

### How does E-ZPass work?

- Motorists pay tolls without having to stop at toll booths or dig for change to pay their toll. Some facilities allow motorists to travel highway speeds as they pass under toll gantries. Electronic tolling equipment mounted on the gantries reads the E-ZPass transponder and automatically deducts the amount from the motorist's pre-paid E-ZPass account. This method of tolling is convenient and saves time because motorists do not have to slow down to pay cash.

### Who runs the E-ZPass program?

- VDOT runs E-ZPass Virginia for toll facilities in the commonwealth. VDOT buys the transponders and distributes them to customers. The transponders remain the property of VDOT. Customers return them after their account is closed or the transponder is replaced after approximately ten years of use. VDOT also manages the back office operations located in Clifton Forge where customer data is stored and calls to the toll free number are routed; collects revenues from the E-ZPass system and sends payment to toll facilities; operates the customer service center and manages account sign-ups and other customer service functions; manages the marketing and promotion of E-ZPass statewide and implements all program policy decisions.

### What is the toll facility's role?

- They have a contract with VDOT to use E-ZPass to collect tolls. The toll facility sets toll rates and collects violations; offers discounts and other specials; builds, operates and maintains toll collection equipment; markets and promotes toll facilities and the use of E-ZPass; and manages and operates all aspects of other tolling, such as video tolling and cash collections.

### What is changing about the E-ZPass program?

- The E-ZPass program in Virginia will double over the next several years with new toll facilities opening in Northern Virginia and the Hampton Roads. As the E-ZPass program grows, VDOT's costs for maintaining and operating the program will increase, thus the need for a new fee structure.

- These new toll facilities will not have toll booths to collect cash. The main method for toll collection will be electronically through E-ZPass, creating a steep demand for new transponders.
- The Jordan Bridge in Hampton Roads will open this summer. The 495 Express Lanes in Northern Virginia will open by the end of the year. Vehicles with three or more people can ride the Express Lanes for free if they have a Flex transponder. Other toll facilities that will open in the years ahead are the 95 Express Lanes in Northern Virginia, the Downtown/Midtown Tunnel/ MLK Extension and eventually Route 460 in the Hampton Roads region.

### **Why will costs of operations go up?**

Most of the cost increase will occur in the first few years as VDOT makes a significant investment in program expansion, including:

- Buying nearly one-half million new transponders, including the special Flex transponders, which cost more than the standard transponders
- Upgrading information technology to accommodate the expanded program
- Implementing a retail program, in which transponders can be obtained at various retail outlets such as grocery stores
- Providing service at select DMV locations

### **VDOT was considering a \$1 monthly fee per transponder, what is the final fee structure?**

VDOT reviewed several options, including the \$1 monthly fee. Following a public comment period and careful consideration of citizen input balanced with the need to cover VDOT's rising costs to provide Virginia's E-ZPass program, VDOT developed a final fee structure. Key elements include:

- Current E-ZPass customers will not pay a monthly fee until they need a new transponder or one replaced. The monthly fee will then be 50-cents per standard transponder or \$1 per Flex transponder issued after July 9, 2012.
- New E-ZPass customers will pay a monthly fee per transponder.
- The Flex monthly fee will be waived if the transponder is used exclusively for carpooling on the future 495 Express Lanes and 95 Express Lanes.
- The \$25 security deposit on new transponders will be waived. Users who previously paid the deposit will have the deposit converted to prepaid tolls on their account when

they replace a transponder or customers will get a refund if they close their account and return the transponder.

- \$35 in pre-paid tolls will still be required when obtaining a new transponder.
- Toll facilities will share the costs.
- The new fee structure goes into effect Sept. 1, 2012.
- Flex transponders will be charged the standard transponder rate (50-cents) until January 1, 2013 after the 495 Express Lanes open.

### **What profit, if any, does VDOT make from the fees?**

- VDOT does not make a profit. The fee would generate the funds needed to support expanded operations. The fee would also help control costs and manage the selection and demand for transponders. The fee would be regularly evaluated to ensure the charge is generating just enough revenue to maintain and operate the program without generating excess revenues above expenses.

### **Do other states charge fees?**

- 14 of the 24 E-ZPass participating toll agencies currently charge fees.

### **I am an existing E-ZPass customer. How will the new fee structure impact me?**

- If you have an open account as of July 9, 2012, you will not be charged a monthly fee for your existing standard transponder. If you need to replace an existing standard transponder or add a new one to your account, you will be charged with a 50-cent monthly fee per new standard transponder or \$1 monthly fee per new Flex transponder. The Flex fee is waived when carpooling on the future 495 and 95 Express Lanes. The new fee structure goes into effect Sept. 1, 2012 and will apply to new or replacement transponders obtained after July 9.
- Flex transponders will be charged the standard transponder rate (50-cents) until January 1, 2013 after the 495 Express Lanes open.

### **I am a new E-ZPass customer. How will the new fee structure impact me?**

- If you open an account after July 9, 2012, you will be charged a 50-cent monthly fee for a standard transponder or \$1 monthly fee for a new Flex transponder. The Flex fee is waived when used exclusively for carpooling on the future 495 and 95 Express Lanes.

- Flex transponders will be charged the standard transponder rate (50-cents) until January 1, 2013 after the 495 Express Lanes open.

#### **What is a Flex transponder?**

- Motorists planning to carpool in the 495 Express Lanes, scheduled to open by the end of the year, will need to obtain an “E-ZPass Flex” transponder, which will allow them to ride the Express Lanes for free. The Flex transponder is switched to the “HOV ON” position when three or more persons are carpooling. The Flex will also be needed when riding on the future 95 Express Lanes as a carpooler. The Flex transponder works just like a regular E-ZPass transponder on all other E-ZPass facilities, regardless of switch position.

