

econnections



Missouri Department
of Transportation

November 2007

The electronic newsletter of MoDOT District 4, Kansas City Area

Meetings/Training

Tuesday, November 6

Maintenance Supervisors
12:30 p.m. – 3 p.m., Room 136

Wednesday, November 7

Management Team
9 – 11 a.m., Room 136

Thursday, November 8 Room 236

Job Status, District 1, 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.
Job Status, Group 1, 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.
Job Status, Group 2, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Job Status, Group 3, 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.
Job Status, Group 4, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

Resident Engineers
8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., Room 255

Wednesday, November 14

Missouri Highways & Transportation
Commission meeting.
Kansas City Downtown Marriot

Munck Area Team Meeting
8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., Nashua Project
Office

Monday, November 19

Lamson Area Team Meeting
9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Events

Sunday, November 4—REMINDER—

Daylight Savings Time
Set clocks back one hour



Tuesday, November 6

Ribbon Cutting Route 13/2, Johnson
County, 2 p.m.

Friday, November 9

Ribbon Cutting Route 2, Cass County
1 p.m.

Sunday, November 11

Veteran's Day

Monday, November 12

Veteran's Day Observed
State Offices Closed

Wednesday, November 14

Fall Harvest Chili Contest
Fundraiser for Employees Fund
Nashua Maintenance Facility
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Thursday & Friday, November 22 & 23

Thanksgiving Holiday
State Offices Closed

MoDOT Receives Prestigious Award

by Kerri Lewis

District 4 Maintenance Superintendent Wess Murray was recently recognized by Missouri Governor Matt Blunt for his role in maximizing resources and increasing efficiency, while improving processes and service to Missouri citizens.

Murray was among those state employees receiving the prestigious Governors Award for Quality and Productivity. He served on the "Snowplowing into the 21st Century-Solutions for Gang Plowing in Kansas City and St. Louis" team, led by Bob Lannert of the Central Office that was honored during the awards 19th annual presentation ceremony. The MoDOT team was chosen from others across state governmental agencies to receive the award.

MoDOT is known nationally as one of the most aggressive agencies in keeping roads open during snowstorms. However, this approach requires a large amount of



Wess Murray, D4 Maintenance Superintendent, receives the award from Governor Blunt.

staff time and equipment. Expansion of interstate routes from three to five lanes has further complicated snow removal operations. Each winter, MoDOT operates more than 1,700 snowplow trucks requiring more than 3,000 operators for 24-hour service.

The implementation of TowPLows, a trailer plow pulled behind MoDOT snowplow trucks, began as Lannert's idea. Based on his farming ex-

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Front row from left to right: Governor Matt Blunt, Don Hillis, Stephen Rider (Viking Cives), and Owen Hasson.

Back row from left to right: Kory Krause (Viking Cives), Wess Murray, and Bob Lannert.

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News from Across the District

Condolences:

Condolences go to Patricia Surette, Motorist Assist, and her husband, retiree James Surette from Nashua, on the loss of his mother, Leona Surette on Aug 31st.

Condolences to Maurice Jones, Mechanic Supervisor in General Services, and his family on the loss of his cousin, Richard Urdiales on October 14.

Our thoughts and prayers go to Sherita White, Senior Office Assistant in Design, and her family on the loss of her grandmother, Gracie Marie Mack on October 15.

Our thoughts and prayers also go to Chad Foley, Field Mechanic in Holden, and his family on the loss of his father-in-law, Luther Scott on October 23.

Awards Update: And the winner is...

The Above and Beyond Award was presented to Brian Burger, Construction Inspector for taking a proactive step and creating and updating the D4 Construction and Materials website on the intranet.

The Above and Beyond Award was also presented to Michelle Nelson, Cindy Beebe and Jody Jones for their hard work and dedication to the 2007 Snow Roadeo.

Several project offices from D4 received the Performance Plus Construction Cost Savings Incentive for July through September. They include Clinton, Riverside, Richmond and Kansas City—Cookingham Drive. They received this award by reaching the project office performance target that requires an achievement of a final construction cost of one percent or less above the contract award amount. The district target was met, qualifying each eligible employee an incentive amount of \$400.

The D4 Design Team received the Performance Plus Project Scoping and Estimating Incentive. The required target for tier 1 was met which means all eligible employees in the district will receive an amount of \$250.

Mailbag

Bill Kostar, City Administrator for Lake Lotawana, sent a note, commenting on the recent work completed on Route 291 through Lee's Summit. This project used a warm mix asphalt that has proven to be more environmentally friendly and economical. He wanted to congratulate everyone involved in the project, and thank each for completing it in a timely manner.

