

FORGET WIDENING, SYNC TRAFFIC LIGHTS

A bill on Governor Jerry Brown's desk has huge implications for California highways: AB 1447 by Assemblywoman Marie Waldron (San Diego County) says that traffic signal synchronization can qualify for "cap and trade" auction revenues as part of sustainable infrastructure projects. Why is this important? Because traffic light synchronization works. Los Angeles synchronized traffic lights and saw a dramatic impact on traffic flow and nasty emissions from idling cars. Salinas synchronized five intersections and saw a difference. No one wants to sit in traffic. We have technology to make traffic move more smoothly. Caltrans supports synchronization. Anyone sitting at a traffic light or in gridlock would happily tell the governor to sign this bill. (from a press release by Amanda Fulkerson, press secretary to Assembly Republican Leader Connie Conway)

TRAFFIC JAMS COST YOU MONEY

The Road Information Program (TRIP) says the staggering costs to Californians of driving on deteriorating highways is \$44 billion a year in extra car costs because of traffic jams and potholes that seemingly grow worse by the day. Some Bay Area drivers fork over as much as \$2,200 a year, according

to TRIP. Will Kempton, executive director of Transportation California and a former Caltrans director, says that most state freeways opened five decades ago and have exceeded their 40-year-old life span: "Our transportation system is simply worn out." (source: San Jose Mercury News)

MR. POTATO HEAD

Healthy eaters know about avoiding white food: white rice, white flour, white sugar, etc. Same goes for potatoes. Skip the starchy white innards, which are just empty calories and carbs, but get some skin. The skin of a good spud has fiber, iron, potassium, calcium, vitamin C, and B vitamins. Warning: Wash the skin well, cut off any green areas, sprouts, and blemishes. Do not eat any potato that is bitter, green under the skin, soft, or excessively cracked, bruised, or sprouted. (source: UC Wellness Letter)

AIR PACIFICA

Many Pacificans silently suffer noise pollution from flights out of San Francisco International Airport (SFO). The airport complaint hotline is 650-821-4736. I cannot guarantee that reporting noise will do any good, but at least you will feel that you did something about it, other than gripe. Scott McKellar,

who lives on a hill high above Linda Mar, so high in fact that he feels uncomfortably close to the passing airliners, made the call, and tells me: “Supposedly the unwanted noise is due to federally mandated runway repairs and will last for only about two years here. Cool! Hey, now I can pretend I don't notice 50 takeoffs per hour for maybe only one more year.”

ABEERANCE

The act of showing up somewhere because you feel obligated, but only for one beer, because you don't want to stay too long. “Ugh — holiday party. Guess I have to make an abeerance.” (UrbanDictionary.com)

REDUNDANCY

“One that always gets me and is used very often: rocky outcrop.” (Chris Vance, Pacifica library assistant)

SWAMI SEZ

“A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory.” (author unknown)

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