

TRANSPORTATION REPORT

BOMA-NEW JERSEY

JANUARY 2026



*Like a
Virgin...
to the open road.*

*Papa Don't
Preach...
about public
transit.*

*Express
Yourself...
and your
infrastructure.*

*Vogue...
your commute.*

*Material
World?
Built on transit.*

*Into the
Groove...
of mobility.*

*Holiday...
is a trip.*



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BOMA-NY Codes & Regs Committee

🎵 📺 January 2026 🧊 ❄️

Glenn Waldorf, Bell Environmental Services

GOODBYE, MTV (8/1/1981–12/31/2025) – 🎵 THE DAY THE MUSIC CHANNEL DIED 🎵

Don McLean sang 🎵 *"A long, long time ago..."* 🎵 in *American Pie* as a eulogy for the 1950s. The 1971 classic cataloged how the turbulent 60s moved Americans from being 🎵 *"in one place"* 🎵 to a generation adrift, 🎵 *"lost in space, with no time left to start again."* 🎵

Ten years later, on [August 1, 1981, at 12:01 AM ET](#), MTV, a new "space," launched, fittingly, with a rocket 🚀. The [Moonman](#) 🌕, symbolizing spaceflight and our most powerful form of transportation, became the emblem of a new cultural meeting place for America's youth, who joined one cable 📺 📶 household at a time.

MTV captured a generation. Music videos became a new form of art and communication. Teens shared the same language, images, heroes, and must-watch premieres. *"I Want My MTV!"* became a rallying cry. More than programming, it was a phenomenon.

And now, that era is officially pulling into the station for the last time. [Paramount Global closed five MTV music channels at year-end-2025](#), marking the end of a major chapter in music broadcasting. Our old, shared world is shrinking.

SAYING FAREWELL TO MTV MIGHT SEEM OFF-TOPIC FOR A TRANSPORTATION REPORT. IN FACT, IT'S A MUST-COVER SUBJECT. MTV WAS ABOUT MOTION. MOVEMENT. MACHINES. AND NOT JUST MUSIC. THE THRILL OF GOING SOMEWHERE. THE MUSIC VIDEO WASN'T JUST A CLIP; IT WAS A VEHICLE. MTV DIDN'T JUST SHOW VEHICLES. IT SHOWED WHAT VEHICLES MEANT.

Transportation in MTV videos was metaphor and visual shorthand. *"Little Red Corvette"* 🚗 was temptation with a warning light underneath. *"I Can't Drive 55"* 🚫 distilled a generation's impatience with limits into one speed sign and a foot on the gas. *"Fast Car"* was a promise and an escape plan. *"Downtown Train"* 🚂 carried longing through a city of missed connections. *"The Metro"* 🚇 captured the lonely truth of mass transit: surrounded by people yet still traveling alone. *"Vacation"* 🌊 🏄 turned time off into motion and freedom, like water skis cutting across open water. A yellow school bus 🚌 was the crazed ride to a teen fantasy in Van Halen's *"Hot for Teacher."* 🏠 🧑 Duran Duran's *"Rio"* 🌊 was a floating postcard from a glam escape. *"Sabotage"* turned police cars 🚓 and sirens into a gritty city chase. And Whitesnake turned a green 🟢 Jaguar into a staging ground for our road fantasies.

MTV isn't one place anymore. It lives now in fragments on social media, everywhere and nowhere, endlessly available but rarely shared at the same exact moment. VJs became 📺 📶 disc jockeys on 📻 Sirius XM. The streaming era gives us everything on demand, including the way music keeps recycling itself forward. You can hear it when Eminem and Lady Gaga refresh 80s songs for their smashes 🌟 *"Houdini"* and 🌟 *"Abracadabra."* The songs keep moving, even when the platform changes.

If you ever need proof universal youth culture is still possible, look at how quickly *"67"* became a ubiquitous catchphrase: [two digits accompanied by a juggling-hand gesture](#) that basically means "okay, old person," casting Gen X and Millennials as the radio stars [The Buggles warned would be dismissed](#).

🎵 *"...Video killed the radio star. In my mind and in my car. We can't rewind, we've gone too far."* 🎵

[Don't Look Back In Anger, not even you Gallagher brothers and Oasis](#). We'll be grateful for our moment and keep driving. MTV taught us what transportation planners already know: every generation finds a new route. Destinations, vehicles, and platforms change. But the need to connect and be together in one place does not.

