

# eConnections



The electronic newsletter of MoDOT District 4, Kansas City Area

June 2010

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### econnections sources

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**Design** Flo Noear, 0455

**Regional Counsel** LeAnn Francis, 6382

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## MoDOT Earns National Recognition for Programs Joint Effort with "A Call to Oneness" and Traffic Control Program Receive High Praise

The Kansas City District of the Missouri Department of Transportation recently received national recognition from the American Public Works Association. MoDOT's inter-faith partnership with A Call to Oneness for "CDL and Job Awareness Training" won the Diversity Exemplary Practices Award and KC Scout's "Maximizing the Flow" PR campaign won the Exceptional Performance Award.

The largest and oldest organization of its kind in the world, APWA brings important public works-related topics to public attention in local, state and federal arenas, so national recognition from this organization is important to citizen-focused departments such as MoDOT.

### A Call to Help Unemployed

What began as an idea grew to a partnership with a mission: Provide training to help individuals find jobs in the transportation industry. MoDOT and "A Call to Oneness" joined efforts in 2009 to offer three free workshops to provide training on what is required to pass the written test for the Commercial Driver's License (CDL).

"At MoDOT we want to attract the best employees. And to work in many of our jobs, you must have a high school diploma and pass the written CDL test. We began with the idea of helping individuals get the training to take the written exam, but it has grown beyond that. This partnership is about training individuals for a wide variety of transportation careers. It's about reaching out and being an engaged partner in our community," said Belinda Fite, human resources manager.

Learn more about this program at [modot.org/kc/programs](http://modot.org/kc/programs).

### Merge Easy

After much research, MoDOT and KDOT's joint Kansas City Scout Team identified some high-traffic and impact areas along one of the city's busiest corridors and came up with a proven solution to help - ramp metering. In August 2009, the first ramp meters in the city went into operation.

Before the first bulb was lit, the team began an aggressive public relations campaign to engage citizens in the surrounding communities in the traffic decisions. While used successfully in many parts of the country, this was the first time the concept of controlled merging was introduced in Kansas City. Public information was crucial to success.

Many of the people who received information attended public meetings or left comments on the online meeting, were the same drivers who found themselves stuck in traffic in the corridor. The citizen response was very positive. Hundreds of drivers attended local meetings and logged comments online. Check out ramp metering at [kcscout.net/rampmetering](http://kcscout.net/rampmetering)



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## Meetings/Training

### Thursday, June 24, Room 236

#### Job Status

Cass/Jackson, 8:30 – 10 a.m.  
Interstates, 10 – 11:30 a.m.  
Clay/Platte, Noon – 1:30 p.m.  
Ray/Johnson/Lafayette/Henry,  
1:30 – 3 p.m.

### Monday, July 1

Monthly RE Meeting  
8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Room 255

### Wednesday, July 7

Maintenance Superintendent Meeting  
12:30 to 3 p.m., Room 136

### Tuesday, July 13

Management Team  
8 a.m. - 2 p.m., Room 136

### Wednesday, July 14

Jackson/Cass Area Team Mtg.  
8 to 10 a.m., Room 255

### Thursday, July 15, Room 236

#### Job Status

Cass/Jackson, 8:30 – 10 a.m.  
Interstates, 10 – 11:30 a.m.  
Clay/Platte, Noon – 1:30 p.m.  
Ray/Johnson/Lafayette/Henry,  
1:30 – 3 p.m.

## Events

### Wednesday, June 23

**I-470/50 Ribbon Cutting  
J.C. Penney Parking Lot, Summit  
Fair Shopping Center, 10 a.m.**

### Friday, June 25

**Route HH Bridge Ribbon Cutting  
Platte City, 10 a.m.**



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## Creatively Engaged

These two programs are just a few examples of the many ways MoDOT staff uses creativity and community engagement to solve problems affecting customers.

“It is a pleasure working for a district that has innovative ideas and takes a risk to implement them,” said Beth Wright, District Engineer. “This staff never fails to impress with new ways to keep our customers and roads moving forward.”

MoDOT representatives will attend the local award ceremony on May 18. The department will receive national recognition on Aug. 16 at the International Public Works Congress and Exposition in Boston, Mass.

## From the Director

I am writing to provide you with an update regarding the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission’s search for a new Director.

