



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS
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PRESS RELEASE

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VRE Takes Additional Steps to Protect Passenger Health and Safety

Commuter rail system employs new cleaning protocol, offers online social-distancing information tool

Alexandria, Va. – The Virginia Railway Express' (VRE) implementation of a new overnight cleaning regimen and webpage detailing train utilization rates will better protect the health and safety of passengers. These steps complement other measures – such as decals on railcar seats and platforms that indicate proper social distancing – undertaken by VRE in recent weeks.

Overnight railcar cleanings now use acidic electrolyzed water, a potent yet nonirritating disinfectant that kills viruses, even those more resilient to disinfection, and bacteria. The hypochlorous acid produced by electrolyzing the water can be 100 times more powerful than the hypochlorite ion in bleach, yet it does not irritate the eyes and skin and does not damage fabric and metal. Hypochlorous acid relies on a process called lysis to kill viruses and bacteria. The acid causes a cell's membrane to rupture, resulting in its death.

VRE has installed equipment allowing crews to create the cleaning solution at its maintenance and storage facilities. This new enhanced cleaning system is environmentally friendly, using only salt, tap water, and electricity. By generating its cleaning solution on site and on demand, VRE eliminates the environmental impact from the distribution and disposal of hazardous conventional chemicals, while creating a healthy indoor environment.

VRE's [Train Utilization Trends](#) webpage has been updated to reflect total seats, maximum capacity to support social distancing, and current daily ridership. This information will serve as a decision-making tool for passengers who want the greatest amount of distancing. VRE also is exploring ways to notify passengers when trains are near or at capacity.

“The safety and health of our passengers, train crews, and staff are paramount,” said VRE Acting CEO Rich Dalton. “The conditions under which we now operate require us to continuously evaluate our processes and make adjustments, no matter how incremental, in order to provide the greatest level of protection possible.”

The 13th largest commuter rail service in the U.S., VRE is a transportation partnership of the Northern Virginia and the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commissions. VRE’s mission is to provide safe, cost effective, accessible, reliable, convenient, and customer responsive commuter-oriented passenger rail service. The 4.5 million rides the railroad provides annually remove some 100 million vehicle miles from Northern Virginia’s interstates. Learn more at www.vre.org.

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