

kcConnections



A publication of MoDOT Kansas City District

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KC District Calendar:

May 8

Truman's Birthday
State offices closed

May 10

District Tracker Meeting

Fall Protection Training

Bucket Truck Training

Application & Interviewing Strategies
Training

Have a Great Week!

May Day Brought Big Changes to MoDOT Customer Service

Two significant changes took place for customer service representatives throughout the state on May 1. First, working as one team, 23 customer service representatives began answering customers' questions about any transportation issue in the entire state, to include district-specific questions pertaining to such topics as road work, maintenance efforts and upcoming projects. Termed "the bucket," the new process works like this: if a caller in Kansas City District has been on hold for four minutes, then the call bounces to the "bucket" and the next available representative – anywhere in the state – answers the call.

Second, customer service centers in all seven districts implemented new call center schedules. The five, full-time Kansas City District Customer Service Representatives operate the KC call center from 4 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday. Additionally, each representative spends part of her shift assisting customers at the district office front desk from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"The changes taking place now are the result of the Customer Service Team that met weekly in September and October of last year," said Traffic Systems



Traffic Systems Supervisor Jeff Still oversees the daily operations and staffing of KC District's Customer Service Center. Photo: Cathy Morrison

Supervisor Jeff Still. "The team included customer service representatives, traffic systems supervisors and customer relations managers throughout the state who really dug into our customer service processes and identified ways to work more efficiently."

Training for all customer service representatives and their back-ups was held April 19, followed by a pilot test of the new process. The training focused on developing a culture of one team customer service and demonstrating the web-based information "hub" created to help them quickly find the answers to customers' questions.

"So far everything is going very smoothly," said Still. "We are continuing to provide outstanding customer service."

New State Transportation Program Reflects Funding Freefall

Fewer Projects Will Be Built in the Kansas City District

In the last ten years, great progress has been made to improve Missouri's transportation system, due largely to funding from Amendment 3 and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

But the sense of satisfaction that comes from traveling on those smooth, safe roadways may soon be forgotten. Missouri's transportation system is in the midst of a drastic funding shortage, and unless a solution is found, the situation will only get worse.

Missouri's construction program has dropped from an average of \$1.2 billion in recent years to about \$700 million. It's barely enough to maintain the existing system, much less tackle the projects that create jobs, increase safety, ease congestion and foster economic development. Additionally, MoDOT has reduced staff, facilities and equipment to direct as much funding as possible to roads and bridges.

MoDOT Planning Manager Lee Ann Kell said that many of the larger construction projects in the pipeline,

such as interchange improvements at Interstate 35/Route 291 in Liberty (\$12.6 million), U.S. 71/Route 291 in Harrisonville (\$17.9 million) and Interstate 29/Tiffany Springs Parkway in Kansas City (\$13.6 million) are made possible by sharing the costs with cities and transportation development districts.

"For future, our customers will notice that district projects in this program are largely those that take care of our existing system," said MoDOT Planning Manager Lee Ann Kell. "We simply no longer have the resources to solely tackle big projects that enhance our transportation system."

The draft 2013-2017 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program lists transportation projects planned by state and regional planning agencies for fiscal years 2013 through 2017 (July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2017). The proposed program is available for public review beginning May 2. Those interested in seeing the program or offering comments can contact MoDOT's



customer service centers at 1-888-ASK-MoDOT (888-275-6636). The program is also available on MoDOT's web site, www.modot.org, and at the Kansas City District Office located at 600 NE Colbern Road in Lee's Summit. The formal comment period ends June 1, 2012.

Following the public review period, the comments will be presented to the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission. The commission will review the comments and the final transportation program before considering it for approval at its July 11 meeting in Washington, Mo.

Insurance premiums stay the same for 2013

I wanted to update you on a decision the Commission made yesterday.

Back in September 2011, I emailed you to tell you about the Commission's decision to change the state contribution to our medical plan for both active employees and retirees. I've always felt that one of the great things about working at MoDOT, besides the fantastic people, is the great benefits.

