

# econnections



October 2005

The electronic newsletter of MoDOT District 4, Kansas City Area

## MEETINGS/TRAINING

### Friday, Oct. 9

Missouri Highways & Transportation, St. Louis

### Tuesday, Oct. 11

Downtown loop bridge replacement public meeting, 5-7 p.m., HNTB Corp., 715 Kirk Drive

### Thursday, Oct. 20

Management Team, 1-3 p.m., boardroom

### Monday, October 17

Lamson Area Team, 9-11 a.m., district office

### Tuesday, October 18

Stock Area Team, 8-10 a.m., 87<sup>th</sup> Street facility

### Wednesday, Oct. 19, Room 236

Job Status, Group 4, 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 1, 1:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m.

### Wednesday, Oct. 26

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

### Friday, Oct. 7 through Friday, Oct. 14

Benefits Meetings - see page 3

## EVENTS

### Monday, Oct. 10

Columbus Day - state offices closed

### Saturday, Oct. 15

MoHELPS Hurricane Katrina relief donation drive, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Stadium, Lee's Summit/Blue Springs Complex, and Harrisonville maintenance buildings

### Saturday, Oct. 29

MoHELPS Hurricane Katrina relief donation drive, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Lee's Summit/Blue Springs Complex and Clinton maintenance buildings

### Monday, Oct. 31

Soups, Brews & Stews luncheon/silent auction fund-raiser for MoHELPS Hurricane Katrina relief

## Kansas City Scout Marks First Anniversary

by Joel Blobaum

Just one year after its public launch, the Kansas City Scout traffic management system has become an integral component of the region's transportation network and a valued resource for metropolitan area motorists.

The Kansas and Missouri departments of transportation acknowledged the one-year milestone at a Sept. 27 press conference inside Scout's Traffic Operations Center in Lee's Summit.

Scout system operators monitor freeway conditions with closed-circuit television cameras and traffic detectors. Those devices help operators determine traffic flow and the location of incidents such as an accident. Operators also post messages on Scout's electronic freeway signs to notify travelers about traffic conditions ahead of them and send updated traveler information to the Scout web site.

The Scout system began limited operations in January 2004 with 75 miles of coverage on portions of Interstates 70, 435, 35 and a handful of other Kansas and Missouri freeways. Scout has since expanded services — including its recent transition to operating seven days a week, 24 hours a day, and during holidays.

MoDOT System Management Director Don Hillis acknowledged the anxiety that accompanied the startup during his remarks at the anniversary event.

"We also knew Scout had the potential for success, and it's appropriate that we celebrate this milestone," Hillis said. "Reducing traffic jams and enhancing response times to incidents makes Scout an important part of MoDOT's commitment to safety."

Since its official launch, Scout has activated its network of message boards more than 4000 times and broadcast more than 7700 messages. Those messages range from information about



State representative Gary Dusenberg (center) visits with Don Hills (left) and Ray Webb at the Sept. 27 anniversary event.

Photo: Joel Blobaum

roadwork and accidents to AMBER Alert notifications. "Those numbers can do nothing but go up with 24/7 operation," Hillis added.

KDOT Planning and Development Director Terry Heidner acknowledged the planning, transportation and emergency service partners who help the Scout system thrive. He said investing in Scout should pay long-term dividends.

"We can't always build our way out of congestion, but we can improve traffic flow on our existing facilities through systems like Scout," Heidner said.

With expansion of Scout's coverage area already under way, Traffic Operations Center Manager Ray Webb said that the system had "initiated new dialogue for traffic management in the metropolitan area."

And Scout has caught the attention of its peers. In recent months, the system has received a Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity, and was cited at the National Transportation Public Affairs Workshop.

## Destination: SAFE Campaigns to Save Lives

by Steve Porter

Many voices working together can get across a message loud enough to save lives.