MTV made generations feel like we were riding together. If one artist embodied that fearless, visual, kinetic spirit, it was [Madonna](#). She was our [True Blue](#) 💙 80s muse, who sang *"Into The Groove"* to get us up to dance. MTV gave us the chance. Madonna showed us in 2000, the year of one of her many career rebirths and her cover of [American Pie](#), that there is, in fact, 🎵 *"time left to start again."* 🎵 She also reminded us of the whole point of MTV: 🎵 *"Music makes the people come together."* 🎵

(If you made it this far, and want more of your MTV, [click here for an expanded version of this essay](#).)

....AND NOW BACK TO OUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED TRANSPORTATION NEWS....

NY Is Touting Congestion Pricing As A Policy Success At The 1-Year Mark

NY Governor Kathy Hochul: "Congestion pricing is working. The cameras are staying on."

Official NYC Congestion Pricing verdict: it's working

Bloomberg Charts Through November 2025:

- Foot traffic: +3.4% YoY
- Sales tax revenue: +6.3% YoY
- Storefront vacancy: -0.9% YoY
- Pollution: -22% (first 6 months)
- Vehicle traffic: -11% YoY (-71.5k per day)
- Est. Revenue: \$548.3M (vs. \$500M goal)

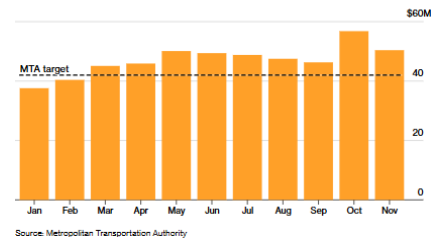
Hochul tells companies to deliver goods overnight to cut down on congestion pricing fees

Gov. Hochul, MTA hail better traffic in Manhattan from congestion pricing, drivers insist otherwise

Critics of congestion pricing say concerns remain.....

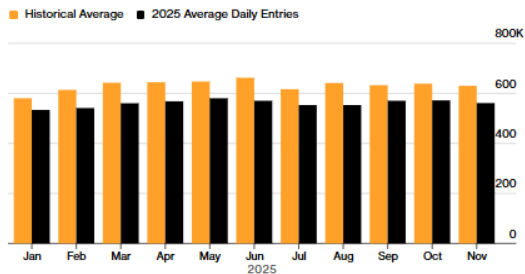
MTA vs. Trump administration: Congestion pricing legal battle date announced

Congestion Pricing Revenue Is Higher Than Anticipated
NYC's toll is set to bring in \$548.3 million in 2025 after expenses



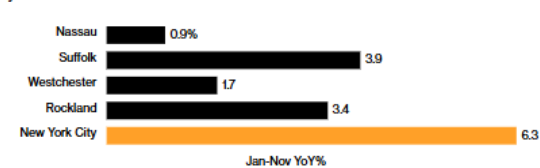
Fewer Vehicles Entered the Toll Zone

An average 71,500 fewer vehicles entered the Central Business District each day through November



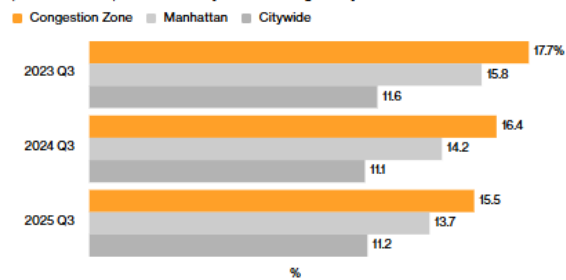
New York City's Sales Tax Receipts Grew Faster Than Nearby Counties

NYC's sales tax revenue grew 6.3% compared to the same period last year

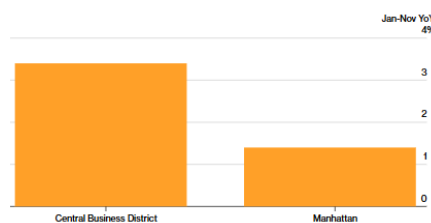


Storefront Vacancies in Congestion Zone Declined Faster

The vacancy rate in the tolled zone dropped by nearly one percentage point in 2025, while the citywide average stayed flat



Foot Traffic Growth in the Central Business District Outpaced Manhattan



Gateway Tunnel

[Gov. Hochul said Trump has not indicated any end of the cut off of funds for the Gateway Tunnel since the October 2025 suspension nor any time they will resume.](#)

[The Gateway Tunnel Progress. 📰 Extra! Extra! Read all about it! 📌 GDC Gazette - December 2025](#)
[GDC Completes Manufacturing of First Pair of Tunnel Boring Machines For Hudson Tunnel Project: TBMs Arriving in New Jersey for On-Site Assembly in Early 2026](#)

