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- HOME
 - NEWS
 - WEATHER
 - CANCELLATIONS
 - SPORTS
 - KCRG 9.2
 - SHOW YOU CARE
 - YOUNEWS
 - A-LIST
- Local
 - National & World
 - Local Business
 - Politics
 - Crime
 - Health
 - News Links
 - News Team

Sequester Cuts Cause Delays at Eastern Iowa Airport

By Nadia Crow, Reporter



A US Airways plane is parked between two American Airlines planes, one bearing the new logo, (far left), and the old logo (far right). American Airlines CEO Tom Horton and US Airways CEO Doug Parker announced the merger of the two airlines during a press conference in the Terminal D Admiral's Club at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, Thursday, February 14, 2013 in Texas. (Tom Fox/Dallas Morning News/MCT)

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CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa - FAA furloughs are causing flight delays at several US airports, and some eastern Iowa travelers are feeling the effect. Automatic spending cuts require all air-traffic controllers to take furlough days. The sequester has forced the Department of Transportation to cut one billion dollars from its budget. It means, 47,000 FAA employees, including 15,000 air traffic controllers, have to each take eleven days of unpaid leave before October first. Because of that, the FAA expects some 6,700 flight delays each day, nationwide.

All eyes are glued to big monitors scattered around the airport here. You can check your flight status and try your hand at predicting weather. The biggest questions people want to know when they look at this board are, "Is my flight on time and is there anything that would delay my travel plans?" And you may not know until after you take off from Cedar Rapids.

"Just relaxing and taking time with my mother and my sister taking it one day at a time," said Hufford.

But before Solon's Tracy Hufford gets to Rome, Italy, she has to get on two planes through three airports, with the looming sequester cuts hanging over her travels.

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"It made us a little nervous. We thought about taking an earlier flight, but so far so good," said Hufford.

Leaving Eastern Iowa isn't the problem. It's getting to your connecting flight on time. And what about getting back to Cedar Rapids?

"The planes are always being watched by air traffic control. So when you have a lot of volume or weather delays, they really have to watch the separation of aircrafts," said CID Airport Director Tim Bradshaw.

And fewer of those watchful eyes could mean more people on the ground waiting for their trip in the sky. It happened just this past weekend. Flight delays littered the jumbo screens at airports across the nation.

"The planes are full and when you have any kind of glitch in the system, it's very hard to rebook," said Bradshaw.

Tuesday, there are no real delays to speak of at the Eastern Iowa Airport, but pending interruptions makes Hufford weary of flying.

"I hope they get it straightened out for the public because when people are flying they're spending a lot of money and we had delays before so this is only going to compound that problem," said traveler Tracy Hufford.

And a busy summer travel season puts more pressure on Congress to make changes as tensions and frustrations from travelers climb.

Bradshaw says you should be prepared to wait, especially if you're traveling to or through New York City where most of the delays are expected. Most airlines have beefed up their online presence, so you can take your smartphone and follow your flight, check for delays, and even connect with the airlines directly.

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At least the obamaphones are still ringing...

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Levi White · ★ Top Commenter · Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Why wouldn't they? He has nothing to do with them, but you're hoping for cheap shots. You mean reganphones. Because that's when it started, and it's not actually paid for by tax dollars. Facts don't support your argument. Again. <http://www.factcheck.org/2009/10/the-obama-phone/>

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Mels Rogue · Bagram, Afghanistan

Levi White - its paid for with tax dollars - its a surcharge (tax) on our phone bills! Who do you think is paying for it?
Regan started it for rural americans correct. That was for land lines. Cell phones were included in 2008. As of now Americans pay an average of \$2.50 a month per household and last years bill was 2.2 BILLION ... whos making up that difference?

In 2008 the bill was 819 million - ITS 2.2 BILLION NOW!!!! thats a freakin huge jump in my book in 4 years. Was that Bush or Regan's administration that did that? And dont even get me started on the Obamanation health care - talk about the millstone around the neck of America ...

I dont care who started it - but I find it quite disingenuous that we have this political driven "sequestor" - when we have cradle to grave government and not one dime of that can be cut. Get rid of the free phones and the taxpayer (ie surcharges) saves 2.2 billion (and it will grow) a year.

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More Good Stuff



Antarctic adventure now within reach, but keep it safe

In 1911, Norwegian Roald Amundsen and British rival Robert Falcon Scott raced overland to be the first to stand at the South Pole. Amundsen planted a flag on the spot that Scott would find three weeks later, before he would turn around for his ill-fated return to the coast. [More](#)



The Secret to Paying Less for Life Insurance

For parents, protecting their children is second nature. The lengths you would go to keep your children safe know no bounds, and you would readily sacrifice your own well-being to ensure theirs. Yet many well-meaning parents overlook the importance of obtaining a life insurance policy that will ensure their spouses and children are taken care of if the worst should happen. [More](#)



New: Safe, natural way to make your eyelashes beautiful

Even the ancient Egyptians knew it: The secret to beauty is in the eyes. Not those of the beholder, but yours. Research shows that as far back as 3000 B.C., the women of Egypt were enhancing their eyelashes with metal dust and soot. The goal then was the same as it is now: To make the eyes appear larger, wider and brighter - which creates a more alert and youthful look. But metal dust and soot were tough on the vision. Fortunately, today there are much safer ways to make your eyelashes fuller, thicker, longer and darker ... so you look bright-eyed and younger. [More](#)

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