

511 The Stakeholders' Update



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Keeping You Updated on 511PA

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511PA Has Launched!!

On September 4, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) rolled out 511PA, the round-the-clock traveler information service designed specifically for motorists and commuters. Users can access the system by dialing "511" from cellular phones or typing www.511pa.com on the Internet. 511PA provides free, automated, on-demand access to pertinent traveler information, including traffic conditions, roadway incident reports, traffic delay warnings, construction updates, weather forecasts, winter road conditions, tourism and special events data and transit and rideshare information. Near real-time traffic speed information is available on interstate highways and other roads in key urban areas.

In launching the 511PA system, PennDOT Secretary Allen D. Biehler observed, "Travelers log nearly 295

million miles on Pennsylvania roads each day and although the resources are simply not available to build our way out of traffic congestion, 511PA offers reliable information to help travelers make smart planning decisions and minimize travel delays."

The 511PA network covers more than 2,500 linear miles of roads across the commonwealth, including the interstate system, the Pennsylvania turnpike, and major non-interstate roadways in Harrisburg, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Information is supplied to the 511PA system through a variety of services and devices, including approximately 440 traffic cameras statewide. Web site users may access many of the camera images on-line.

Users may also set up free, personalized traveler alerts in order to receive customized traffic information based on their personal preferences.



Figure 1. 511PA Web Site Home Page



511PA divides the state into eight regions, as shown Figure 2.

Users are able to request information for a given region, such as Greater Philadelphia, or the entire state.

The 511PA Web site, which can be accessed either from a conventional computer or over a mobile device, received a total of 25,196 visits during the month. This equated to an average of 840 visits per day. The

Registration is simple. To register, go to www.511pa.com and select the "Personalized Alerts" button on the bottom left of the Web site home page. You will then be taken to another screen on which you will see an area requesting a log-in and password.

In that same area and to the right, the words "New User" are displayed. Select "New User" and you will be prompted to create a username and password. Specify the type of alert desired (e-mail or SMS text messages to your cell phone), the e-mail address where you want the updates to be sent, and the maximum number of alerts you wish to receive per month.

Then fill out your personalized "traffic profile." In the profile you can select several different roadways and provide your starting and ending points on each.

Also choose the time periods for which you want to receive the alerts, and for which days. Reports include elements such as incidents and active construction.

Thousands of travelers have already registered to receive personalized notifications. More than 200,000 alerts were sent out during September. 📱

The 511PA Roadway Network and Available Features

The 511PA roadway network encompasses every interstate highway in the state, including the Pennsylvania Turnpike and other major roadways in Philadelphia, Harrisburg and Pittsburgh.