[Gateway Tunnel construction: What to know about the boring machines \(And they're anything but boring!\)](#)
[Hudson River Ground Stabilization Project is stabilizing the riverbed on the Manhattan side of the Hudson River to enable tunnel boring machines to excavate the new tunnel.](#)



Military Impact On Skies 🛩️ ☀️

[U.S. Military Plane and JetBlue Flight Nearly Collided Over Caribbean, Radio Traffic Shows - Airforce Jet Was Flying Without Its Transponder On.](#)

[US admits Army, air traffic control failures in deadly plane crash near DC](#)

[US military operation in Venezuela disrupted Caribbean holiday travel, hundreds of flights canceled](#)

[Thousands stranded as flights canceled across Caribbean following Maduro capture](#)



2025 - Good Transit News

[When It Comes to US Transportation, 2025 Had Some Wins, Too - Amid federal-level threats and funding cuts, cities found ways to fight congestion, boost road safety and forestall the public transit death spiral.](#)

News of the Weird - 🛸 Space Invaders Edition 🛸

[NJ-bound plane that plunged and injured 15 was likely hit by 'cosmic rays' from exploding star](#)



Air Traffic Control 🛫 🚨 🚦

[Air traffic control overhaul heats up as US government awards contracts.](#)

[The contracts awarded to RTX Corp and Spain's Indra Sistemas are part of a \\$12.5 billion plan Congress approved last year to overhaul the air traffic control system. The FAA estimates the cost of a full air traffic control system upgrade is \\$20 billion to address issues such as airport congestion, technology failures, and high-profile safety incidents.](#)

[RTX Corp and Indra Sistemas will be contracted to replace up to 612 radars by June 2028 with modern, commercially available surveillance radars.](#)

[The deal also calls for installing surface radars at 44 airports, as well as 27,625 radios and 110 weather stations in Alaska.](#)

Federal Politics 🏛️

[Another day, another empty threat from the Trump administration over transit funding](#)

[Trump delivers major blow to California's EV rules](#)

[Transportation Secretary Duffy threatened to withhold federal funds over illegal immigrant truck drivers](#)



NJ Roads 🚦

[Gas tax increased in New Jersey on January 1, 2026](#)

[NJ traffic deaths drop 15% in 2025, exceeding safety goals](#)

[NJ debates return of traffic cameras, starting with school bus enforcement](#)

[Is it legal to sleep at a New Jersey rest stop? What state law says](#)

NJ Transit 🚆

[Portal Bridge replacement: How February 2026 cutover will impact NJ rail service](#)

[NJ Transit: Train crash at Montclair train station results in several injuries](#)

[NJ Transit Montclair-Boonton Line rail service resumes after collision](#)

[2026 NJ Transit Flexpass: Popular commuter ticket making a comeback](#)

[NJ TRANSIT is taking the next major step in advancing the extension of the Secaucus-Meadowlands Transitway, which, when complete, will provide environmentally friendly transit access between the Meadowlands Sports and Entertainment Complex, Secaucus Junction and Jersey City.](#)

[Fallen trees were an issue on RiverLine for 18 months before train operator was killed, report says](#)

[The new NJ TRANSIT FLEXPASS will go on sale late February 2026. FLEXPASS provides 20 one-way tickets for travel between one origin and one destination station, at a 15% discount. If you're only traveling a few times a week, FLEXPASS provides the best value for you!](#)

[Low visibility left operator no chance to avoid hitting tree, says NTSB report on NJ Transit light rail fatality](#)

News of The Weird - Life Imitates Seinfeld Edition

[Exclusive | 'Disco ball' causing inferno on UWS block | Is life imitating the Seinfeld Kenny Rogers Roasters episode?](#)



News of The Weird – Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee Edition ☕

[Flyer slammed for making in-flight espresso: ‘My seat neighbor nightmare’](#)

[A Coffee Machine for the Dashboard? The Hertella Auto Kaffeemachine, a VW Beetle Accessory from 1959](#)
[Enjoy! Watch Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee on Netflix](#)

Auto Industry

[Ford’s CEO just blew up Congress’s big auto affordability hearing: After Texas Senator Cruz left Tesla’s Elon Musk off of the guest list, Ford’s CEO, Jim Farley, balked at why he needed to attend. Cruz invited Tesla’s VP of Engineering, Lars Moravy, instead of CEO Elon Musk. Ford argued that bringing in executives of different seniority levels violates longstanding congressional norms. And that if a VP is sufficient for Tesla, the same standard should apply to everyone else. Farley, through legal counsel, also pointed to a scheduling conflict, as the Detroit Auto Show kicks off on January 14. Now, the meeting is in limbo altogether.](#)
[...Start/stop engines are dying. Here’s what finally killed the feature](#)