That's the aim of Destination: SAFE, a coalition of MoDOT and other Kansas City regional agencies on both sides of the state line focused on reducing transportation fatalities.

Destination: SAFE employed a new tool earlier this month to demonstrate impaired driving dangers to students at South Valley Junior High School in Liberty, Mo. Taking a turn behind the wheel of the battery-powered go-kart-like simulator nicknamed SIDNE, (Simulated Impaired DrivINg Experience), students experienced consequences of impaired driving. When switched to impaired mode, the vehicle's handling simulates effects of alcohol or drug impairment on the driving skills of a motorist.

Last year 217 people died and more than 14,000 people were injured in crashes across the Kansas City metropolitan area. Destination: SAFE, in cooperation with the Missouri "Arrive Alive" and Kansas "Safe Not Sorry" safety campaigns, is developing a safety blueprint for the Kansas City region to reduce serious injuries and fatalities on area roadways. Local partners include law enforcement officers, traffic engineers, transportation planners, emergency responders, public health officials, educators

and safety advocates in Kansas and Missouri. Destination: SAFE has received \$223,385 from the Missouri Department of Transportation to address four priorities for the region's transportation system:

- Occupant protection – enforcement targeted at younger drivers and training to develop child passenger safety permanent fitting stations in each county.
- Impaired driving – targeted enforcement to get habitual offenders off the streets and Simulated Impaired DrivINg Experience (SIDNE) vehicle and fatal vision goggles to take to local schools and events.
- Aggressive driving – enforcement to target speeding along identified corridors.
- Pedestrian safety – enforcement of state laws to stop for pedestrians in crosswalks, particularly around urban areas and school locations.

Safety-related events for the Kansas City region in October supported these Destination: SAFE priorities, including the fifth annual Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day on October 10. The goal is to achieve one full day of



Students at South Valley Junior High School in Liberty attempt to maneuver SIDNE while Missouri Highway Patrol Trooper John Hotz commands the vehicle to act erratically.

Photo: Michael Briggs, MARC

zero traffic deaths on the nation's roadways by encouraging safer behavior and promoting safer roadways.

### Computer Tip of the Month

## Adding Printers at the District Office

Once a printer is added to your computer, it only resides on the machine you are currently using. If you log on to a different computer, you might need to add a desired printer to that machine as well. For employees at the **district office and general services**, adding a printer is as easy as:

- 1 Open Internet Explorer.
- 2 Type <http://wwwr/print/d4.htm> in the address block.
- 3 Follow the instructions.

To add a printer in a **Project Office** use this link:

<http://wwwi/intranet/d4/is/Procedures.htm>

## Crews Snow What to Expect

by Steve Porter

District 4's third annual Snow Expo had a little bit for everyone, including some of the seasoned snow fighters who have battled winter road conditions for years.

More than 100 operators turned out for this year's training sessions, learning more about MoDOT's newest tool, the TowPLow™, and brushing up on training with some of the old standards in snow fights, the plow-mounted dump trucks and their automated material distribution systems.

Maintenance Superintendent Wess Murray led one group, explaining the advantages of using brine over rock salt and other dry materials, depending on the temperature, and the rate and type of precipitation. District 4 uses the Salty Dog, a semi-tanker rig, to spray interstate surfaces with brine, and the Salty Pups and pickups – smaller units with brine tanks – to apply the liquid to other routes.

District 4 will put nearly 200 pieces of equipment and about 400 employees into the field when the flakes begin falling again this season.



Dennis Calton (left) and Matt Elsea talk about the challenges awaiting them in the coming snow season.

Photo: Steve Porter

## News from Across the District

**KC Scout:** Governor Matt Blunt presented the Kansas City Scout Ethernet Team a 2005 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity at a Sept. 20 reception. The Technology Award recognizes the team's efforts in developing cost-effective and cutting-edge technology deployed through Scout's traffic management system.

