

27  
25 to 71 TB

MHSMP-78-51

Dist. Category UC-96

**MASTER**

**VANPOOLING AT PANTEX PLANT**

**MASTER**

**Marvin D. Thompson**

**Administration & Services Division**

**September 1978**



P. O. BOX 30020  
AMARILLO, TEXAS 79177  
806-335-1581

*Mason & Hanger - Silas Mason Co., Inc.*  
*Pantex Plant*

OPERATED FOR THE

Department of Energy

UNDER

U. S. GOVERNMENT CONTRACT EY-76-C-04-0487

**DISTRIBUTION OF THIS DOCUMENT IS UNLIMITED**

## **DISCLAIMER**

**This report was prepared as an account of work sponsored by an agency of the United States Government. Neither the United States Government nor any agency thereof, nor any of their employees, makes any warranty, express or implied, or assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information, apparatus, product, or process disclosed, or represents that its use would not infringe privately owned rights. Reference herein to any specific commercial product, process, or service by trade name, trademark, manufacturer, or otherwise does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the United States Government or any agency thereof. The views and opinions of authors expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the United States Government or any agency thereof.**

---

## **DISCLAIMER**

**Portions of this document may be illegible in electronic image products. Images are produced from the best available original document.**

NOTICE

This report was prepared as an account of work sponsored by the United States Government. Neither the United States nor the United States Department of Energy, nor their employees, nor any of their contractors, subcontractors, or their employees, makes any warranty, express or implied, or assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness or usefulness of any information, apparatus, product or process disclosed, or represents that its use would not infringe privately-owned rights.

Printed in the United States of America  
Available from  
National Technical Information Service  
U. S. Department of Commerce  
5285 Port Royal Road  
Springfield, VA 22161  
Price: Printed Copy \$4.00 ; Microfiche \$3.00

**VANPOOLING AT PANTEX PLANT**

**Marvin D. Thompson**

**Training Specialist**

**MASON & HANGER-SILAS MASON CO., INC.**

**Pantex Plant**

**Amarillo, Texas**

**NOTICE**

This report was prepared as an account of work sponsored by the United States Government. Neither the United States nor the United States Department of Energy, nor any of their employees, nor any of their contractors, subcontractors, or their employees, makes any warranty, express or implied, or assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness or usefulness of any information, apparatus, product or process disclosed, or represents that its use would not infringe privately owned rights.

**To Be Presented At**

**National Ridesharing Conference**

**September 18, 1978**

**Baltimore, Maryland**



## VANPOOLING AT PANTEX PLANT

Vanpooling — — — What is it?

Vanpooling is simply a safe, comfortable, and economical form of transportation to and from work.

Vanpooling may be organized in many ways. The concept to be discussed, however, will be the privately owned and operated method of vanpooling.

Vanpooling is now a part of the common, everyday language at Pantex Plant; yet only a few months ago if you had asked a Pantexan for a definition of "vanpool," the reply given might have been a new kind of swimming pool or pool table.

Let's take a short trip back in time and discover how vanpooling came about at Pantex Plant.

The employees at Pantex Plant have always been energy conscious since the plant was first placed into operation in 1952. This being due to the location of the facility which is approximately 28 miles from Amarillo.

The oldest form of this energy conservation is car pooling. Today we have approximately 400 automobiles that car pool on a daily basis.

Four and one half years ago in the interest of energy conservation, the plant's Energy Conservation Committee conducted a plant wide survey to determine

interest in a bus system for the plant. Based on the interest survey in February of 1974, Mason & Hanger entered into a contract with the city of Amarillo to furnish buses from Amarillo to the plant. At the present time we have four buses in operation carrying an average of 130 employees daily to and from work.

A little over a year ago in search of new ideas, Mason & Hanger sent the Energy Conservation Chairman to a conference in Lubbock, Texas, sponsored by the FEA and SBA. The objective of the conference was to interest individuals in supporting vanpool operations. Considerable information was obtained from the presentation and some handouts were furnished by the FEA.

This information was brought back to the Plant where various possibilities and combinations of ownership, financing, insurance and vanpool administration were discussed.

The approach adopted was individual ownership with administrative assistance provided by a coordinator who would be given the time necessary to actively promote the program.

I was considered to be a good prospect to try this vanpool concept because my home is in Clarendon, Texas, which is 60 miles one way from the plant. The plan was presented to me and after several days of digesting the FEA material, discussing the concept with the other (13) plant employees from Clarendon and calculating expenses, I arrived at a decision: If the Clarendon group would agree to pay a daily fare of \$2.25 which should cover the total cost of operation, plus letting me ride free to work, then I would accept the challenge and establish the first vanpool.

The Clarendon group excitedly accepted the proposal and the new ride sharing concept was about to become a reality.

My first concern, naturally, was to nail down the hard terms of financing and insurance.

Armed with the FEA handbook, I contacted various individuals to obtain more information on the subject of financing. After several calls, I learned about a program, coordinated by Mr. George Tyson of the Social Security Office in Baltimore, Maryland, which received its financing thru their credit union. My conversation with George was very informative and the credit union financing arrangement that we now use has been patterned after the program in Baltimore. Thank you George Tyson.

The insurance questions were totally unresolved until Lew Pratsch from the Office of Transportation Programs in Washington D.C. suggested that I contact State Farm. To my surprise, the Texas State Farm Manual addresses itself to share-the-expense ride sharing programs, and our problems in that area were finally resolved.

