

## Policies regarding Starting up Coaches

Information compiled October 31, 2007

**The Question:** Who starts the coaches? Do drivers start their own or does the Maintenance Staff have them running and warmed up? In both scenario's; how long do you allow for pre-trips?

**Clallam Transit** says... Most of the Port Angeles based buses are started by the Maintenance Worker. In summer or non-winter weather; We try to stay around a 10 minute or so warm up starting just a couple minutes before the operator starts their pre-op. In cooler temps we do use block heaters and our goal is to get air and time it so the windows are clear enough to safely drive. We do not warm the bus to the point of which it is nice and toasty inside or at least I attempt to direct folks in that direction. In one area we have more control, is we have eliminating idling at transfer points and operators are required to shut off vehicles when pulling in on layover and restart. Exceptions: Running late and leaving immediately or in extreme cold conditions.

**Community Transit** says... Drivers start their own coaches unless the temperatures are very low. Maintenance will start a limited number of vehicles during extreme cold weather. The scheduled time for Operators to conduct all pre-operational duties is 15 minutes after check-in. This time includes all administrative updates they are required to perform in dispatch.

**CUBS** says... At CUBS' the transit operators are responsible for starting their own coaches and doing their pre-trip inspections. The drivers have 18 minutes each morning (that is paid) for checking in, filling out their paper work and getting their coaches ready.

**Grays Harbor Transit** says...We have a bus hostler that puts the buses on line for the driver prior to the driver reporting to work. When the driver arrives they start the bus and are given a 10 minute pre trip time. So the bus warm up time is typically 10 to 15 minutes.

**Everett Transit** says...I believe that someone who works for transit operations starts the buses up when the weather is very cold. The fleet department does not start the buses in cold weather, unless the bus will not start on its own. If vehicles are iced up, our bus maintenance defrosts the buses. We allow 10 minutes for pre-trip inspections.

**Intercity Transit** says...[Click here](#) to view our start-up policy

**Island Transit** says...At Island Transit we have a shift that comes in to start the buses before they go out for their driving part of the shift. They have 1 and ½ hours to start 17 buses and make sure that all the lights work. When the bus operator comes in to work we give them 15 minutes to

do the thorough pre-op of their bus. During the cold winter days, we have a maintenance person available here to help if there are buses that will not start etc.

**Kitsap Transit** says...Driver starts their own coach and it warms up as they do their pre-trip

**Mason Transit** says... At MTA the mechanics start earlier than drivers and when the weather requires it, the mechanics start and warm up the buses (cutaways and coaches). We will let them warm just enough to thaw windows and mirrors, etc. then they are shut down. During non-freezing temps the vehicles are started by the operators. We allow 15 minutes for pre-post trip each shift I believe.

**Skagit Transit** says... Operators start the coaches. Operators start their own coaches. We allow 10 minutes for pre-trips.

**Spokane Transit** says...The Operators start them up. From the time they sign-in, the Fixed Route Operators must proceed to their coaches and are supposed to conduct a pre-trip inspection, confirm all lights are working, get the vehicle aired up and pull out of the garage. They then must pull around to the back street and cycle their lift to ensure its operation (they get a total of fifteen minutes).

**Twin Transit** says...At Twin Transit the drivers start and warm up the buses they will be driving for the day. We generally allow 15 minutes for pre-trip and warm up.

**Valley Transit** says... Our Maintenance staff warm-up all the vehicles in the morning. During the day, however, the drivers start their own vehicles. We allow 10 minutes for pre-trip inspections.

**Whatcom Transit** says...The buses at Whatcom Transportation Authority are equipped with fuel-fired coolant heaters (Webasto thermo systems) that are pre-set to start at 4:30 AM. This heating system warms the engine coolant and heater system very quickly and provides instant heat and windshield defrosting. This permits the operators to perform their pre-trip inspections at the same time interval throughout the year, and prevents delays while having to wait for a bus to warm up. However, when conditions are well below freezing and icy Fleet Maintenance will start every diesel powered bus to ensure that the vehicle starts without needing assistance.

**Yakima Transit** says... We have a standby operator assigned to start all buses and do the prepping. This person starts the buses around 4:30a.m. and is done by 5:30a.m. The first bus leaves the yard at 5:45a.m. After all buses are prepped the standby operator helps dispatch with the runs that need to be filled for any number of reasons. However, the drivers are encouraged, but not required, to do a walk around their bus when they start their shift.