**Carpool to Conserve:** The price of gas has skyrocketed, and Don Hillis has notified everyone to conserve pool car and gas usage. Pool cars are to be used in the most effective manner. Employees who choose not to carpool when several pool cars are reserved for the same event will not be reimbursed for mileage.

Additionally, employees who have pool cars assigned to them are expected to transport other district personnel attending the same event.

**Roadside Photo Contest 2005:** The Federal Highway Administration's annual roadside photo contest honors photography which show roadsides that protect remnant native vegetation, use native wildflowers and grasses in landscaping, control invasive species and demonstrate overall good stewardship in managing highway rights-of-way. The contest is open to all MoDOT employees, and photos

should be of Missouri roadsides. For category information and competition requirements, contact Margie Mansager at 573-522-9471 or [margie.mansager@modot.mo.gov](mailto:margie.mansager@modot.mo.gov).

*continued on page 4*



National Transportation Public Affairs Workshop (NTPAW) Chair Jeff Stratten presents awards to MoDOT Community Relations Director Shane Peck and Kansas City Scout Communications Director Dianna Kidwell. KC Scout received top honors in the technology category.

*Photo: James T. O'Brien, DelDOT*

## Corporate Ladder

### Welcome to District 4

**Crew worker** Matthew Findley, Kenneth Johnson, James Reavis

**Design technician** Brandon Hardin

**Construction technician** Dallas Russell

**Assistant signal and lighting electrician**

Brandon Welch

### Promoted

**Intermediate crew worker** Bruce Barnes, Bennie Pate, Milton Valentin

**Senior crew worker** Michael Briggs

**Maintenance specialist** Cullen Brewer

**Executive assistant** Amy Gagne

**Senior traffic technician** Sonya Henson

**Project development engineer** Scott Humphrey

**Survey technician** Andrew Strong

**Intermediate highway designer** Christopher West

### Retired

**Maintenance superintendent** Kelly Eaton

**Motorist Assist Operator** Jerry Young



Traffic Specialist Bob Gillaspie congratulates Maintenance Superintendent Kelly Eaton at a reception honoring Eaton at Watkins Mill State Park Sept. 27. Eaton is retiring with 35 years of service at MoDOT.

*Photo: Jennifer Benefield*

## Plan to attend a BENEFITS MEETING 2005

Updates and changes will be discussed for:

- Health Insurance ■ Life Insurance
- MCHCP (dental & vision) ■ Cafeteria Plan
- and more

### DATES TO NOTE

**10/31/05:** all health & life insurance changes to D4 Business & Benefits

**10/31/05:** all dental & vision changes postmarked to MCHCP

**12/1/05:** all cafeteria changes postmarked to MO Café

**1/1/06:** all changes become effective

## Meeting Dates & Times

Date	Time	Location/Group
10/7/05	8:00 a.m. 12:30 p.m.	Platte City Maint. Kearney Maint.
10/13/05	9:30 a.m.	District Office #136 Retirees & Survivors
10/14/05	8:00 a.m.	District Office #136 Materials, Traffic, Permits, Comm. Relations
10/31/05	9:30 a.m.	Design, Project Managers, Customer Service
12/1/05	12:30 p.m.	Gen. Serv., Maint., Risk Mgmt., Reg. Counsel
1/1/06	2:00 p.m.	Admin., B&B, DO Const., HR, Planning, ROW

### Questions?

Contact a Business & Benefits representative:

**Harold Reeder:** 816-622-6305

**Barbara Orrison:** 816-622-6319

**Judy Magruder:** 816-622-6309

## News from Across the District

*continued from page 3*

**New Dental Plan:** Missouri Consolidated Health Care Plan is offering a new statewide dental plan. Employees will receive a hand-book and enrollment form in the mail at home. The Delta Dental plan offers a nationwide network of participating providers that includes over 95% of dentists in Missouri. CompDent will be terminated and employees will have to re-enroll in Delta Dental to continue dental coverage. More information may be found on MoDOT's intranet site by clicking on "Benefits" in the lower right hand corner, or calling MCHCP at 800-487-0771.