With medical costs rising, the Commission decided beginning in January 2014, to set a state contribution at a specific amount per month, tied to the number of years of service. Active employees and current employees would also be

affected by changes in the percentage of the premium paid by the state and by the plan member.

Yesterday, the Commission rescinded these changes. Why? Because the Commission wants to ensure the BEST decision is made for all of us at MoDOT. They recognize the need to look at an affordable way to provide health care, but want to get more input.

The Commission intends to create a committee with MoDOT and Highway Patrol representatives to study this over the summer. And, I promise to keep you updated as the committee works through all the issues.

What does that mean for you? If you are a member in our medical plan, your percentage share of the premium that you currently pay, as either a retiree or an active employee, will not change for calendar year 2013. You will be receiving a letter later this month to further explain this.

Our benefits are important to all of us and I'm pleased the Commission is creating this committee to revisit this very important topic.

Kevin Keith,
Director

Bring Your Child To Work Day

Over 100 children came to Bring Your Child To Work Day April 24 to learn about what their parents do at work each day.

Thanks to a variety of departments putting together activities, parents and children were able to visit different stations in the morning.

Groups visited KC Scout and toured the TMC. Traffic set up the tricycles and cones so kids could try their luck at texting and driving to see what a distraction it causes.

In General Services, the groups were able to try and see if they could find and fit the right washers and nuts onto bolts, and learn about the equipment GS uses to keep equipment in good shape.

Design provided Match Box car-sized models of Round-A-Bouts and Diverging Diamonds. The kids were able to learn the correct way to navigate these innovations. In Construction and Materials families toured the Materials Lab and learned about all the testing completed.

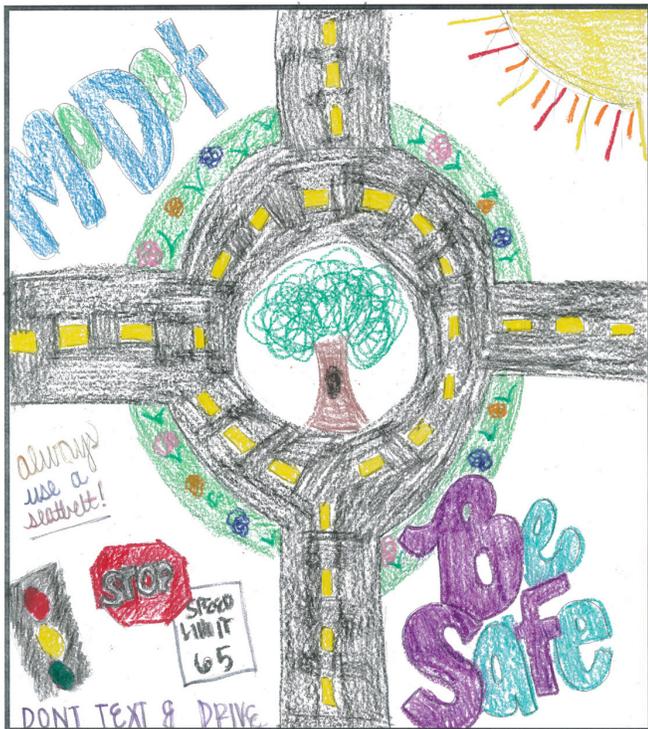
Maintenance provided a space for kids to create safety posters to be sent to each building, reminding workers to be safe. At this station, kids also got to use their engineering skills to build a marshmallow and toothpick bridge.

After lunch, kids designed safety posters and got to see a variety of the big trucks MoDOT uses in its operations. Thanks to all the staff who created and worked stations so kids could learn about MoDOT.