To MoDOT:

Sunday night, October 14, just after sunset, my son was involved in a one-car accident, on Eastbound I-70 about the 18-mile marker. My son was in the backseat, his cousin in the front passenger seat, and his best friend, Jamie was driving. Jamie was in the passing lane following a semi when the semi suddenly swerved to avoid a car parked on the shoulder of the passing lane. The car's rear end was partially in the passing lane. Jamie could not avoid hitting the parked car, which caused him to lose control. While the air bags deployed, the car ran into the median and was stopped by the cable that runs between the north and southbound lanes. All three boys were wearing their seatbelts. The airbags also prevented serious injury, but the thing that saved their lives and stopped them from going into oncoming westbound traffic was the cable fence. Thank you, thank you, thank you for putting cable fencing down the center of the divided highways. If the fence had not been there, I'm too afraid to say what might have happened. Thank you a thousand times. These fences are needed on every inch of divided highways in Missouri.

Sincerely,
Pat Quint

Last spring, MoDOT facilitated an observation and adjustment of the stoplight at Hwy 9 and Northwood Road to better accommodate unsafe traffic patterns prior to the start of our school day. The lights are working wonderfully this fall and the traffic patterns are the best we have seen in the ten years since we opened our school. Thank you for having taken the time to help ensure the safety of our students, parents, staff and patrons each morning!

Sincerely,
Dale Longenecker
Principal, Park Hill South High School



More MoDOT News

MoDOT has won a national award for safety by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). They presented MoDOT with the 2007 Safety Leadership Award for efforts to reduce highway deaths. Missouri had the largest drop in traffic-related fatalities in 2006 of any state in the nation - down by 161 compared to 2005.

MoDOT's Adopt-A-Highway program celebrated its 20th anniversary. The program began in 1987 and has continued to pursue its ultimate goal of making Missouri's roadsides cleaner and more attractive for residents and visitors.

Adoptors perform about \$1 million a year in litter cleanup and beautification efforts. In 2002, MoDOT expanded the program to include No MORE Trash! program, which has increased interest in the AAH program. As of October 2007, Mo has 3,772 adoptors.

Now the AAH program is going wild. It is offering groups the option of adopting roadsides solely to plant Missouri wildflowers. This new program will encourage the growth of wildflowers native to Missouri, such as coreopsis and purple coneflowers. MoDOT is working with the Departments of Conservation and Agriculture on the effort.

Award

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perience and knowledge of newer farming equipment technologies, he questioned why the concepts of wide farming equipment could not be used to dramatically increase snowplowing on Missouri highways.

MoDOT snowplow trucks plow 10 to 11 feet wide, but require overlapping when operating in gang plowing. This approach often requires eight or more trucks to clear five lanes. The challenge was to find a method to clear two lanes (24 feet or more) with one truck and operator.

The development process overcame several obstacles. With the help of Viking Cives, MoDOT's snowplow contractor, the first TowPLow made its January 2005 debut in Kansas City.

MoDOT now has more than a dozen of the units in service. With just one truck able to do the work of more than two conventional snowplow trucks, the benefits of TowPLow are adding up quickly, and will allow MoDOT to provide superior customer service today and in the future.



The innovative TowPLow at work.

We Salute All Our Troops for Their Bravery and Sacrifices Made to Provide and Maintain Our Freedom on This Veteran's Day and Every Day

Whatever you do, you need courage. Whatever course you decide upon, there is always someone to tell you that you are wrong. There are always difficulties arising that tempt you to believe your critics are right. To map out a course of action and follow it to an end requires some of the same courage that a soldier needs. Peace has its victories, but it takes brave men and women to win them.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1803 - 1882





Corporate Ladder

Welcome to District 4

Senior Risk Management Technician
Carolyn Grisham

Maintenance Worker, Jimmie Osgood

Construction Technician,
Ronald Rinella

Roadside Manager, Linden Stuerke

Assistant Construction Technician,
Angela Wilson

Promoted

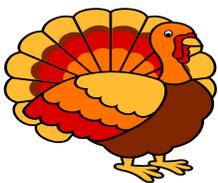
Maintenance Worker, Richard Allen

Intermediate Maintenance Worker
Mark Burroughs

Maintenance Worker, Russell Fisher

Intermediate Design Technician,
Melissa Johnson

Senior Electrician, Kenny Lynch



econnections sources

Construction Bev Chrisco, 6341

Design Flo Noear, 0455

Regional Counsel LeAnn Francis, 6382

Administration Judy Magruder, 6309

General Services Toni Terry, 0056

Human Resources Belinda Fite, 6321

Right of Way Melbra Taylor, 6351

Traffic Dawn Phillips, 0401

Editor Kerri Lewis, 6328

Promoted Continued

Maintenance Worker, Stephen Pope

Electrician, Warren Stalker

Maintenance Supervisor,
William Joseph Simms

Senior Maintenance Worker,
Quentin Wuthnow

Retired

Equipment Technician Supervisor,
Marc Meador



A Little About the EAC's Job Evaluations Committee

David Bower, Senior Information Specialist and D4 representative on the Employee Advisory Council, recently served on the Job Evaluations Committee. Here is a look inside this committee and how it serves MoDOT employees across the state.

Q: As a member of the Employee Advisory Council (EAC) you recently served on the Job Evaluations Committee. Can you tell me a little about this committee?

