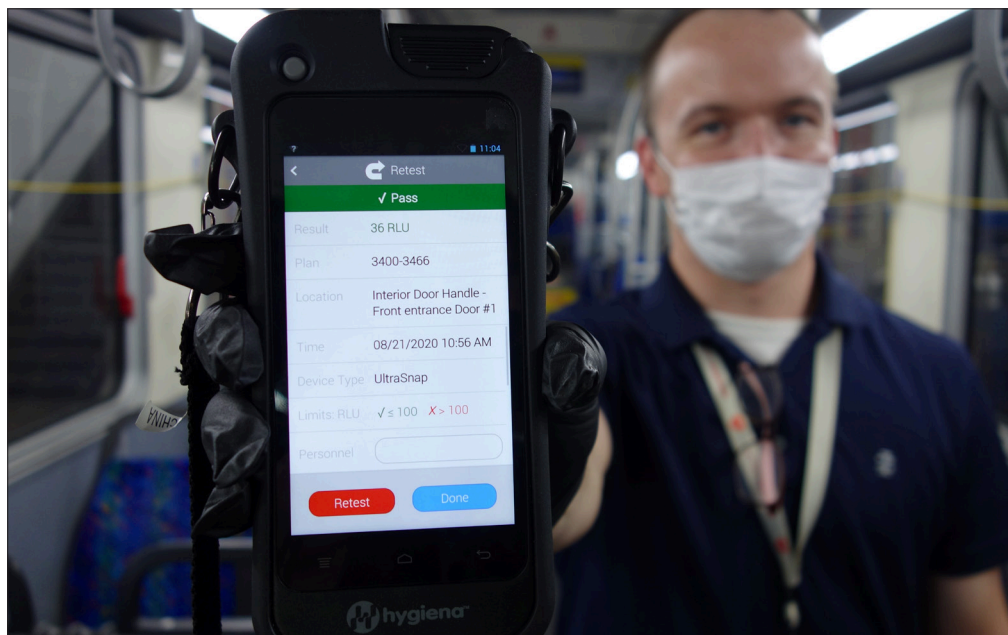


# INSIGHTS

Metro Transit's weekly employee newsletter

August 28, 2020



Project Manager **Anthony Zessman** displays a surface tester that Bus Maintenance is using to measure vehicle cleanliness and help improve cleaning methods. After high-touch areas have been disinfected with wipes or mist, staff swab and place samples into this handheld device that detects the presence of organic matter in minutes. Buses will be randomly tested at every garage through September to create a baseline for cleanliness and help improve cleaning strategies.

## Annual Bus Rodeo will go on in September

Metro Transit's annual Bus Rodeo will go on in September with precautions in place.

The annual competition tests operators' driving skills through a series of exercises set up in the Como Avenue parking lot at the State Fairgrounds (1622 Como Ave.). The competition also includes a customer service test and uniform inspection.

This year, the competition will be held on the following dates:

- Wednesday, Sept. 16, 8:30 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.
- Thursday, Sept. 17, 8:30 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.
- Friday, Sept. 18, 8:30 a.m. to noon
- Saturday, Sept. 19, 8:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

Operators will complete the course in the order that they arrive. There are no practice dates this year.

All operators and judges will be required to wear a face covering and maintain separation between themselves and others while on the course.

Top finishers from each garage will be recognized, along with a Rookie of the Year. Participants will receive a baseball cap.

For more information, see a garage coordinator. To learn more about service as a judge, contact Safety Specialist **Bobby Redd**.

## Thank you for being a steady presence in an unsteady time

From General Manager  
Wes Kooistra



August and September are usually our busiest and most festive months, with large crowds filing into the Minnesota State Fairgrounds and several stadiums situated along our light rail lines. In years past, overlapping events have led to single-day ridership records.

This year, the world around us looks very different.

Here and across the country, there is growing tension over police conduct, racism, inadequate housing and a troubled economy. Our community is seeing far too many homicides, including one that occurred on Wednesday near a Minneapolis transit center. On several recent occasions, our services have been detoured by police activity and road closures.

Against this unnerving backdrop, the COVID-19 pandemic is as present and as powerful as ever, claiming 1,800 Minnesotans and infecting nearly 71,000 others, including more than 70 of our co-workers.

Especially for those who are working in our garages and in the community, the risks have been and continue to be ever-present. For parents, the fall brings another weighty challenge: the need to balance the demands of work and home as students attend classes online.

These are incredibly difficult and stressful conditions to operate under, and I know they can be particularly hard for the frontline staff who cannot work from home and whose work brings them closest to these issues.

Many of us have also dedicated our lives to bringing our community together, and are left wondering where we go from here.

I want to acknowledge these turbulent times and offer my sincere appreciation

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for the efforts that are being made to continue serving our community despite all the obstacles in our way. I have been and continue to be inspired by your work.

I also want to remind you that none of us are in this alone.

As an organization, we are committed to providing access to mental health resources, including free counseling, and to putting the safety of our staff at the center of every decision we make.

I encourage you to learn more about available supports by speaking with a manger or supervisor, Fit For Life Champion, or Peer Support member. Our Equity & Inclusion team members are also tremendous resources.

Things are not what they used to be and, frankly, they may never be again.

But one thing has remained constant: Our capacity to look forward, and to look out for each other. Thank you for providing that steady presence at a time when it is most in need.

## Flu shot clinics scheduled for late September

During the last two weeks of September, flu shot clinics will be available at many Met Council sites. Schedules will be posted at work sites. On-site employees do not need to schedule an appointment; simply stop by during a scheduled time.

Employees who are working from home should not drive to on-site flu clinics. Instead, please schedule an appointment at either of the Council's Well@Work clinics or your regular clinic. Convenience clinics around the metro area are also an option for free flu shots for anyone enrolled in a medical plan.

Please contact [Benefits@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:Benefits@metc.state.mn.us) if you have any questions.

### Reminder: Complete Health Assessment, earn \$40 gift card

Employees who have HealthPartners medical or dental coverage through the Met Council can earn a \$40 gift card by completing their Health Assessment by the end of the month. To complete the assessment, visit [healthpartners.com/wellbeing](https://healthpartners.com/wellbeing) and login with your HealthPartners account. For assistance, call 800-311-1052.

CUSTOMERS TELL US HOW WE'RE DOING

### "He is a wonderful driver"

South Operator **Kent Knutson** recently received the following commendation from a customer who appreciates his dedication to pandemic safety.

"He is a wonderful driver. I enjoyed riding with him on the Route 6 and really appreciated how he followed the COVID-19 policy for passenger capacity."

– David

## COVID-19 cases to be reported weekly, by work location

Beginning this week, employees can find more information about COVID-19 cases at the workplace. Each Friday, the Insights e-mail newsletter will include a link to a one-page document with the number of new cases reported during a one-week period ending the Tuesday of that week at each work location. The cumulative number of cases and the number of employees who tested positive for COVID-19 and have returned to work will also be shared. This information will also be prominently posted at work sites, and is being shared in this week's print edition to demonstrate what will be available moving forward. Employees who cannot locate this information are encouraged to speak to a manager or supervisor.

Location	New cases 8/18-8/25	Cumulative cases	Returned to work
East Metro	0	7	6
Nicollet	0	17	17
Heywood	1	13	12
South	1	12	12
Ruter	1	7	4
Northstar	0	0	0
Green Line OMF	0	2	0
Blue Line OMF	2	5	1
Rail Support Facility	0	0	0
Transfer Road	0	2	1
Overhaul Base	0	1	1
MTPD	1	7	5
Heywood Office	0	2	1
Instruction Center	0	1	0
Transit Control Center	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>60</b>



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