



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
1401 EAST BROAD STREET
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23219 2000

David S. Ekern, P.E.
COMMISSIONER

December 8, 2006

Dear VDOT Employees:

On January 1, 2007, Executive Order 41 (2006) will go into effect, banning smoking in state offices and vehicles. The Governor recently signed this Order as a step to improve employee health, minimize health risks in the workplace, and preserve the value of state assets.

Since 2000, VDOT has banned smoking in all offices. This ban will continue. On January 1st, smoking will no longer be permitted in any vehicle owned or paid for by the state. This includes all equipment such as tractors and backhoes, as well as, vehicles that are leased or rented with state funds. All drivers and passengers, including consultants and contractors who use state-owned or leased vehicles, must comply.

As an agency and individually, we must fully support and comply with Executive Order 41 (2006). For some, this may be a difficult challenge. Employees who smoke and have a desire to quit have access to multiple resources through the Commonwealth's Wellness Program. One resource is the "*Break Free From Tobacco*" program which provides an incentive kit and a supply of patches or gum among other support services. This program is designed for employees to eliminate tobacco use on ones' own schedule. There have been many success stories from VDOT employees who completed this program, changed their health forever, and saved an estimated \$1,000 or more a year by not purchasing tobacco related products.

Everyone can learn more about improving their overall health and fitness through the Commonwealth's Wellness Program and the Healthy Virginian's campaign. For further details, please contact your local VDOT Wellness Coordinator or visit the CommonHealth website at <http://www.commonhealthva.com/commonhealth/>. For employees on a path to a healthier lifestyle, I wish you great success and I encourage your peers to support you in making those changes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Meredith Baker".

Meredith A. Baker
Chief of Organizational Development