A: The Job Evaluations Committee meets as a final stage in the Job Study Process. This is done after the Job Appeals have been submitted and received. The committee members read these appeals, and in a round table discussion, will find a consensus that best fits these positions.

Q: What are you trying to agree upon?

A: Human Resources has provided a plan that they feel offers appropriate compensation to employees. We discuss a variety of items with them, such as: How do we compare to others in our market? Is the pay class appropriate? What are the impacts of career ladders? However, the most important question we ask ourselves is, "Are we doing the right thing"?

Q: I have never heard of this committee, can you tell me who the members are?

A: The members include Kevin Keith, Chief Engineer; Steve Meystrik, Compensation Manager; and four members of the EAC. The EAC members include myself, David Bower, Information Systems from D4; Terry Smith, Permits Supervisor from D6; Ron Baker, Senior Maintenance Worker from D5; and Johnna Teel, Senior Maintenance Worker from D8. Also included are two representatives from Human Resources designated to assist the Committee.

Q: How was it sitting across the table from the Chief Engineer?

A: Not difficult at all. The whole environment is built on a partnership. I can assure everyone that Kevin has a feel for the employees, and through this committee he strives to make the best possible decisions by balancing the needs of the employees and those of the organization. My personal gauge is rather simple, can I feel good and sleep at night based on the decisions that have been made. I genuinely feel good about what was accomplished.

Just Poking Around

It's not always a positive when someone decides to poke around; however, Mark Stock, Area Engineer, took it to a whole different level. Mark was faced with the challenge of cleaning up around the downtown loop to prepare for work completion and a ribbon cutting ceremony to signify the opening of three downtown bridges. Instead of passing the buck to someone else and having them take care of the trash, Mark ventured out to face traffic, and literally took matters into his own hands.



One-Team MoDOT

by Kerri Lewis

Working as a team, striving to achieve one goal through finding the most efficient solution, creating a positive work environment, or maintaining the most productive work ethic would all describe working as one-team MoDOT.

This is how Ron Cordes, Regional Maintenance Supervisor for Higginsville, will tell you what teamwork means to him: Tremendous Employees Achieving Maximum Work On Roadway Knowledge.

Cordes says that's exactly how D4 worked together as a team, and reached across the district to help find an efficient and workable solution to a problem that he and his crew were facing.

For several years, D4 maintenance crews from the Higginsville area have struggled to maintain and patch Route T in Lafayette County. Funding limitations precluded a complete overlay or chip seal, so workers could only do minimal patch jobs along the route.

This summer, due to the extremely hot temperatures, the pavement basically exploded, breaking the past overlays into big sheets and creating a very unsafe driving surface. That's when the crew went district wide, seeking help to fix the problem.

After explaining the situation and notifying other maintenance departments about their dilemma, the Higginsville maintenance crew received an overwhelming response. Other work units from across the district pooled their available hay-dite materials to assemble enough material to create a nice chip seal and complete Route T near Higginsville. Some crews even sent manpower to help with the effort.

Cordes offered his thanks to the following crews for acting as one-team MoDOT:

Higginsville, Concordia, Odessa, Richmond, Independence, Blue Springs, Lee's Summit, Knob Noster, Warrensburg, Kearney, and Excelsior Springs.



Route T before One-Team effort



Route T after One-Team effort

2007 Tool and Equipment Challenge

The 2007 Tool and Equipment Challenge is designed to identify and share the best department innovations to complete critical field operations faster, better and cheaper. Recognition and awards are available for individuals, teams and districts.

- Statewide program launched September 21, 2007.
- This challenge is open to all full-time employees
- Tools and equipment must be in use within the department and showing desired results.
- District competition runs from September through December.
- Tool and equipment innovations must fall within the following categories and emphasis areas:

Category	Emphasis Area
Hand Tool Innovation	Pavement Maintenance
Non-Fleet Innovation	Signing
Fleet Innovation	Shoulder Work

- District evaluation teams will use the General Services online documentation to determine non-fleet and fleet categories and the Maintenance work codes to assign submission to emphasis areas.
- Emphasis areas will be changed each year based on input from district and Central Office technical experts.
- Innovations will be judged on the following:
 - **Cost vs. Benefit** - cost effective, realistic, may reduce injuries, save time, save manpower, safe
 - **Convenience/Ease of Use** - number of employees to operate, makes the job easier, little training required, easily maintained, safe
 - **Versatility/Adaptability** - easily attached, detached and stored, multifunctional, safe
 - **Implementation** - Availability of materials, easily replicated, proven results, safe
- The top three district winners will compete for statewide honors at the March Innovation Challenge Showcase in Sedalia.
- Three statewide winners will earn \$500 per individual or maximum of \$2,000 per team and an extra \$10,000 for the district maintenance budget. Winners will also be on display at the spring maintenance managers' meeting.

For more information, please visit the intranet at wwwi/intranet/or/Solutions