Electric Vehicles

[Tesla Deliveries Might Drop 15% This Quarter, Analysts Estimate](#)

[Tesla Falls Behind China’s BYD as EV Sales Drop for Second Year - WSJ](#)

[BYD’s Sales Growth Slowed in 2025, but It Still Tops Tesla - BYD has faced increasing competition from peers like Geely and Leapmotor](#)

[VW kills its \\$60K electric bus just 12 months after launch—2,600 vans 'unsellable.' The culprit? The end of US tax credits for EV buyers.](#)

Airport Dress Codes ✈️ 🧳 🧑

[Pajama resistance: Duffy faces growing backlash](#)

Airport Gyms 🏋️ 🧘 / 🏊

[RFK Jr., Sean Duffy have pull-up competition while touting \\$1B bid to add mini-gyms, healthier food options at airports](#)

[California Governor Gavin Newsom shut down Secretary Sean Duffy over his airport workout thing](#)

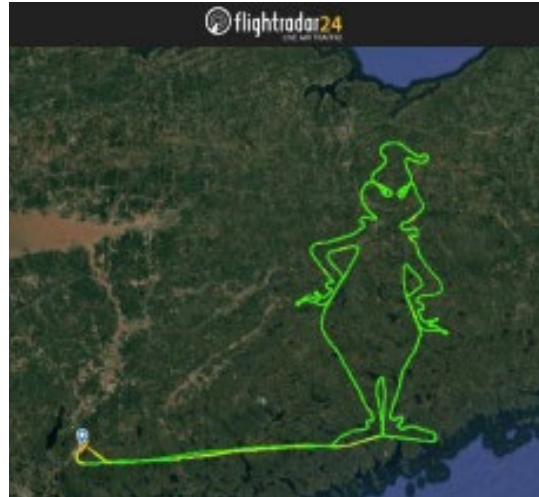
Friendly Skies

[A pilot used their plane to draw an image of the Grinch in the air, taking two hours and 30 minutes](#)

[United passenger takes six flights in one day for \\$500 to make Platinum status: 'A fun challenge'](#)

[Non-passenger airport access returns with new guest pass security programs](#)

["United airlines top international destinations by state & overall. I'd have expected Tokyo to be lower than it is."](#)



Unfriendly Skies

[DHS won't accept a REAL ID in lieu of a passport](#)

[TSA opt-out debate reignited by Federal Department of Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy's pregnant daughter.](#)

[She called TSA unconstitutional and not even good at its job after a 15 -minute wait](#)

[Flyers warn air travel is becoming unbearable as passenger seats keep shrinking. People feel 'crushed' by neighboring passengers on full flights, posts reveal](#)

[Airplane passengers spill the beans on their cramped flight experiences](#)

[Stuck at a New York airport? Here's what airlines owe you.](#)

[Doctor reveals how to avoid getting sick on holiday airplane flights this season](#)

[Flight attendant arrested ahead of boarding for tapping someone on the shoulder](#)

[JetBlue announces major change that could affect your TrueBlue points](#)

[Two suffer broken ankles on BA flight during turbulence](#)

[Boeing 767's tires blow out upon landing in Atlanta](#)

News of the Weird - Twilight Zone Edition

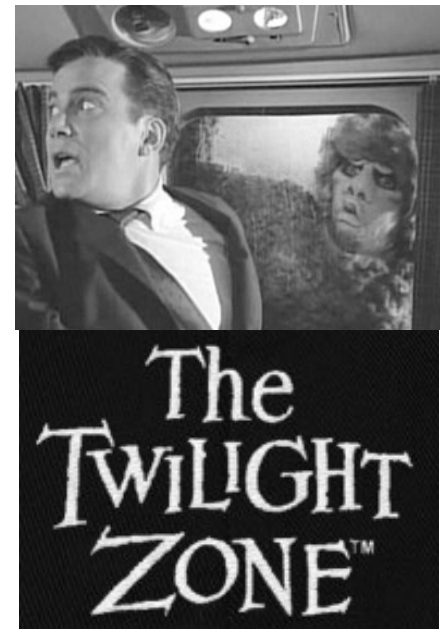
[Passengers flying first class on British Airways' Boeing 747s have expressed concerns about a redesign that includes windows in some lavatories.](#)

One woman traveling to New York voiced her discomfort over the lack of blinds.