The first step of the process, which was the development of the job specification for the position, has now been completed following an outreach effort to many interested stakeholders. That outreach included feedback from our employees through a review and comment of the draft job specification by representatives from the Employee Advisory Council, the Transportation Employees Association of Missouri, the union that represents some of our maintenance employees, and from our senior management team.

This collaborative effort was of great help to the Commission in formulating

the best possible specification for the job.

At its meeting on June 2, 2010, in Lee Summit’s, Missouri, the Commission approved the final version of the specification following careful consideration of the comments received. As a result, the search has now been officially launched, and the job specification may be viewed on MoDOT’s external webpage and at <https://www4.modot.mo.gov/HRIS/external/postListAction.do>.

All individuals who wish to express interest in the position (either internal or external candidates) should do so in confidence directly to Grant Cooper & Associates as indicated on the job specification.

We will update you as we progress through the search process. Thanks.

## Two of State's Top 10 Work Zones Located in Kansas City

### *Projects Impact 300,000 Travelers*

As motorists hit the road for the Memorial Day holiday weekend and throughout the summer, the Missouri Department of Transportation wants to help ensure your travels are as carefree as possible. The department has made a list of 10 work zones to look out for this summer, and two of them are located in Kansas City.

### **Interstate 29/35 "kcICON Project" reconstruction**

Interstate 29/35 from Route 210/Armour Road to the northeast corner of the downtown Kansas City central business district loop will have restricted lanes and various ramp closures through July 2011. Two restricted lanes will be open daily 6-8:30 a.m. and 3:30-6:30 p.m. Expect delays during both peak and non-peak hours. This project includes construction of the new, landmark Christopher S. Bond Missouri River Bridge. The route carries 102,000 vehicles per day. For more information, visit <http://www.kcicon.com/>.

### **Interstate 70 improvements**

MoDOT is rehabilitating 14 bridges on I-70 and improving the I-70 and I-435 interchange. To repair the bridges, I-70 will be reduced to two lanes on eastbound I-70 from downtown Kansas City to Van Brunt Boulevard until December. Afternoon rush hour eastbound traffic likely will be slowed into late fall. At the same time, work to improve access at I-70 and I-435 will impact more than 200,000 travelers heading to the Truman Sports Complex and other destinations. Work this summer is centered on 40 Highway and I-435 at the I-70 interchange. This project will slow traffic on the interstates and will close 40 Highway during the summer while a new bridge is constructed.

A video and clickable map providing more details about the Top 10 statewide projects can be found at [www.modot.org](http://www.modot.org).

## kcICON has Widest Concrete Bridge Deck Pour in Missouri

The single widest bridge deck pour in Missouri state history will take place this week off the north bank of the Missouri River, as part of the new Christopher S. Bond Bridge. This concrete pour will be 134-feet wide, and will be placed in 70-foot sections for a total of 1,750 cubic yards.

"Missourians have entrusted MoDOT with \$245 million to maximize every dollar on this project and get it built as quickly as possible" said kcICON Project Director Brian Kidwell. "Design-build project delivery enables the contractor to continue to find ways, like this single, widest deck pour, to save time and complete the project on schedule by July 2011."

"This is the widest deck pour Paseo Corridor Constructors has ever done," said kcICON Project Manager Bryan Wilkerson. "We are always looking for new, innovative ways to save time and money on this project, keeping our promise to

Kansas City that this will be delivered on time and on budget."

Concrete will be pumped from trucks on the river bank, below the bridge and roadway deck.

Approximately 40 crew members will work to grade and finish the concrete before the cure process begins. Once the concrete on the deck is placed, it will be covered with wet, burlap sheets until the cure process is complete.

When complete, there will be approximately 219,000 square yards of concrete paving in the 4.7-mile project.

All construction activities are weather dependent and subject to change. Updated lane closure information for the kcICON Project can be found on the project's Web site at [www.kcicon.com](http://www.kcicon.com) or by calling the information hotline at 816-841-8888.



*Artist rendering of completed Bond Bridge*

# IS Information Corner

## Change Is Inevitable

One of the most confusing aspects of Word's Track Changes feature is how to remove the changes from a document. If you have ever wanted to send a "clean" version of a document to someone else, you may have tried the "Display for Review" drop-down menu on the Reviewing toolbar (Word 2007: the "Display for Review" drop-down menu in the Tracking group on the Review tab).



This drop-down menu contains choices such as Final Showing Markup, Final, Original Showing Markup, and Original.