#### **I plan to carpool on the future 495 Express Lanes and 95 Express Lanes. Will I have to pay a monthly fee for my new Flex transponder?**

- The fee is waived during the months you use your Flex transponder exclusively for HOV-3 on the Express Lanes. You will be charged a fee during the months you use the Flex on another toll facility or in the non-HOV mode on the Express Lanes or if the transponder is unused.

#### **Why is the monthly fee for the Flex more than the standard transponder?**

- The Flex is more complex with a switch to select between the non-HOV mode and the HOV mode. The Flex costs VDOT twice as much as the standard transponder and has a shorter life, thus the higher monthly fee. Additional administrative costs will also be incurred to support customers with their Flex usage on Express Lanes facilities.

#### **When can I obtain a Flex transponder?**

Flex transponders will be available beginning July 10. You can obtain a Flex or standard transponder the following ways:

- Apply online at [www.ezpassva.com](http://www.ezpassva.com)
- Call 877-762-7824
- Visit one of the customer service and DMV locations below:

- Coleman Customer Service Center  
1811 George Washington Memorial Highway  
Gloucester Point, VA 23062  
Hours: Monday 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.  
Tuesday - Wednesday 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.  
Thursday - Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
  
- Northern Virginia Service Center  
610 Herndon Parkway  
Suite 900  
Herndon, VA 20170  
Hours: Monday-Friday 8 a.m. – 7 p.m.
  
- Richmond Area  
175 Wadsworth Drive  
Richmond, VA 23236  
Hours: Monday-Friday 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Standard transponders are also available at

- Chesapeake DMV  
813 Greenbrier Parkway  
Chesapeake, VA 23320  
Hours: Monday-Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
Saturday 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

*Note: Flex transponders will not be available at this DMV*

- Flex and standard transponders will be available at the Tysons Corner DMV beginning July 16 and select retail outlets in Northern Virginia by late July.

**Will I be able to get an E-ZPass at retailers or other locations? What is E-ZPass On-the-Go?**

VDOT will provide E-ZPass On-the-Go at select local retailers in Northern Virginia by late July. The program will work in the following way:

- You will go into a participating store and select either a standard transponder or Flex transponder, which will come in pre-packaged bags.
- You will buy \$35 in prepaid tolls, which come with the transponder.
- The transponder will be fully functional for immediate use. You will be able to use \$15 of the \$35 prepaid tolls. The remaining \$20 balance becomes available upon registering the transponder on-line or by phone.

- VDOT will eventually provide E-ZPass On-the-Go in retail locations in Hampton Roads and Richmond.

**How much do I have to pay to open an E-ZPass account?**

- You pre-pay a minimum of \$35 in tolls for each transponder. Tolls are deducted against the balance. When your balance is down to \$10 per transponder, you're required to make a payment of \$35 per transponder, or your average monthly toll, whichever is higher.

**Do I need a credit card to open an account?**

- No. You can use cash or check. For accounts with five or more transponders, a credit card or direct bank routing is required.

**Is my E-ZPass account information private and secure?**

- Yes. VDOT is committed to protecting your privacy and the security of your account. Please refer to our Privacy Policy and Web Policy statements.

**How do I maintain enough funds in my account?**

- The easiest way to maintain funds in your E-ZPass account is to choose automatic replenishment. When the account balance reaches the set low balance level, the account will replenish automatically.

**Can I use my E-ZPass transponder other states?**

Yes, in all states that accept E-ZPass They are Delaware, Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

E-ZPass can also be used at all toll facilities in Virginia:

- Dulles Toll Road
- Dulles Greenway
- Downtown Expressway, Powhite Parkway and the Boulevard Bridge in Richmond region
- Powhite Parkway Extension in Chesterfield County
- Pocahontas Parkway in Richmond region

- Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel
- George P. Coleman Bridge in Hampton Roads region
- Chesapeake Expressway
- Jordan Bridge, Hampton Roads region (beginning in summer 2012)
- Downtown/Midtown/MLK Extension, Portsmouth/Norfolk (January 2014)
- 495 Express Lanes (Dec. 2012)
- 95 Express Lanes (Open date TBD)

### **If my car is not registered in Virginia do I need to get my transponder in Virginia or in the state where my automobile is registered?**

- Your car doesn't have to be registered in Virginia to acquire a transponder from Virginia. It is highly recommended that you open accounts in the state where you have the most usage.

### **If my car is registered in another state, do I have to get a transponder?**

- If you plan to use a toll road in Virginia, and would like the added convenience of having the tolls deducted from a pre-paid account, a transponder is needed, even if the car is registered in another state.

### **Why do I have to have an additional credit card to secure my account?**

- You need a back up credit card on the account if they are using automatic replenishment. This is to provide a back-up in case the initial means of payment fails. Having a second card on file (that is not linked to the initial form of payment) will minimize any interruptions in the processing replenishments to the account.

### **Can I obtain a transponder for someone else?**

- Yes, you can open an account and add pre-paid tolls for someone else. The patron account information needs to correspond to the person actually using the transponder.

### **How do out of state vehicles get tolled?**

- All states currently utilizing E-ZPass for automated toll collection have established reciprocity agreements with Virginia. These agreements allow Virginia to collect from out of state E-ZPass customers; and have funds due to other states for Virginia E-ZPass customers transferred to other states on a set schedule.

### **Do I need to be a Virginia Resident to receive a Virginia EZ-Pass Transponder?**

- No, but it is highly recommended that you open accounts in the state where they have the most usage.