

FAQs Spring 2020

This summer, All Electronic (Cashless) Tolling (AET) is coming to the Maryland Transportation Authority's (MDTA) Bay Bridge (US 50/301). The following Frequently Asked Questions are provided to help you find out more about AET and what it means for you!

What is All-Electronic (Cashless) Tolling / AET?

With AET, **cash is not accepted as payment at the time of travel.** Drivers do not have to stop to pay tolls, as overhead gantries collect tolls electronically by *E-ZPass*[®] or Video Tolling. Cashless toll facilities already operating in Maryland include the Intercounty Connector (ICC)/MD 200 in Montgomery and Prince George's counties, the I-95 Express Toll Lanes and Francis Scott Key Bridge (I-695) in Baltimore, and the Thomas J. Hatem Memorial Bridge (US 40) in Cecil and Harford counties.

What are the benefits of AET?

The benefits of AET include less idling time for better fuel efficiency and reduced emissions, decreased congestion, increased driver safety and a safer work environment for employees. Each year, Marylanders will save \$1 million and 44,000 hours in fuel and a combined total 42,000 hours of time annually once all-electronic tolling is "live," no one is stopping to pay their tolls and the flow of traffic improves with the toll plaza removal in 2022.

Once the toll plazas are removed, customers will have the added benefit of travelling at highway speeds. Other tolling agencies around the country have experienced up to 70% reductions in accidents near toll plazas.

What will I "see" as the MDTA converts the Bay Bridge to AET?

Motorists will see demolition of two of the existing toll booths to create wider lanes at the Bay Bridge plaza in preparation for all-electronic tolling. Additionally, toll lanes 3, 4 and 5 are closed while crews construct free-flowing traffic lanes through the existing tolling structure. On the Eastern Shore side of the bridge, crews also will prepare for installation of overhead tolling gantries between the Bay Bridge and MD 8 on Kent Island.

What is the timeline for AET conversion at the Bay Bridge?

The toll gantry will be installed March/April 2020. The toll booths will be demolished and all-electronic tolling will be live at the Bay Bridge by summer 2020. Removal of the remaining toll booths and canopy will happen after all-electronic tolling is live, with full roadway reconstruction in 2022. Motorists also will see work underway on the all-electronic tolling project including utility relocation, roadway reconstruction and installation of the new eastbound tolling gantry between the bridge and MD 8.

Where will the toll gantry be located?

The gantry will be located on the Eastern Shore side above eastbound US 50 between the Bay Bridge and MD 8 on Kent Island. Toll operations will no longer exist approaching the bridge from Annapolis once the overhead tolling gantries are operational on Kent Island. Motorists traveling eastbound will be tolled as they get off the bridge.

AET Gantry Location Along Eastbound US 50/301



How many lanes on the eastbound approach?

During normal conditions, two lanes of traffic will operate along eastbound US 50/301 approaching the bridge. During two-way operations on the westbound span, three eastbound lanes will be open to traffic on the bridge's eastbound approach, with the left lane being directed to the westbound span.

All-Electronic (Cashless) Tolling / AET

Will AET eliminate all eastbound delays at the Bay Bridge?

Eastbound congestion is still expected at the bridge and along the US 50 corridor during peak times like summer weekends and during emergency incidents, when the volume of vehicles exceeds the capacity of the roadway.

How do I pay tolls?

Motorists pay cashless tolls via *E-ZPass*® or Video Tolling. *E-ZPass*® Maryland customers can take advantage of discounts and plans that can save 25% to 65%. *E-ZPass*® customers pay \$2.50 to cross the Bay Bridge – and those with a Bay Bridge Discount Plan pay just \$1.40 – compared to \$6 with Video Tolling.

Transponders are free, and there is no monthly fee for Maryland residents. *E-ZPass*® “On the Go” transponders are available with a credit or debit card. Customers can pay in cash by visiting *E-ZPass*® Maryland Customer Service Centers at MDTA toll facilities, at many Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration (MDOT MVA) locations and at retail partners. A full list of locations is available at ezpassmd.com. There has never been a better time to join *E-ZPass*® Maryland.

How do I sign up for *E-ZPass*® Maryland?

You can sign up for *E-ZPass*® Maryland at ezpassmd.com, by visiting any of the *E-ZPass*® Maryland Customer Service Centers located adjacent to our facilities, at many Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration locations or our retail partners. A full list of locations is available at ezpassmd.com.

What is video tolling?

If you use a Maryland toll facility without an *E-ZPass*®, an image of the vehicle’s license plate will be taken. A Notice of Toll Due will be sent to the registered owner of the vehicle for the Video Toll amount due. Due to higher processing costs, the video toll rate is 50% higher than the base rate with a minimum of \$1 and a maximum of \$15 above the base rate.

Will the toll pricing structure change?

No. Toll rates will remain the same with AET.

The MDTA is moving forward with a new third generation (3G) Electronic Toll Collection System. New tolling options will save Marylanders more than \$28 million over the next five years and:

- Provides a new toll payment method (Pay-by-Plate) – in effect by summer 2020
- Reduces toll rates for new or expanded vehicle classifications – in effect by September 2020
- Provides a discount for early payment of a Video Toll (Pay-by-Invoice) – in effect by December 2020

I have privacy concerns with having an *E-ZPass*® transponder in my vehicle. Is it safe?

Absolutely. We understand customers’ privacy concerns and are careful to protect all tolling information collected. Customer confidentiality is a priority for the MDTA and *E-ZPass*® Maryland.

Will toll collectors lose their jobs?

We are working with our employees to provide them with career development information and skills training to move into other areas within MDTA and the Maryland Department of Transportation.

For the latest on Bay Bridge traffic, call 1-877-BAYSPAN (229-7726). To sign up for email/text alerts or to view real-time traffic camera images on MDTA roadways, visit mdta.maryland.gov. For updates on major incidents follow the MDTA on Twitter at twitter.com/TheMDTA. Follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/TheMDTA.