A flight attendant reportedly responded, *"Madam, if someone is clinging to the side of this aircraft at 35,000 feet, they've earned the view."*

[Did the passenger watch too many Twilight Zone episodes? Will she channel inner William Shatner and will have to warn us all about gremlins on the airplane wing?](#)

[Maybe this woman would rather switch seats with Gayle King. Anchor slams United for giving her a 'window seat without a window' on nearly 9-hour flight.](#)



Buses 🚌

[Hoboken Terminal Bus Operations: Select Bus Lanes reopened on December 8, 2025. The reconstruction of the Hoboken Bus Terminal advanced to a point that bus operations can resume at the new facility. Customers will no longer use the interim bus terminal.](#)

[NJ Transit to start on MetLife bus terminal for 2026 FIFA World Cup](#)

[Here's where Port Authority's Manhattan bus terminal makeover stands](#)

Batteries 🔋 ⚡

[The Pentagon and A.I. Giants Have a Weakness. Both Need China's Batteries, Badly.](#)

Biking 🚲

[Citi Bike prices to rise for 5th year in a row — operator cites tariff, expansion costs](#)

[NJ Legislature Poised to Pass Victim-Blaming E-Bike Restrictions - An e-bike registration bill is speeding through the New Jersey Legislature after several crashes in which drivers killed young cyclists. New Jersey politicians want to require all e-bike riders have licenses, registration and insurance — citing several instances of drivers killing two-wheelers. Note: the crashes involved e-bike users hit and killed by drivers.](#)

[Opinion: E-Bikes Are An Economic Boost That Cities Must Encourage](#)

Uber

[NJ accuses Uber of making Uber One subscriptions hard to cancel](#)

Long Stroll: Walking NJ 🚶 🚶

[Walking New Jersey \(and Staten Island\)](#)

[In a state between Manhattan and LA, and the strata of the American Dream: New Jersey has pockets of Manhattan's density, but with LA's reliance on cars, so it's in a quantum superposition of the two, and that means it has two outcomes, or two different realities. For people who like it, that reality contains the best of both \(Manhattan's localized variety with LA's space and freedom\), and for those who don't, it contains the worst \(Manhattan's crowding, with LA's traffic\).](#)

[Walking New Jersey gave me a much more favorable view of the state, providing the positive reality](#)

Ferraris 🏎️

[We Can Dream!!!! Does This Ferrari Trademark for 'HC25' Hint at a New One-Off Supercar?](#)



News of the Weird - Westchester Edition 🗺️

[Cops discover pair of crocodiles during routine bust in Yonkers](#)

Good Advice!

[The airplane armrest trick flight attendants swear by for a more comfortable flight](#)

[TSA: Don't wear this 1 clothing item to the airport: Spoiler alert: No Sparkles](#)

[Driving Somewhere for the Holidays? Here's How to Make Your Road Trip Safe.](#)

[Silent' iPhone alarm causes traveler to miss flight — here's how to prevent this from happening and avoid leaving your child "Home Alone"](#)

[What to delete from your phone before you travel](#)

[Leggings are officially out and these 11 comfy pants are taking over airport style](#)

[Movies and shows you should never watch on an airplane if you hate flying!](#)

Long Distance Trucking 🚚

[Sikh Truckers Found Refuge In Trucking Until The Trump Administration's Crackdown](#)

Hospitality & Improved Customer Service - Transit Agency Edition

[NJ TRANSIT on X: Thank you for bringing this to our attention, Jim. Could you please share the bus number, the date, and the time when you observed this issue? -SG" / X](#)

How Did That Happen? 🤔 🤖

[Man boards Heathrow flight without passport or ticket](#)

NJ Road Signs 🗺️ 📌

[‘They make you laugh.’ NJ drivers find humor in holiday message road signs](#)

- Ho, Ho, Ho, Please Drive Slow
- The weather outside is frightful, But safe driving is so delightful.
- There's No Place Like Home for the Holidays, Make it there safely.
- Don't be a Grinch! Let them merge.
- You'll have a Blue Christmas if you drive drunk.
- Lead Foot? Coal in your stocking.
- Have yourself a Merry Little Commute, Drive safely.
- Drunk drivers get handcuffs for Christmas.
- Santa sees you when you're texting... Put down the phone!