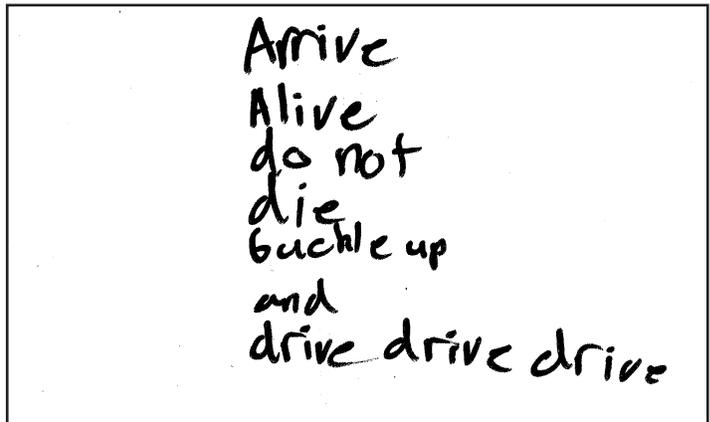
On this page are some of the poems and posters kids created during bring your child to work day.



Roundabout Poster
by Riley Moore, Age 6



I Love MoDOT & Safety Poster
by Halle Jackson, 9 & Alexis Nichols, 15



Poem by Troy Huffman, Age 9

Thanks to everyone who made Bring Your Child to Work Day possible!

Safety Update: Dogs Spiders & Snakes

Working outdoors exposes us to more than just the sun and heat. There are other living things such as stray dogs, spiders and snakes that could pose a threat to workers. Here are some basic tips for avoiding bites from these creatures when working outdoors.

Dogs and Other Animals

- Both dead and live animals can spread diseases such as rabies or Lyme disease.
- Always avoid direct contact with wild or stray animals. If you cannot avoid contact, wear protective gloves and wash your hands frequently.
- Dispose of dead animals as soon as possible, following MoDOT best practices.
- If you are confronted by a dog, avoid eye contact. Try to remain motionless until the dog is gone and then slowly back away.
- Never run from a dog. Its natural instinct is to chase its prey.
- If you are bitten or scratched by an animal, let your supervisor know and seek medical attention immediately.

Insects, Spiders and Ticks

- Wear long pants, socks and long-sleeved shirts to protect against stinging and biting insects.
- Use insect repellents that contain DEET or Picaridin. Apply these repellents as directed by the manufacturer. Avoid spraying directly on to skin.

- Treat bites and stings using over-the-counter products that relieve pain and reduce the risk of infection. Keep these products handy, such as in your first aid kits.
- Avoid ants. Severe reactions to their bites can cause chest pain, nausea, loss of breath, slurred speech or swelling that requires immediate medical attention.

Snakes

- When moving debris, avoid placing your hands underneath objects whenever possible.
- Wear heavy gloves. Gloves with gauntlets offer the best protection.
- Watch for snakes sunning on fallen tree limbs or other debris.
- If you see a moving snake, step back and allow it to pass. A snake's striking distance is about one-half of the total length of the snake.
- Never pick up a snake.
- Do not kill a snake. All snakes help maintain the eco balance by eating mice, rats or other small mammals. Also, some snakes are protected by law.
- When working in snake country, wear boots that are at least 10 inches high or snake proof gaiters or chaps.
- If bitten, note the color and shape of the snake's head to help with treatment.
- Keep bite victims calm and still to slow the spread of venom. Seek medical attention as soon as possible.

If you would like more information on how to avoid spiders and snakes, contact your Kansas City District risk management office.

Going, Going, Gone! Millville Building Sold

MoDOT KC is doing much more than building and maintaining roads and bridges. In fact, the district is also working in realty, selling no longer needed buildings and equipment essential to current operations now or in the near future. The Realty to Roads program is in full swing for 2012, and the department is working diligently to sell assets no longer needed to perform daily operations.

Recently, members from the KC Right of Way Department held an auction to sell the Millville Maintenance Facility. Auctioneer Brad Wise, Senior Right of Way Specialist, with help from Scott Thurston, Assistant Right of Way Manager, started the day's events with an open house. Several residents from the surrounding area stopped by to see the facility and grounds before bidding began. The building sold for \$46,000 to Farmer's Electrical Cooperative.

