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San Diego – The Metropolitan Transit System just unleashed a new tool in the fight against coronavirus – disinfecting fog. Additionally, the agency is now requiring daily temperature checks for hundreds of bus and Trolley operators, and is now offering one-way fares on its mobile ticketing app – Compass Cloud.

“We will continue adopting measures to improve protections for our employees, essential workers, and riders taking essential trips,” said Paul Jablonski, MTS chief executive officer. “Strict sanitizing protocols and early detection for this virus are key to slowing the spread. We will keep improving on both these fronts.”

Disinfecting Fog ([broll video demo w/MTS interview](#)): MTS has added a new decontamination protocol to its regular cleaning schedule. In addition to daily cleaning with disinfectants, buses will be fogged with a CDC-approved substance that kills COVID-19 (and other viruses) on contact. The small devices evenly spray a fine mist of chloride dioxide solution throughout each bus’s interior. The fog can decontaminate hard-to-reach locations and fabric seats, leaving more time for professional cleaners to sanitize areas more frequently touched by passengers. It also decontaminates air conditioning filters. The fogging process takes just minutes. All buses will be fogged every other day and more often if necessary after more materials become available. In addition to the daily cleanings, many buses are cleaned during mid-day before returning to service for the evening commute.

Mandatory Temperature Checks ([photo of MTS bus operator temperature check](#)): Taking another step to increase safety of passengers and front line employees, on Wednesday MTS began checking bus and Trolley operator temperatures prior to starting a shift. Fevers are one of the primary symptoms of coronavirus according to the Center for Disease Control

MTS is conducting temperature checks on approximately 500 bus and Trolley operators daily, as well as administrative employees. Temperature stations have been set up at bus divisions on Imperial Avenue, Kearny Mesa and the Mills Building in East Village. Employees with temperatures of 100 degrees or higher will be required to go home.

New One-Way Fares on Compass Cloud: MTS recently instituted rear-door boarding only on buses to help distancing between operators and passengers. This eliminated the option of buying a one-way fare with cash when boarding the bus. Now passengers can use the Compass Cloud mobile ticketing app to purchase one-way fares on both the bus and the Trolley.

Since California’s stay-at-home order was issued in March to slow the spread of coronavirus, MTS has implemented strict sanitizing procedures on all vehicles and stations. Additionally,

strategies have been implemented to help keep passengers and transit operators safe. Highlights include:

Mandatory face coverings:

Beginning Friday, May 1 all passengers will be required to wear face coverings while using the transit system

Rear-door boarding:

Only allow passenger boarding from the rear door on buses to increase distance between passengers and the bus operator

Social distancing:

- Kept service levels at 75 percent even when ridership has declined by 65 percent to help passengers practice social distancing on vehicles
- Increased the distance separating passengers from the bus operator to six feet.
- Posted social distancing messaging on all electronic signage and at Trolley stations

Employee protection:

- Provided every bus and Trolley operator with hand sanitizer, gloves and masks
- For security personnel checking fares on Trolleys, all inspections are done on station platforms instead of onboard Trolleys. Visual inspection of fares is also allowed

Sanitizing efforts:

- All MTS vehicles are cleaned daily, with additional deep cleanings using bleach to disinfect, and other solutions recommended by CDC
- Disinfectant is used to wipe down exposed surfaces nightly
- Posted personal hygiene rules on vehicles
- Established handwashing stations at all Trolley stops
- Increased daily cleanings on the internal and external surfaces of trolleys and at major transit stops

MTS continues to operate about 95 bus routes and three Trolley lines. Frequencies and spans have been modified temporarily due to COVID-19. Updated schedules can be accessed on the MTS website. MTS asks that only essential trips be made on public transit, that people wear face coverings and practice physical distancing at all times.

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