NJ Highways 🗺️

[Disputed NJ Turnpike project gets altered but critics are skeptical](#)

[NJ Turnpike project 2025: Jersey City expansion canceled, Newark Bay Bridge replacement continues](#)

[Opponents urge Gov.-elect Sherrill to pause \\$6.2B Newark Bay Bridge project](#)

[Driving NJ's least favorite roadways: No. 1- Route 22](#)

[How does this happen Jersey 🤔? This photo was taken as the Essex toll plaza](#)

["I'm curious too, how did that happen? It defies the laws of physics, but anything can happen here in Jersey This is on the garden state parkway at the Essex toll"](#)


[Study: NJ commuters spend almost 100 hours sitting in traffic each year](#)

[Cashless tolling to start on Atlantic City Expressway this week](#)

[Dog was running around on Route 78 today... Hopefully the little pup is ok \(Yes, he was.\)](#)

[Op-Ed: Hudson County Complete Streets urges Sherrill to focus on transportation - Hudson County View](#)

Frozen NJ Holidays - Do You Want To Build An Inflatable Snowman? + Santa Claus Is Coming To Town

 [Snowmen: More than 20 giant inflatable snowmen have taken over Warren Place in Montclair. The tradition started two years ago with long-time resident Ann McCarthy and “snowballed” into this very unique holiday spectacle.](#)

 [Santas on Mountain Avenue in Washington Twp. create holiday spectacle](#)

+ [News of the Uplifting: Old Bridge Santa Claus !\[\]\(99f58673407353e96a019fbca558fd72_img.jpg\) fights !\[\]\(2113e5cba4d11862fa536c379e9b61cd_img.jpg\) fire !\[\]\(c9a5cd0ae2be6c3d63effa266a341339_img.jpg\) dressed in red suit](#)

Newark Airport

[Record holiday travel underway at Newark Liberty International Airport](#)

[Proterra bankruptcy forces Newark Airport to abandon electric bus fleet](#)

[Anheuser-Busch selling classic NJ brewery, closing New Hampshire and California sites | New York Post](#)

NJ - Good News!

[Toll of Commuting: New microtransit service in Passaic County called a lifeline by commuters](#)

NJ Bridges

[The smallest lift bridge in NJ has the most dramatic history, it's closing on Jan. 5](#)

News Of The Weird - Airport Edition

[Boeing aircraft 'lost' for 13 years turns up in airport parking bay](#)

News Of The Weird - Denver Airport Edition

[Denver Airport Conspiracies: A Long Layover at the Most Interesting Airport in America: From the beginning. Coloradans have theorized about its secret tunnels, clues regarding secret societies, and horrifying harbingers of doom "hidden" in public artwork around the popular hub.](#)

[Another Deep Dive With 5 Wild Theories About Denver Airport's Secrets: Denver International Airport fuels conspiracy theories with its mysterious construction cost, secret societies, and mysterious underground tunnels. The airport's artwork, including murals and the infamous "Blucifer" statue, is often interpreted as ominous clues to doomsday scenarios. Signs and marketing often play into these theories, with humorous nods to lizard people and the Illuminati.](#)

American Airlines- The Good, The Bad, The Ugly

[American Airlines unveils premium upgrades to win back customers](#)

[Free Wi-Fi is coming to American Airlines. Only these flyers can get it.](#)

[My 2-year-old gave up his seat on an American Airlines flight. Where's my refund?](#)

[American Airlines no longer lets basic economy flyers earn miles](#)

[When Something Goes Wrong With Your Flight, These People Take Charge - Inside a tornado-hardened office in Texas, 1,700 American Airlines employees manage the carrier's operations, responding to bad weather, plane trouble and ailing passengers.](#)



News of the Weird - Not The Airport Edition

[The mystery of flight MH370: will a new search find the missing airliner after more than a decade?](#)

News of the Weird - Dangers Just Outside The Airport Edition

[CBP officer opens fire at another driver during road rage incident sparked by a fender bender near JFK Airport](#)

- [JFK Airport terror as gunman opens fire in front of horrified travelers](#)

Tourism

[Tourists abandon US travel plans over Trump's new rules](#)

Travel Health Risks ✈️ ⚠️ 🏠

[Flu cases on the rise amid holiday travel, gatherings, latest CDC data shows](#)

[Newark Airport passenger may have exposed others to measles, New Jersey Health Department says](#)

NY vs NJ

[NJ Gov-elect Mikie Sherrill slams Mamdani for taking credit for hosting World Cup — and suggests ‘reverse congestion pricing’ for New Yorkers. It looks like Mom and Dad are fighting.](#)

[The Keys to the City of New York Are Made in New Jersey](#)

