



Las Vegas • McCarran International Airport

NEWS RELEASE

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Airport Parking Lots Will Be Jammed Over the Holidays ***Travelers are asked to leave their cars at home when flying from McCarran***

LAS VEGAS – A rising number of holiday travelers is expected to fill the nearly 13,000 public parking spaces at McCarran International this holiday season, and airport leaders are taking a proactive approach that asks drivers to catch a ride when flying out of town for Thanksgiving or Christmas getaways.

Monday marked the beginning of a nearly \$40,000 public awareness campaign designed to minimize travelers' traffic-related hassles. Over the next six weeks, newspaper ads, radio spots, Web site messaging and other methods will be utilized to help alert drivers of the parking shortages expected this season at the airport.

The number of vehicles that used McCarran's overflow lots during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday periods nearly tripled from 2003 through 2005. Despite this year's addition of more than 2,500 new spaces, increased airport traffic could overwhelm the airport's parking lots and garages in November and December.

"Thanksgiving and Christmas aren't our busiest periods, but they present some unique challenges that will impact many Southern Nevada residents if they fail to plan ahead," said Randall H. Walker, Clark County Director of Aviation. "To avoid problems when parking, we're suggesting that travelers take a cab or bus, or ask a friend or family member to drop them off during these busy times."

The Air Transport Association of America, a Washington-based trade group, said U.S. airlines are on pace to carry more than 2 million passengers per day, which would make this the busiest Thanksgiving travel period on record. Approximately 750,000 passengers are expected to pass through McCarran from Wednesday through Monday, Nov. 27.

In addition to high air traffic volume, driving around the airport is complicated by a number of roadway projects near Russell Road between Paradise Road and Eastern Avenue. Crews are busy installing underground utilities and doing roadwork to prepare for the construction of Terminal 3, a \$1.5 billion unit terminal that will open in 2011.

"We'll welcome Terminal 3's ability to make McCarran a better airport, but we realize that its construction will cause some temporary inconvenience for drivers in the area," Walker said.

It's unusual for an airport to turn away drivers because parking is a key revenue source. In fiscal 2005, McCarran took in more than \$22.3 million in parking fees alone. This year, however, airport leaders are asking travelers to leave their cars at home to promote customer service for those who fly.

"Our top goal is to provide a pleasant airport experience, and we realize that's difficult to pull off when people are stuck in traffic or miss their flights because they couldn't find a place to park," Walker said.

Those who must drive to the airport are encouraged to allocate at least 30 additional minutes to park. McCarran's Economy and Overflow lots will be staffed with attendants to guide drivers to the proper places on the east side of the airport near Russell. The Gold Garage and valet parking lots should fill before the Economy and Overflow lots, Walker added.



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