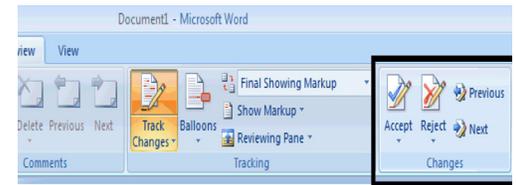
Setting this to Final hides the changes, so you should be able to save the document and send it, right?

Wrong. The Final setting only hides the tracked changes, which means your recipient will still be able to display them again by setting the Reviewing toolbar selection to Final Showing Markup.

The "Display for Review" drop-down menu simply offers different ways of viewing a document with tracked changes. The only way to remove the changes permanently is to accept or reject them.

Word 2007:

1. Click the Review tab.
2. In the Changes section, click the Accept button and choose "Accept and Move to Next" if you need to accept some changes and reject others, or choose "Accept All Changes in Document" if you want to accept all changes that were made.
3. To reject changes, click the Reject button (located next to the Accept button) and choose "Reject and Move to Next" or "Reject All Changes in Document" to return to the original document.



## Using Excel: Basics

Working with formulas is one of the most common activities people engage in when working in Excel. The complexity of the formulas varies greatly, but the basics are the same for everyone.

This tip covers the basics so that everyone has the tools to create formulas.

### Is it a formula or not?

A formula in Excel starts with an equal (=) sign. If the first thing in a cell is anything else, you are looking at text. There is, however, one exception: for compatibility with other applications, you may also see an @ symbol as the first character in a formula.

### Mathematical Operators

- Addition - a plus (+) sign signifies that the item to the left and right should be added together. Example =2+2 result 4
- Subtraction - a minus (-) sign signifies that the item to the right should reduce the item to the left. Example =8-4 result 4

- Multiplication - an asterisk (\*) symbol is used for multiplication, signifying that the item to the left and right should be multiplied. Example =2\*2 result 4
- Division - a slash (/) symbol signifies that the item to the left should be divided by the item to the right. Example =8/4 result 2
- Exponents - a carat (^) symbol signifies that the item to the left should be raised to the power of the item to the right. Example =2^3 result 8

### Parentheses

Parentheses are used in formulas in two ways. One is to enclose the arguments (contributing parts) of one of Excel's functions. The other is to indicate the order in which mathematical operations are to be performed in formulas. Mathematical operations inside the parentheses are done before those outside the parentheses. When more than one level of parentheses exist, work from the inside out; for this reason, parentheses must come in pairs. Example: =(5+10)/(3+2) is solved =(15)/(5) result 3

### Order of Operations

Certain mathematical operations take precedence over other operations, and some are equal. Many of us learned a mnemonic in grade school to remember the order of operations. The most commonly used is PEMDAS, often remembered as "Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally." This translates to Parenthesis, Exponents, Multiplication, Division, Addition, Subtraction. The only caveat is that multiplication and division are equal and therefore are carried out left to right; likewise, addition and subtraction are also equal and are carried out left to right. Multiplication and Division are considered together and Addition and Subtraction are also considered together. If you are getting the wrong answer for a formula, check that the parentheses are in the correct places.

Other characters commonly found in formulas:

- Commas are used to separate arguments in a function and values or cell references in a formula. Example =SUM(B2,C2,E2)
- Colons are used to denote contiguous ranges of cells. Example =SUM(B2:E2)

# Corporate Ladder

## Retirees

**Gary Carson**  
Senior Maintenance Worker

**Carl King**  
Maintenance Crew Leader

**Gary Loveless**  
Senior Electrician

**Larry Pierce**  
Senior Maintenance Worker

**Dennis Cline**  
Maintenance Supervisor

**Robert Curtin**  
Senior Highway Designer

**Ray Meeks**  
Survey Instrument Operator

## Welcome to D4

**Kevin Long**  
Maintenance Worker

**Antwaun Marchbanks**  
Maintenance Worker

**Robert Milton**  
Maintenance Crew Leader

**Frank Richardson**  
Intermediate Maintenance Worker

**George Rosser**  
Maintenance Worker

**Noah Spear**  
Maintenance Worker

**Robert Hunt**  
Maintenance Worker

## Promotion

**Keith Rush**  
Maintenance Crew Leader

**Rebel Walker**  
Maintenance Crew Leader

## News from Across the District

### Condolences

Our thoughts and prayers go to Dale Malott, Crew Leader for Clay County, and his family on the loss of his mother Ethel Woneta Malott in June.