SNL 📺 🏠 ✈️

[The Colin Jost and Pete Davidson SNL Staten Island Ferry will have bars, museum, public space, plans reveal](#)

[Say Farewell To SNL’s Bowen Yang at the Delta Lounge - Raise An Egnog and For A Sentimental Goodbye](#)

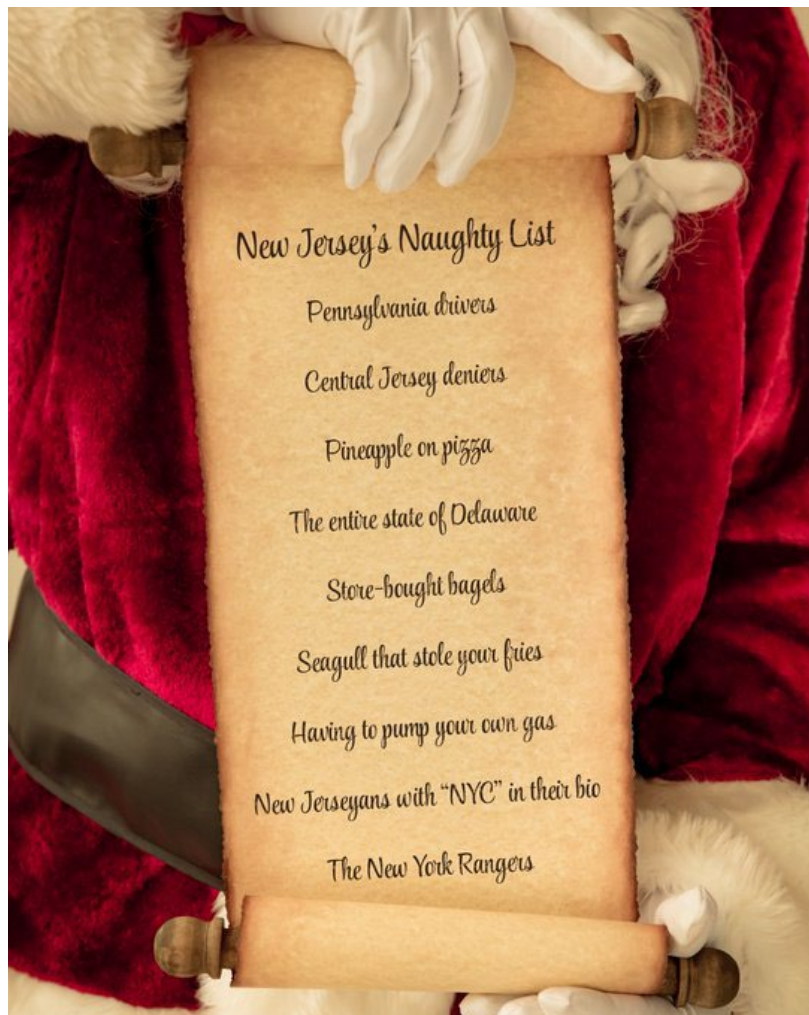
Tesla ⚡ 🚗 📶

[Tesla’s roof of the future could bring Starlink satellite internet directly to your car](#)

[Winter exposes Tesla Cybertruck's major design flaw: the giant windshield wiper](#)

NJ's Throws Legendary Shade

[NJ's Naughty List](#)



Port Authority

[Kathryn Garcia Is Named New Head of the Port Authority. Ms. Garcia, who ran for mayor of New York in 2021 after serving as the city's sanitation commissioner, would succeed Rick Cotton, who is retiring.](#)

[NJ Senate advances Phil Murphy Port Authority board nominees](#)

[Port Authority approves \\$45 billion capital plan with toll and fare increases - see how much more you'll pay.](#)

[Port Authority expects record 14.8M holiday travelers through NYC hubs](#)

[Port Authority plan to double Uber, Lyft airport fees faces driver opposition](#)

[Port Authority shelves Newark Airport PATH extension for another decade](#)

Rivers 🌊 🗺️

[The Hudson River Froze For The First Time Since 2018](#)

[NJ Revolutionary War reenactor marks 50 years crossing the Delaware](#)

You Read It Here First! 👉 📰 📺 👁️ 🙌 🧠

[That's Why Alec Baldwin Was On NJ Transit! And Why We May Continue To See Jack \(Ryan\) Donachy: Alec and Hilaria Baldwin Spotted House Hunting In Montclair.](#)

Self Driving Cars 🚗 🤖

[San Francisco power outage leaves 130,000 in the dark as self-driving cars stalled in middle of streets: Tesla vehicles with Full Self-Driving wouldn't be bricked like that. FSD treats powerless intersections as all-way stops and navigates them safely, as seen in recent SF outage tests. Waymo's issues stem from software standoffs at dead lights.](#)

[Waymo has just released an official statement following the massive power outage in San Francisco this week and their robotaxis shutting down. "We want to share an account of our operations during the outage and how we are evolving to better serve the city."](#)

Waymo:

The most interesting thing about the Waymo blackout mess isn't that robotaxis froze. It's why they froze.