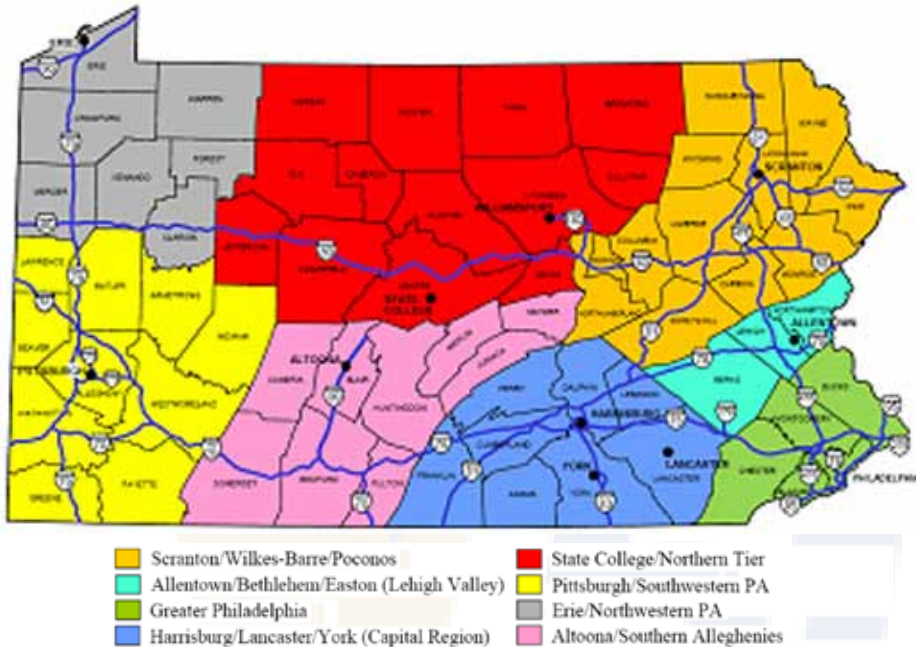


Figure 2. 511PA Regions

During its first month of operation, September 4 to October 3, 511PA already distinguished itself as an active, fully engaged system. The telephone subsystem received a total of 42,310 calls initiated by 26,350 unique callers. Average call duration was just 1.3 minutes, indicating that callers were able to query the system quickly, gather the information they were seeking, and then disconnect from the system. Most callers inquired about traffic conditions; the peak daily calling period was 5:15 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.. Sixty-five percent of all calls during the month involved queries about three regions:

- Philadelphia (10,298 calls);
- Pittsburgh (9,615 calls); and
- Harrisburg (7,542 calls).

visitor repeat rate was 50.3 percent; the average duration of a visit to the 511PA Web site was 10.5 minutes on the main Web site and 2.2 minutes on the mobile Web site. The peak access period on the main Web site was 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily and 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. daily on the mobile Web site.

At the end of the first four weeks of activity, 2,169 users had subscribed to 511PA traffic alerts. 📱

Register for Personalized Alerts!

511PA users are able to set up personalized "profile" accounts to receive customized traffic alerts based on personal preferences.



Traffic information includes incident reports such as crashes and construction activities. Average traffic speeds and travel times are also available for many of the interstates and other major roadways in urban areas.

The Web site also provides weather forecasts and alerts.

Transit Information

The Transit Web page provides access to transit information statewide. You may look up transportation services by county for:

- Intercity passenger rail
- Fixed route bus and rail
- Fixed route bus
- Shared ride/demand response
- Intercity passenger bus

Available data includes basic transit agency information and the option to map the pertinent services by county. For more detailed information, the system links to the corresponding Transit Web sites.

Travel Links

From the Travel Links Web page, you can link to a range of complementary Web sites that provide information on:

- Emergency Information
- Airports
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Information
- Other States' Travel Web sites
- Tourism
- Pennsylvania Turnpike
- Pennsylvania Maps
- Other Pennsylvania Travel Links



New Feature! Winter Road Conditions

Winter road conditions have now been added to available 511PA features. Beginning this year, the winter road conditions function is being activated from November 1 through April 30. Information will be provided for each county in a given region; it will be time-stamped so that callers know when the information was last updated.

Information on winter road conditions is accessible on both the 511PA telephone system and Web site. Callers can get information on winter conditions via the "traffic conditions" option. Visitors to the 511PA Web site can view a map with color-coded winter road conditions for all interstates and other routes covered in the 511PA regions.

Safety First!

You don't have to be on the road to dial 511! Many users choose to access 511PA before they head out the door. If you're at home or in the office, check www.511pa.com before you leave.

Always travel safely. Never use a hand-held cell phone while driving. Instead have a passenger dial 511, or use a hands-free accessory so that you can keep both hands on the wheel. Better yet, call when you are stopped at one of PennDOT's safety rest areas. 511PA cares — safety first!

Visit 511PA.com for More Information!

Learn more about 511PA by visiting the Web site, www.511pa.com. There you will find:

- Notice of new features as they become available.
- A frequently-asked questions (FAQ) section detailing key facets of the 511PA service, including the new winter road conditions feature.
- A feedback system enabling travelers to offer comments and suggestions for improvements.

Visit the 511PA Web site and stay informed.

Help Get the Word Out!

Help get the word out about 511PA! Reach out to your constituencies, memberships, and circles of organizations that can benefit from using the 511PA system. Inform your family and friends.

Feel free to provide a link on your organization's Web site to www.511pa.com. PennDOT can provide you with a button and instructions for completing the link. Simply contact Regis Ryan at rryan@state.pa.us. Also, please inform Regis once you have implemented the link.

Let us know how else we can assist you in spreading the word.

Your feedback, comments, and concerns are important to us. Please contact us...

Contact:
Regis Ryan at rryan@state.pa.us