Our condolences also go to Greg Copeland, Materials Technician, and his family on the loss of his father Raleigh Copeland in June.

Our thoughts and prayers go to Tori Burris, Intermediate Design Technician, and her family on the loss of her father Robert Daily in June.

Condolences to the family of retiree Donnie Wiltz, retired Maintenance supervisor at Westline for D4 on his passing in May.

Our thoughts and prayers go to Trace Fickle from Desgin, and his family on the loss of his father Ernest Fickle in May.



### Mailbag

To MoDOT:

We want to thank you for providing us with assistance to make our "Motor Madness" on May 7 such an exciting day. This was the first time in several years that we tried this program and appreciate all that you did to complete the request we placed upon you. Your gift bags were a success. The kids loved them. Your staff was so kind and considerate. They represented

MoDOT extremely well. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely  
Neta Starnier  
Parents-As-Teachers  
Higginsville MO

My family and I wish to express our sincere appreciation to the district for the thoughts and prayers during the loss of my father.

Dad had been blessed with a long life of 94 years and he will be greatly missed. Also thanks for the lovely plant.

Thank You  
Charlie Geiger

My family and I wish to express our sincere appreciation to the district for the thoughts prayers condolences and the many acts of kindness during our loss. You have been a true blessing and are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,  
Gregory R. Copeland  
and Family

## Partnership Gives Employment and Hope to Homeless

*MoDOT partners with reStart to create job opportunities for Kansas City homeless*

The District 4 office is undertaking a life-changing partnership that if successful, will benefit participants as well as the city.

This month, the MoDOT and reStart Inc., an interfaith ministry that works with homeless persons, began a work program to employ homeless citizens. The workers pick up trash and beautify state-run roadways in the city's urban core.

Paid a standard minimum wage, the new employees are given the necessary safety equipment and training, as well as transportation to and from the work site.

"It is a tough job market for people with experience," said Evelyn Craig, reStart executive director. "These people have a spotty work history in many cases. This partnership gives them the opportunity to build their resume. It also gives them the pride of earning an honest wage, something they may not have had for a while."

reStart provides shelter and supportive services to homeless men, women, youth and families with the goal of helping them move toward independence and self-suf-

wage that will help them reestablish independence and potentially regain a home and security.

"We are very excited about this program," said Beth Wright, District Engineer. "We have been discussing this option with reStart for almost two years, it is amazing to see it finally coming together. If successful, this is something we may be able to implement in other areas of the city, expanding the opportunity for more participants."

"Kansas City has the seventh largest homeless population per capita, 56 percent of which are mothers and children. In the past two years, nearly half of all the homeless households are experiencing homelessness for the first time," said Craig. "In 2009, reStart served 7,501 homeless persons. Partnerships with organizations such as MoDOT has the potential to reduce that number greatly."



ficiency, and ultimately ending homelessness in our community.

In this partnership with MoDOT, six to nine homeless persons have the opportunity to go to work every day and earn a

## Designers Put in Extra Hours to Keep Travelers Safe

On July 7, 2009 a routine bridge inspection quickly turned into an emergency bridge closure. The northbound Route 291 Bridge over the Missouri River was closed to maintain the safety of the traveling public after an inspection revealed an unacceptable level of rust on the gusset plates.

MoDOT had to act quickly to award an emergency contract to construct a cross-over to minimize the impacts to traffic – a project that was under construction within days of the bridge closing. It was the work of Senior Highway Designer Jodie Puhr and Senior Design Technician Melissa Neff that made the quick turnaround possible.

"Normally a project like this takes a few months," said Puhr. "But because this was an emergency, we had to get it done in two days."

The designers not only completed their normal tasks but had to manage extra responsibilities that were usually handled by other groups, including figuring material quantities and working closely with the construction office to make sure the plans were appropriate for the area.

"Jodie and Melissa were responsible for providing an entire set of plans for an emergency Route 291 Bridge. The job was designed in less than 48 hours," said Lisa Stupps, Transportation Project Designer. "They were told about this project on Tuesday afternoon and by Thursday noon they had posted plans, specifications and an estimate that the contractors could bid on. The project was awarded by Friday noon and the contractor was on site by that evening. Both Jodie



and Melissa were willing to go above and beyond to work late nights to finish the project in the deadline required."

Their dedication to the work and the public recently earned the designers a High Achiever Award for demonstrating MoDOT Values and being flexible in their job.