The cars knew exactly what to do. Dead traffic light? Treat it like a four-way stop. Humans do this every day. But Waymo's system still asked a human:

"Hey... are you sure this is okay?"

That worked fine when it was one intersection.

It collapsed when it was the entire city. This is the dirty secret of autonomy (and honestly, AI everywhere): Human-in-the-loop sounds safe... until concurrency hits. Rare edge cases stop being rare when the world misbehaves all at once.

So this wasn't an AI problem. It was an organizational confidence problem. Google style

Waymo didn't trust its own system enough to let it act decisively at scale. The fix isn't better sensors. It's deciding when software no longer needs permission. Autonomy doesn't fail when models are dumb. It fails when humans can't keep up.

[After Power Outage, San Francisco Wonders: Can Waymo Taxis Handle a Big Earthquake?](#)



Self-Driving Cars 🚗 Are Suddenly Behaving Like New York 🗽 🚕 Cabbies!

[Waymo's Self-Driving Cars Are Suddenly Behaving Like New York Cabbies](#)

NPR 📻 'Wait Wait' for December 13, 2025: Takes On The Self-Driving Car Topic

HOST PETER SAGAL: Welcome to the show. You're going to play "Who's Alzo This Time?" Alzo Slade will read you three quotations from this week's news. If you can correctly identify or explain just two of them, you will win our prize - any voice from our show you might choose for your voicemail. Are you ready to play?

ANNOUNCER ALZO SLADE: "It's driving like a New York City taxi driver."

HOST: That was one of many people who have noticed that what kind of cars have started getting a lot more aggressive on the road?

CONTESTANT: Is it self-driving car?

HOST : Yes, it is self-driving cars. *(Sound of a Bell)* Specifically, Waymos. Waymo's driverless taxis are already operating in some cities, and customers had complained about trips being slow, because the cars were too polite, right? They stopped behind double-parked delivery trucks instead of driving around them in the other lane. They slowed down to check on the people they hit. *(Laughter)*

So - and this is true - the car's programming has been tweaked to make it a little bit more human. Nobody coming in the opposite lane? Well, drive around the truck. No other cars around? Well, just roll through the stop sign. School zone? If you say so. *(Laughter)*

So some people say, well, now it drives, like, aggressively, like a New York City cabby. As a matter of fact, many Waymo passengers have noticed the sudden appearance of, like, pine tree air fresheners on the rear-view mirror. Although, of course, it's not really a New York cabby unless the car itself says, oh, I wish Giuliani was still mayor. *(Laughter)*

ADAM BURKE, COMEDIAN: Who was complaining that they were too polite?

HOST: Passengers.

TOM BODETT, COMEDIAN: Yeah. I went through - it was actually more hilarious than unnerving was I owned a Tesla when - and it had the beta self-driving thing. And the week that they downloaded that to all of us, and our cars would actually self-drive, I was in Vermont, took my two boys out with us, and we're going to let this drive us to town, right? And it was like 10 miles. It took forever. Yeah, 'cause it's Vermont. I mean, I don't think it really knew where it was. It'd get to a stop sign and be like, whoa, what is that? *(Laughter)*

And it would inch up. And we were in tears by the time we got halfway to town. It drives like Nana. *(Laughter)*

BURKE: Did it realize it was in Vermont and just started becoming more folksy? Like, it just stopped to appreciate the sunset.

BODETT: Well, it would be going down the road, and then, you know, look, another car is coming, which is more rare there than other places. And it would just, like, whoa.

BURKE: Your Tesla somehow tipped its cap to the other person and went, Ma'am.

BODETT: Yeah, you got to have the wave. *(Laughter)*

ANNOUNCER SLADE: I can attest to the fact that Waymos are more like taxi drivers 'cause when I tried to hail one, they just went right past me. *(Laughter)*

BURKE: They were Waymo racist than you thought they were going to be. *(Laughter)*

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Harrison Ford will be honored with the 2025 SAG-AFTRA Life Achievement Award on March 1, 2026. Photo courtesy of Apple