

WEST VIRGINIA PARKWAYS AUTHORITY

GENERAL INFORMATION

- The West Virginia Turnpike opened as a two-lane highway in 1954 and cost \$133 million to construct. The Turnpike is now a four-lane interstate between Charleston and Princeton.
- The West Virginia Parkways Authority has statutory authority to provide for the construction, development and maintenance of 88 miles of interstate roads that constitute the West Virginia Turnpike.
- Its mission is to operate and maintain the West Virginia Turnpike safely and efficiently. In April 2007, the Parkways Authority Board adopted a Resolution refocusing the core mission of the Parkways to maintenance and upkeep of the Turnpike.
- In 2010, Senate Bill 427 was enacted which again renamed and reorganized the West Virginia Parkways Authority. This bill gave the Parkways Authority the authorization to construct new toll road projects by issuing bonds secured with toll revenues; however, bonds sold for new toll road construction cannot be used for the West Virginia Turnpike pursuant to Section §17-16A-10(a) which states that “the Parkways Authority is authorized to provide by resolution for the issuance of parkway revenue bonds of the state for the purpose of paying all or any part of the cost of one or more parkway projects: Provided, That this section shall not be construed as authorizing the issuance of parkways revenue bonds for the purpose of paying the cost of the West Virginia Turnpike...”. The aggregate amount of the West Virginia Turnpike’s outstanding principal amount of bonds cannot exceed \$200 million.
- The Parkways Authority currently employs approximately 360 full time and part-time employees, with positions in toll, maintenance and administration, with State benefits.
- Performs pavement and bridge maintenance and rehabilitation of the Turnpike’s 426 lane miles of roadway, 18 interchanges and 116 bridges.
- Performs snow removal and ice control during inclement weather along the entire length of the 88 mile Turnpike as well as on the parking lots of the three full service Travel Plazas at Morton, Beckley and Bluestone, two Rest Areas at Bluestone and at Milepost 69 and one Welcome Center at Princeton along the Turnpike.
- Provides tourist information at the travel plazas and the welcome center where West Virginia made arts and crafts are also sold.
- Provides Dynamic Message Signs to communicate with motorists about safety and congestion.
- Operates four Toll Plazas 24 hours a day, 7 days a week collecting in excess of \$80 million in toll annually.

- Administers the E-ZPass electronic toll collection system which allows patrons to pass through toll barriers without stopping by using a vehicle-mounted transponder, provides efficient movement of commercial goods, provides increased levels of customer support, decreases congestion and improves air quality.
- Offers toll discount plans for WV E-ZPass passenger car customers and both WV E-ZPass commercial customers and non-WV E-ZPass commercial customers. Four (4) discount plans available to: WV E-ZPass passenger vehicles, frequent user (flat fee for unlimited use); WV E-ZPass passenger vehicles, infrequent user (35% savings); WV E-ZPass commercial vehicles (20-35% savings); Non WV E-ZPass commercial vehicles (13% savings).
- WV citizens who participate in the E-ZPass non-commercial commuter pass program are able to deduct from adjusted gross income up to \$1,200 per year on their state income tax return for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2007 (minimum amount eligible for deduction is \$25.00).
- Funds and supports State Police Troop 7, consisting of up to 31 State Police officers and two Public Service Commission Commercial Motor Vehicle Inspectors, who provide 24-hour law enforcement on the Turnpike.
- Operates a 24-hour communications system that links State Police, emergency services and wrecker services and ties in the interdepartmental Turnpike toll plazas and maintenance departments.
- Operates a 16-hour (3 pm-7am), 7-day a week internal Courtesy patrol/Motorist Assist Program that covers the entire length of the Turnpike and operates in coordination with Troop 7 patrol units.