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Overview

What is iRide?

iRide is Santee Cooper's commuter benefits program. It is a substantial employee benefit, and an example of how Santee Cooper lives green.

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How is iRide a Santee Cooper Green initiative?

By helping employees use their cars less for commuting to and from work, iRide is enabling them to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from their vehicles.

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How does iRide help Santee Cooper employees?

iRide offers employees the option to share their commutes, cutting the cost of commuting for each participating employee while reducing the environmental impact of those commutes. iRide helps employees join car pools or ride an express bus.

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Why is Santee Cooper offering iRide?

Employees nationwide are calling on their employers to help offset the increasing cost of gasoline, which can total \$400 or more a month for Santee Cooper employees commuting 30 miles or more one way – and there are many employees making that long of a commute or longer.

Commuting via express bus, including the Santee Cooper subsidy, can cost approximately \$50 a month.

Car pooling with just one other person cuts the cost of a commute approximately in half. Adding a second or third carpooler will reduce your commuting expenses even more.

In addition to helping employees save money, Santee Cooper is always looking for creative ways to minimize its impact on the environment. Cutting personal vehicle emissions is one straightforward way.

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What is Santee Cooper doing to encourage employees to participate in iRide?

Santee Cooper will offer incentives to encourage participation in the iRide programs. For car poolers, Santee Cooper has purchased a software program that will help employees find car pool matches by creating a computer-based profile and identifying employees at their work location with similar work schedules and home addresses. Santee Cooper will also offer preferred parking spaces and additional incentives, such as drawings for prizes, to encourage car pooling.

In addition, the federal government allows a tax credit for people who ride mass transit. To facilitate earning this tax credit, you can sign up to have your monthly bus pass taken out of your pay check as a payroll deduction. By doing so the pass is paid with pretax dollars thus not costing the employee the full \$50.

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Car pools

How does a car pool work?

Typically, two or more workers will share the ride to work, splitting the cost of gas, taking turns driving or spreading the responsibilities in other ways. If just two people car pool, they cut their commuting costs and vehicle emissions in half. The software Santee Cooper has implemented will help car poolers find fellow workers who have similar schedules, live near each other and even like the same radio station.

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iRide car pool reserved parking?

Santee Cooper provides reserved parking for employees who car pool to work. A car pool is considered two or more riding together. Exceptions for employees who car pool to work with others in the community are considered on a trust but verify basis.

Carpooling parking spaces are designated by iRide signs in Lots 1, 2, 3 and 6 in Moncks Corner. These spaces are reserved explicitly for employees who car pool. Any employees violating parking privileges may result in disciplinary action. See [Parking -Main Office Complex Policy 6-24-08](#)

A magnetic iRide decal is required for this reserved parking and can be obtained from Employee Relations.

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Express bus

How does the express bus work?

Santee Cooper had worked with Tri-County LINK to make express bus service available between Moncks Corner and Summerville, Goose Creek, North Charleston and Moncks Corner and Moncks Corner, Bonneau, St. Stephen, Cross and the Hwy. 52 Station in Williamsburg county.

Because of the numbers of riders needed to make the routes successful, the bus service is only offered to Moncks Corner headquarter and Cross Generating Station at this time.

Park & Ride lots are located at the Super K Mart on Rivers Avenue in North Charleston; at Berkeley County satellite government office on US Hwy 52 in Goose Creek, at the former DOT site in Summerville at the corner of Berlin G. Myers Parkway and Gahagan road, at the Moncks Corner headquarters, at Bonneau's Town Hall, the IGA in St. Stephen and the Hwy. 52 Station in Williamsburg county. Buses will run several times daily on each of the three routes: North Charleston-Goose Creek-Moncks Corner, Summerville-Moncks Corner and Moncks Corner-Bonneau-St. Stephen-Hwy 52 Station-Cross Generating Station. [Click here for schedules, which are also posted on this iPort site.](#)

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What is Santee Cooper doing to encourage bus ridership?

Santee Cooper is purchasing advertising from LINK on six buses. In exchange, LINK is reducing the fare charged to Santee Cooper employees. Normal fare is \$70 a month; the Santee Cooper rate is \$50 a month.

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Emergency Ride Home

What if I ride a car pool or bus to work and have to leave during the day for a home emergency? Or what if I have to work unexpected overtime? How will I get home?

An important part of iRide is the emergency ride home. [Click here for the Emergency Ride Home Policy, which is also posted on this iPort site.](#)

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Lunch

What will I do for lunch?

Tri-County LINK offers the LINK to Lunch Express free to all employees. LINK to lunch features two routes, with pick-ups on alternate routes about every 15 minutes, from 11:00 a.m. through 12:45 p.m. [Click here to view the LINK to Lunch Express schedule, which is also posted on this iPort site.](#)

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Employee survey results

How did Santee Cooper come up with the components of iRide?

They were developed after employees were surveyed. Here are some highlights of that survey:

- Nearly 1,000 Santee Cooper employees filled out surveys, showing a high level of interest in the issue.
- Roughly $\frac{3}{4}$ of survey respondents said they would consider trying a car pool or express bus. The response were fairly evenly divided between which of the three most favored, and so iRide includes all three.
- The top reason – by far – that employees will support ridesharing is to save money. Helping the environment and reducing our dependence on foreign oil both drew support as well.
- Roughly half of all respondents are very likely or definitely going to rideshare, according to the survey. With an average commute of 26 miles one way, if each of these respondents eliminated 2 commutes per week, they would collectively save 2.5 million vehicle miles per year, nearly 167,000 gallons of gas a year, and enough money to buy 30 Toyota or Honda hybrid cars. They would also eliminate 1,617 tons of carbon dioxide emissions each year.

- These are measurable, meaningful results that will translate to a solid benefit for employees and more proof of Santee Cooper's environmental stewardship.

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Where did the name iRide come from?

It was one of the more popular choices suggested from employees through the survey!

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