Additional properties are still up for grabs in the KC District. For an up-to-date list, visit www.modot.org/realtyforsale/kansascity.htm.



Bolder Five-Year Direction Calendar

2012

- **April-May 2012:** SG 1-5 positions (support) filled competitively.
- **December 31:** all facility, equipment and operational changes complete.

2013

- **March 31:** all employee reassignments, staff reductions complete.

Bolder 5-Year Direction Questions?

- Visit: www.intranet/hr/
- E-mail: SalaryGrade6-10@modot.mo.gov
- E-mail: SalaryGrade1-5@modot.mo.gov
- Contact your KC District HR representative



Approximately 80 KC District employees who work in Cass and Johnson Counties gathered April 27 at the Harrisonville Maintenance Facility for the seventh and final Spring Employee Meeting. District Engineer Dan Niec kicked off the meeting by discussing the district's 2012 business plan and employee expectations. Photo: Jennifer Benefield

May is Motorcycle Awareness Month

Motorcycles are vehicles with the same rights and privileges as any motor vehicle on the roadway.

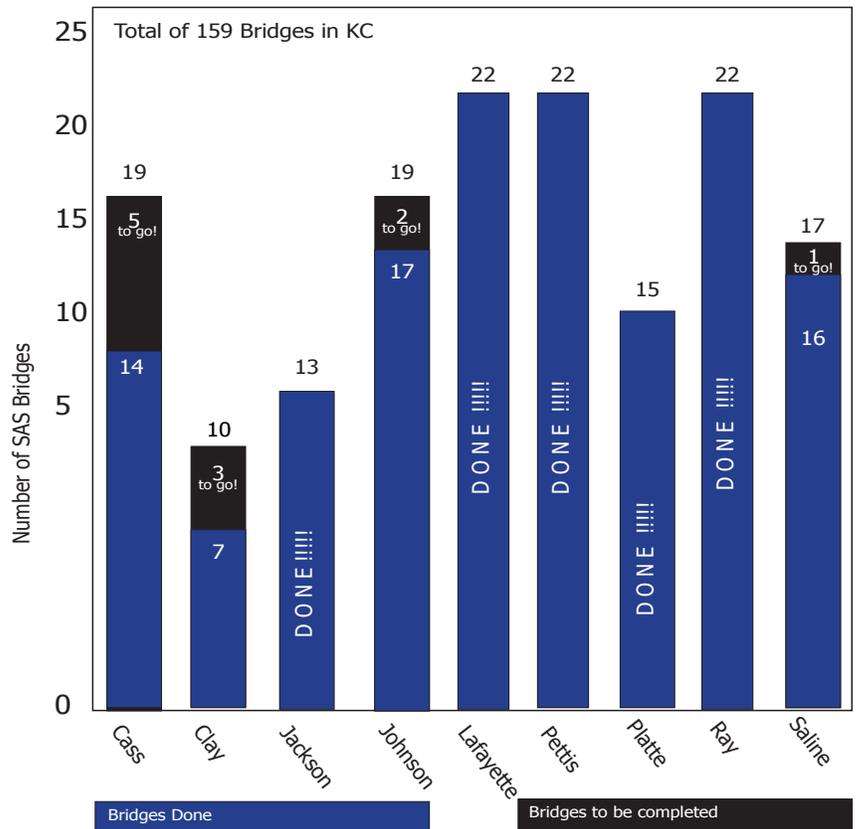
All motorists are reminded to safely "share the road" with motorcycles and to be extra alert to help keep motorcyclists safe. Motorcyclists are reminded to make themselves visible to other motorists.