Now that financing and insurance were available, the next effort was to educate employees to vanpooling. Every available means of communication was put into motion; such as: (1) articles in the plant paper, (2) the "Supervisors Bulletin," (3) plant bulletin boards, (4) credit union bulletins, (5) the plant paging system, and (6) best of all, person to person conversation about privately owned and operated vanpooling.

While all of this education was taking place, we started the first vanpool from

Clarendon, Texas. This was very important to our program because all of a sudden, this was not just a new idea, it was actually working and the employees at the plant could talk to fellow employees who were riding in or driving the real thing.

Upon proving to myself that the expenses of the operation which included the payment on the van, insurance, and operating cost could be covered by a very reasonable fare per rider, I took the next step. I decided that I wanted to fully promote privately owned and operated vanpooling. The massive initial education effort had resulted in scores of people showing an interest in riding, so as the coordinator, my main task was to sell these people on becoming owner/operators.

You might ask, who would want to buy a \$12,000 van to transport people to and from work. Well, let's consider just a few: (1) volunteer coaches in youth activities such as Pee Wee football, baseball, basketball, soccer, track, etc., (2) employees involved in Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts, Brownies, Blue Birds, Campfire Girls, etc., (3) persons active in church programs, primarily youth groups, (4) moonlighting employees such as Amway dealers, Tupperware dealers, etc., would make good use of a van. These are just a few of the people who will "turn on" to a new van paid for by pool members. The list goes on and on and stops only when the imagination and creative cells in your brain quit functioning.

Within the first 30 days of my efforts, six more vanpools were formed, and from that beginning the growth has been fantastic. We now have 30 vans in our program which carry approximately 405 employees to and from work daily.

If you wonder how the vans used in our program are equipped, here are some of the features that we require for passenger and driver comfort: (1) dual air-conditioning and heat control, (2) automatic transmission, power steering and brakes, cruise control, fully trimmed and insulated interior, AM-FM radio with four speakers, CB radio and an optional coffee service using an air-pot as the coffee container.

We are all concerned with saving energy, reducing traffic congestion, and curbing the air pollution problem. To help alleviate these problems and more, here is what vanpooling has done for Pantex Plant and our country.

1. 30 vans save 240,000 gallons of gasoline per year
2. 300 parking spaces gained in our parking lots
3. Employees are always at work on time
4. Employees are rested from traffic trauma
5. 400,000 miles of accident free travel this year

Our 1978 goal is 35 vans, and our 1979 goal is 50 vans. An additional personal goal is to help initiate programs around the country that will produce 300 new vanpools within the next 12 months.

Our program has been featured in several newsletters and publications. These articles stimulated numerous inquiries by letter and telephone and vanpools are now operating in Washington D.C. and Missouri partially as a result of our conversations on vanpooling.

Ask Lew Pratsch from the office of Transportation Programs in Washington whether or not this is an exciting method of vanpooling.

My first conversations with Lew Pratsch were very informative. This man has more vanpool knowledge than anyone I know. However, it seemed funny to me that here was a man pushing a ride-sharing concept and riding to work alone each day, and I told him so. Only a short period of time passed before I heard the words from Lew Pratsch that I wanted to hear and you know what they were, don't you. "Yes sir," Lew said, "guess what, I bought a van and started a vanpool into D.C." That's beautiful isn't it. I don't know that I really had anything to do with his decision to buy that van, but the important thing is vanpooling is a real part of his life. Since then Lew has formed another private owner/operated vanpool in that area.

A young man named Ken Zahora of DOE met with Lew and myself one morning and from that ground work, and a lot of Ken's imagination and enthusiasm, four individual owner/operated vanpools are now operating at Germantown with several more soon to start.

An instructor in the Agriculture Department at the University of Missouri read of our program and called. He and several others worked at an experiment location 30 miles from the city. After questioning me to verify that what he read was really true, his comment was that if the others would ride with him, he just might buy a van. Two weeks later he called to say thanks for the help, and that he had 12 passengers riding in a new van.

I'm convinced that this concept of individually owned/operated vanpools is valid and the idea will spread like fleas on a dog if the word gets to the public about how well it works.

You see there are no restrictions placed on the after hours use of this vehicle. Because it is your private vehicle, you can pull a boat, take the kids anywhere you want to, allow your riders to smoke or not smoke, keep passengers you want and get rid of those you don't want. The main reason this program works is there are absolutely no strings attached anywhere by anyone. The individual with a little help from a coordinator keeps the program working on his or her own, and that's simply beautiful, isn't it.

## DISTRIBUTION

**Ann Kopansky**  
**The Zia Company**  
**Los Alamos, NM**

**Lew Pratsch**  
**Department of Energy Conservation**  
**& Solar Applications**  
**Transportation Programs**  
**Washington, DC**

**Jim McIntyre**  
**Governor's Energy Office**  
**Austin, TX**

**Don Wood, Ph.D.**  
**Texas Transportation Institute**  
**Texas A&M University**  
**College Station, TX**

**Dan Deaton**  
**Director for Conservation & Energy**  
**Resource Development**  
**Federal Energy Administration**  
**Dallas, TX**

**Olivia Gallegos**  
**Conservation Planner**  
**Energy Resources Board**  
**Santa Fe, NM**

**Alvin Askew, Executive Director**  
**Governor's Energy Advisory Council**  
**Austin, TX**

**Congressman Jack Hightower**  
**Washington, DC**

**Roy Noble, Jr.**  
**State Energy Office**  
**Newark, NJ**