



Top Five Ways to Save Money on Toll

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About Bestpass

Bestpass provides a comprehensive payment platform with a focus on nationwide toll management for commercial fleets of all shapes and sizes. Bestpass ensures data accuracy, consolidates payments, delivers invaluable industry expertise, and saves its users time and money. Founded in 2001, Bestpass is now a trusted partner on the road and in the back office for customers, tolling authorities, and related organizations.





For a fleet of any size, toll is an expense that is time-consuming to manage and can add up quickly. With funding needed for infrastructure projects across North America, the miles of toll road will likely continue to increase.

You don't need to view toll expenses as a foregone conclusion. In fact, a few simple steps are all it takes to save. Ready to save money on toll? Here are the top five things to consider when determining your approach to toll management.

1. Don't pay cash

Installing the right transponder or transponders in a vehicle is the best way to save money, especially with the rise of cashless tolling across the United States, which has resulted in new challenges for commercial fleets, especially heavy toll facility users with a national footprint.

Strategically managing transponder deployment across a fleet helps lessen the impact of higher toll rates, administrative fees, and delayed billing associated with paying cash, toll by plate, or violation transactions. If a fleet reallocates or rebills its toll fees as a standard business practice, then the delay created by violations can disrupt accounting and financial reporting, resulting in, at best, a delay in billing or, at worst, the inability to recoup the expense. With a transponder, transactions post as quickly as possible, typically between 24 and 72 hours.

Even in areas where paying tolls by cash is still permitted, many tolling authorities will offer a discount for vehicles using a transponder. If you travel frequently on any given toll road, it makes sense to investigate transponder options and associated discounts. It also allows vehicles to pass more quickly through toll facilities and track all the transactions much more efficiently than using cash.

2. Watch out for violations

Simply put, toll violations and paper toll bills occur when a vehicle passes through a toll booth or toll gantry without the transaction being recorded and validated in a standard way.

While a fleet can never truly eliminate the possibility of violations on its vehicles there are several key steps that can significantly minimize violations, and, in turn, their impact on fleet operations and the bottom line. In addition, if a fleet does receive a violation, it is important to review the transaction to ensure that it is accurate and belongs to a vehicle in the fleet.

Install the Right Transponders

Installing the right transponder or transponders in a vehicle is the best way to minimize the risk of violations. Strategically managing transponder deployment across a fleet helps lessen the impact of higher toll rates, administrative fees, and delayed billing associated with toll by plate and violations transactions. Be sure to check the location of your transponder in your vehicles, proper placement of the transponder will eliminate the possibility that you will get a misread resulting in a violation.

Pay Attention to Your License Plates

If a fleet has deployed toll transponders on a national or regional level, maintaining up-to-date vehicle lists, including license plates, is essential to fully cover the fleet's vehicles when using tolled facilities. Many tolling authorities require transponders to be associated with vehicle plates when they are activated on the account, but this is not a universal practice. Larger trucking fleets often have multiple trailers for every tractor, significantly adding to the complexity of tracking, processing, and paying toll transactions. Some tolling authorities will accept trailer plates on active accounts, but others will not. Since many gantries and other toll readers will capture the license plate at the rear of the vehicle, it is common for toll by plate transactions to be assessed based on the trailer rather than the tractor. For commercial carriers that rent or lease trailers, it can be difficult for tolling authorities to identify who owns the license plate, and, therefore, who is responsible for the toll. This can result in additional accounting delays and costs, especially if the toll transaction is initially assessed to the trailer rental or leasing company and then reallocated to the fleet.





Mystery Toll by Plate

At some point, or possibly on multiple occasions, nearly every fleet will receive a toll by plate invoice on a plate that they have never owned or on a plate that no longer belongs to the company. So, what do they do next? How can they dispute the transaction and, more importantly, ensure that it does not happen again? The invoice was sent because the state's DMV has a record that points to the fleet as the registered owner of that license plate number. Someone from the fleet's back office will have to contact the DMV directly. If the fleet did once own that plate, but no longer does, then they would need to produce a bill of sale that notes both the vehicle and the license plate in question. If they turned the plates in prior to the date of the toll transaction, then they would need to produce the receipt showing they submitted those plates. The other option is to obtain a registration or title abstract from the DMV on the plate in question. This is a summary of registration history on the plate. Requirements vary from state to state, and a fee is typically involved. If the fleet never owned the plate, or did not at the time of the transaction, then this will provide proof.

3. Take advantage of volume discounts

Beyond the transponder discount, many tolling authorities will also offer commercial fleets volume discounts based on frequency of travel or volume of toll. For example, Bestpass gives small and mid-size fleets access to the highest possible volume discounts, which they would likely not qualify for on their own, with discounts of up to 20 percent available in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Colorado, among others.





4. Be wary of peak hours

Many tolling authorities charge higher rates during peak hours, primarily to reduce traffic congestion during weekday commutes and other busy times. Use toll roads during non-peak hours, this will allow you to move more quickly along the toll roads and through the tolling facilities while also costing less.

5. Minimize back-office inefficiencies

When you have accounts with multiple tolling authorities, you can spend hours or even days every month shuffling invoices and submitting payments through multiple interfaces. Wherever possible, consolidate your toll management. You will save time in the back office while also giving you a more meaningful picture of toll usage across your entire fleet.