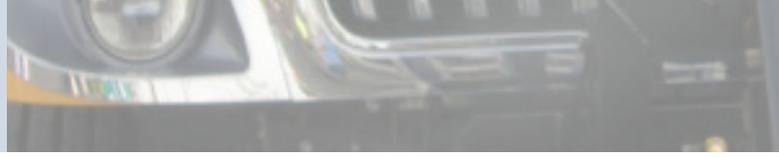
kcConnections sources

- Construction** Bev Chrisco, 607-2101
- Regional Counsel** LeAnn Francis, 607-2082
- Administration** Sherri McGregor, 607-2184
- General Services** Jody Jordan, 347-4100
- Human Resources** Amy Gagne, 607-2145
- Information Systems** JoAnn MacKay, 607-2096
- Right of Way** Dana O'Malley, 607-2056
- Traffic** Laurel McKean, 607-2107
- Editor** Kerri Lewis, 607-2151

Find MoDOT KC on Twitter, Facebook and Youtube.

KC Safe & Sound Bridges On the Rise to Completion





EAEC Corner: Meet the Newly Elected Officers

The KC Employee Advisory Extension Council (EAEC) has been active for four years and serves KC District employees. The council's goal is to foster and enhance a positive work environment for all employees by assisting management and employees with cultural diversity, policy review, and communication issues.

Take advantage of this avenue to stay informed about our district. You can contact the various members or submit a concern or question through the intranet or through a paper form that can be located in each work unit. All concerns are anonymous and confidential throughout the process.

The EAEC Corner introduces you to the newly elected Board members: Dolon Silimon: Chair; Derek Anderson: Vice Chair; Lindsay Harris: Secretary; Ryan Hale: Asst. Secretary.

To learn more about the KC District EAEC on the intranet, visit our intranet at <http://wwwi/intranet/d4/District4EmployeeAdvisoryCouncil.htm>



Dolon Silimon:
Chair



Derek Anderson:
Vice Chair



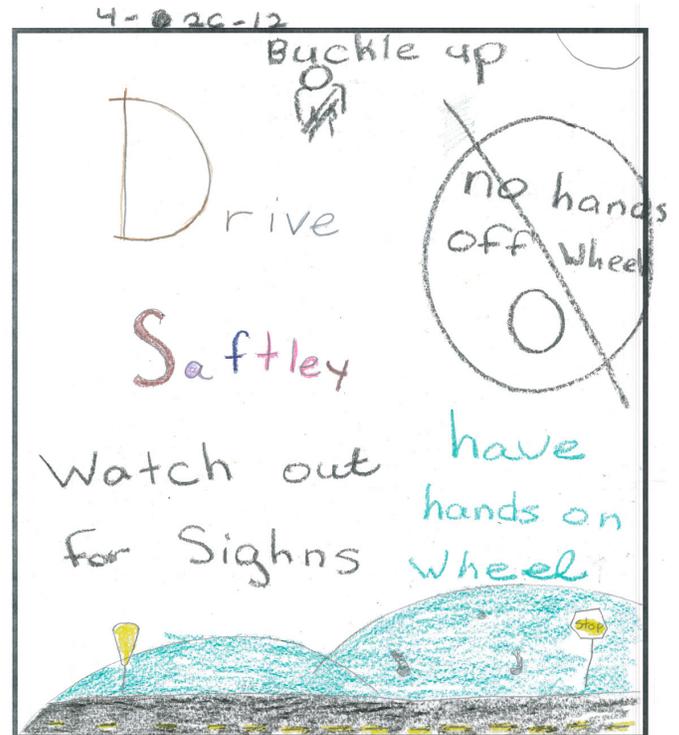
Lindsay Harris:
Secretary



Ryan Hale:
Asst. Secretary



Senior Transportation Planning Specialist Allan Zafft speaks with one of 35 citizens who dropped by a mobile meeting May 2 at the Kansas City Public Library-Bluford Branch to provide input about improving Interstate 70 from The Paseo interchange to the Blue Ridge Cutoff interchange. The I-70 Second Tier Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Study Team will hold its next mobile meeting for residents and commuters Monday, May 7 at Wild Woody's Happy Foods located at 31st and Jackson Street in Kansas City, Mo. Photo: Jennifer Benefield



MoDOT Kansas City Poster Project

Drive Safely
by Lydia Um, Age 7