AMTRAK READY AND PREPARED FOR THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY TRAVEL
Extra trains scheduled for Northeast, Midwest and on the West Coast

WASHINGTON – Thanksgiving is the busiest travel period of the year for Amtrak and America's Railroad® is ready and prepared to accommodate additional passengers with extra trains scheduled in the Northeast Corridor, the Chicago hub, the Pacific Northwest and in California. Amtrak will use every available passenger rail car in its fleet and will operate its special holiday schedule in the Northeast as repairs have been made following Hurricane Sandy.

The busiest travel days that are likely to sell out are the Tuesday and Wednesday before and the Saturday and Sunday following Thanksgiving. Passengers may also wish to consider traveling on less-busy days such as the Monday before or the Friday and Monday following the Thanksgiving holiday, when more travel and price options may be available.

All Amtrak trains in the Northeast will require reservations – including the Harrisburg-Philadelphia Keystone Service, the New York-Buffalo Empire Service and the New Haven-Springfield Shuttles. In time for this year’s Thanksgiving holiday, Amtrak is offering two new service expansions on the Downeaster between Boston and Freeport and Brunswick, Maine, and Amtrak Thruway bus service in Eastern North Carolina that is providing rail connections for eight communities to the Palmetto.

In addition, from Nov. 21 to 23, passengers traveling on Amtrak long-distance trains will be offered a menu item of a traditional Thanksgiving meal featuring a fully-cooked turkey breast with gravy, stuffing, cranberry sauce and side accompaniments. Pumpkin pie with whipped cream and maple walnuts will be offered as a dessert option.

More than 724,000 passengers traveled on Amtrak trains for the Thanksgiving holiday period in 2011, the most ever for the holiday.

Amtrak is working to make the holiday travel experience as pleasant as possible and encourages passengers to consider the following holiday travel tips to help ensure a smooth trip:

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Avoid the Rush: The busiest Amtrak travel days are the Wednesday before and Sunday after Thanksgiving. Purchase tickets early using Amtrak.com and print an eTicket or use your smartphone, use the Amtrak iPhone app or the Amtrak Android app, QuikTrak™ ticket vending machines or ticket windows at staffed stations or call 800-USA-RAIL.

Arrive at the Station Early: Allow plenty of time at stations prior to departure – at least 45 minutes before if tickets need to be picked up. Arrange for pre-boarding if you need extra time or assistance and use Red Cap agents to help you with your baggage. In addition, suburban Amtrak stops can be less crowded than downtown locations and can enable you to get a jump on your trip if the station is in your direction of travel.

Know the Limits: Note the limit of two carry-on bags per person (excluding laptops, purses, briefcases), and be sure all luggage is tagged with your name and address.

Carry photo ID: Passengers are required to show valid photo identification when purchasing tickets. Make sure to carry valid photo ID at all times, as it can be requested aboard trains.

Be Safe: Be aware of your surroundings, stand back from the edge of the platform, do not leave your bags unattended, and watch your step when boarding and leaving the train or when walking between cars while the train is in motion.

Security Matters: If you see something suspicious or unusual, say something. Call Amtrak Police at 800.331.0008 or 911. Passengers might notice additional police presence at stations and on board our trains as part of our planned increased security efforts which also include random baggage screening at various stations.

About Amtrak®:
Amtrak is America’s Railroad®, the nation’s intercity passenger rail service and its high-speed rail operator. A record 31.2 million passengers traveled on Amtrak in FY 2012 on more than 300 daily trains – at speeds up to 150 mph (241 kph) – that connect 46 states, the District of Columbia and three Canadian Provinces. Amtrak operates intercity trains in partnership with 15 states and contracts with 13 commuter rail agencies to provide a variety of services. Enjoy the journey® at Amtrak.com or call 800-USA-RAIL for schedules, fares and more information. Join us on facebook.com/Amtrak and follow us at twitter.com/Amtrak.

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