affiliation with NIH, spent the night in a Montgomery County detention center and was in court the next morning where he was charged with this crime.

Bicycle theft is a big business in Washington, which has a thriving black market in bikes and bike parts. Theft increases in the spring when more people ride their bikes.

Some tips from the Department of Public Safety:

- U-shaped locks cause thieves more difficulty than cable locks.
- Two locks are better than one; you can lock both tires.

Information: Captain Liston 6-6186

Consider Express Bus Service

Two express bus services have been easing the commute for many NIH employees. Ride-On's #70 bus comes from the Germantown Milestone Park and Ride Lot. Metrobus added a J-9 bus route that originates at the Lakeforest Mall Park and Ride Lot.

Both of these express buses serve the National Naval Medical Center, NIH, and Suburban Hospital. Passengers enjoy a worry-free trip while the buses breeze along using the new HOV lanes on I-270. The fare is \$1.10 each way on both routes. Service is available during morning and evening rush hours. Other express bus routes are being considered.

There is ample free parking at both Park and Ride lots. NIH employees who take advantage of public transportation such as this may also participate in the NIH TRANSHARE program, which provides up to \$44 per month in commuting subsidy.

All current schedules are posted on the website:

www.nih.gov/od/ors/parking/parking.htm

Satellite Parking Solutions

Not everyone works 9-5 or even 7-3. If you have an unusual schedule, you may not have an easy time parking. There is a solution: satellite parking lots. The NIH leases parking spaces at the following locations that are served by our free, convenient shuttle bus service:

- Mid-Pike Plaza Commuter Lot in Rockville— 425 spaces

- Garage 57 in Bethesda—130 spaces

NIH parking permits must be displayed for vehicles in our spaces at both of these facilities. Call the ETSO for more information.

Ride Bank and Donor Day:

Possibilities for Traffic Reduction

The NIH offers as many variations on a theme as possible. The theme is reducing traffic and vehicles on campus. There are two new programs currently under consideration due to high levels of interest expressed in the Employee Parking Questionnaire.

RIDE BANK is a volunteer program that would allow NIH'ers who drive alone or in a small carpool to provide rides to others on a temporary basis. Registered drivers and passengers would meet at prearranged locations in their communities and on campus.

DONOR DAY is a parking program that would guarantee an employee a parking space four out of five days per week in exchange for that employee's agreement to not drive to work one day per week.

As soon as decisions are made about these programs, they will be announced.

Interested in Sharing a Ride?

Have you considered carpooling or vanpooling? Call the ETSO for ridematching information! The application is short and simple.

Information: Tom Hayden
Employee Transportation Services Office (ETSO) 2-RIDE (7433)



Travel NEWS



Administrative Updates:

Tim Tosten is new Project Officer

Project Officer responsibilities for the NIH Federal Travel Management Center contract have been shifted from the ORS Executive Office to the ORS Division of Support Services (DSS). Questions or comments regarding Ober's services should now be brought to Tim Tosten, the new Project Officer, who urges people to contact him with any problems that may arise.

Ober Contract Extended

Due to a backlog of Federal Travel Management Center (FTMC) contract awards, the GSA has again

extended Ober's contract with NIH until July 31, 1998.

Ober Invoices: Outstanding in a Bad Way

Currently, thousands of dollars are owed to Ober for services rendered through the purchase order mechanism. The new Project Officer, Tim Tosten, recently conducted a review of outstanding Ober invoices—some dating as far back as January, 1997. He determined that a number of invoices are not being properly received. This causes the NIH to pay significant interest penalties.

The following steps should be taken to correct some common problems associated with Ober invoices:

Receiving must be entered in the ADB within 7 days of receiving the invoice from Ober, not after the meeting/conference has been completed. Upon receipt of lost or unused tickets, credits from Ober will be deposited back to the IC CAN identified on the purchase order.

Receiving should be entered in the ADB as a dollar amount and not by quantity of tickets purchased.

A number of old purchase orders remain open in the ADB with unused funds obligated for travel. ICs should review their purchase orders and close them if appropriate. There are also a number of invoices that need to be paid from purchase orders that have been purged. It is the IC's responsibility to provide Ober with a new purchase order number or to obtain a covering order from OPM.

GSA Federal Travel Regs are Online

Now available on the Internet: the GSA Federal Travel Regulations, with all Amendments. Go to www.policyworks.gov/org/main/mt/homepage/mtt/fttr/fttrhp.shtml

Ober Phone Traffic

ORS has recently received a number of complaints about the service provided by Ober United Travel, NIH's travel management contractor.

There have been major problems with Ober's phone systems. In Building 31, a fuse recently blew and knocked out Ober's Call Management System (CMS). AT&T repaired it and service returned to normal. There have been problems with their CMS in Executive Plaza as well, where Ober handles all the outside meeting travel. Travelers calling this location listened to the phone ringing continuously without being answered. This should never occur, because all calls are automatically answered by the CMS and forwarded to an agent. The Telecommunications Branch is in the process of resolving all of the CMS problems.

Due to meeting scheduling beyond Ober's control, approximately one quarter of their annual business is generated in four intense 2-4 week spurts during the year. In order to better serve you during these peaks, Ober recommends the following actions:

- ICs should communicate to Ober as much information about the meeting roster as possible, including attendees' phone numbers or contact points. Ober can call the participants and speak to them directly about their travel needs.

- ICs should provide as much information to their travelers as possible, including meeting codes, meeting dates, and authorization for travel.
- Non-government travelers should utilize the Fast-Res Fax Form instead of telephoning. Ober can customize the forms for each IC. Travelers need to include information such as meeting codes and dates, sponsoring IC, dates of travel, arrival and departure cities, and their name, address, and phone number.

IC meeting coordinators: do not hesitate to call Ober—or Tim Tosten, the new NIH Project Officer for



the Ober contract—for assistance with any aspect of the travel reservations process.

Information: Tim Tosten, Project Officer: 6-6121 TTY: 5-1908
e-mail: DSSCustomerService@ors.od.nih.gov Fax: 2-1364 Pager: 1-800-913-1264

Attention Motorcyclists

In response to requests for more motorcycle spaces, DPS surveyed garages MLP-6 and MLP-8 and were able to create 18 new motorcycle spaces without impacting vehicle parking. Signs declaring Motorcycle Parking Only are in the following locations:

MLP-6: one space on the top level, SE corner, adjacent to the stairwell



MLP-8:

- Level 3—five spaces
one next to parking attendant booth
two each at SW and SE corners
- Level 4—six spaces
two each at NW, SW, SE corners
- Level 5—six spaces
two each at NW, NE, SE corners

Information
Tom Hayden 2-RIDE (7433)

Division of Safety Online

Useful information for NIH employees is available on the Division of Safety website. One of the most popular selections is the NIH Guide to Waste Disposal. More commonly known as the Waste Calendar, it contains information for the safe management of a variety of waste: chemical, radiological, medical pathological, and general waste. It also has information about the NIH recycling program. Go to www.nih.gov/od/ors/ds. When you arrive, click on Waste Calendar.

The website contains other publications, such as 'Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories' and the NIH 'Chemical Hygiene Plan and Safe Handling of Cytotoxic Drugs.' To access publications, click on Pubs/Guidance under the Section called Frequently Used Services.

www.nih.gov/od/ors/ds

Mission:**Communications**

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform and communicate with the entire NIH community about ORS projects, policy changes and initiatives that are of immediate practical interest, along with some items that might be filed away for future use. The Office of Research Services directly affects you and the place where you spend your whole day—your office, your building, your entire organization. Therefore, your satisfaction is our utmost concern. Please let us hear your ideas and comments.

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