**Open Enrollment:** enrollment for the 2006 Cafeteria Plan extends from Oct. 1 through Dec. 1, 2005.

Save 25 percent or more on qualified expenses through the plan by setting aside tax-free money for expenses such as:

- State-sponsored health, dental & vision insurance premiums
- Qualified payroll-deducted voluntary insurance products (listed at [www.mo.gov/mo/cafevendors](http://www.mo.gov/mo/cafevendors))
- Healthcare expenses (eye & dental exams, prescription drugs, hearing aides, routine doctor visits, chiropractic care)
- Dependent care (child and adult dependent care)

For more information visit [www.mocafe.com](http://www.mocafe.com) or call 1-800-659-3035.

**Ride Share:** A new database located on MoDOT's intranet site can help match commuters with rides. Look for the "Ride Share Database" under Quick Links.

**Make It Click:** Statewide MoDOT employee safety belt usage increased from 65 percent in 2004 to 88 percent in 2005 according to a survey conducted July 5 through Aug. 17 by the Missouri Safety Center. D4 employee safety belt useage is at 89 percent.

**Personnel Policy 2509, Loss of Driving Privileges:** Effective Sept. 30, 2005, changes to state law no longer allow "hardship licenses." Employees who are in a job that requires a CDL and can no longer lawfully operate a commercial motor vehicle will have up to 90 days to re-instate their driving privileges. For more information access the Human Resources Division (HR) intranet web site and click on the Personnel Policy Manual in the HR Administration section.

**ICE Your Mobile Phone:** Emergency service providers often search an accident victim's mobile phone for contact informaton.

Simply store the word ICE in your mobile phone address book and then enter the name of the person to contact in the event of an emergency. Participating in the ICE program could save time and reduce confusion during an emergency situation.

## From the Director

As any news channel will tell you, the need for charitable contributions in our nation is greater than ever. I know from meeting so many of you during my travels, that you're a hard-working, caring group of people, who will pull together to help those in need. That's why I'm asking you to remember those who need a helping hand when the time comes to fill out your Missouri State Employees Charitable Campaign pledge card.

This year's campaign runs from October 1 through October 17. Last year, the state raised more than \$1.1 million in donations, with MoDOT employees contributing almost \$123,000. We came in second in contributions after the Department of Corrections, which has twice the number of employees!

We'd like to increase our participation this year. If everyone gives just a little – say 50 cents per pay period, less than the cost of a can of soda – we can answer some of the needs in our communities. Think how good you'll feel lending a helping hand to those in need.

Thanks for all you do and for your help with this worthwhile cause.



**Pete Rahn**  
MoDOT Director

Pete

*Editor's note: Pledge cards are due Monday, Oct. 17. For more information visit [www.msecc.mo.gov](http://www.msecc.mo.gov).*

## MoHELPS Hurricane Katrina Relief Efforts Under Way

*by Jennifer Benefield*

Kansas City-area state employees from the departments of Transportation, Natural Resources, Conservation and the Missouri State Highway Patrol have set a goal to raise \$10,000 by Thanksgiving to aid those impacted by Hurricane Katrina.

The \$1,015 raised at the Sept. 21 chili cook-off luncheon in addition to cash donations of \$892 bring the fund's total to \$1,907.

Donations of water, food, clothing and household goods were collected Saturday, Oct. 1 at the Stadium, Kearney, Liberty and Northmoor maintenance buildings, and Clinton-area residents have filled flat-bed truck full of goods.

Additional donations will be collected at the Stadium, Lee's Summit/Blue Springs Complex and Harrisonville maintenance buildings Saturday, Oct. 15, and the Lee's Summit/Blue Springs Complex and Clinton maintenance buildings Oct. 29.

All donations will be transported by private company directly to the Gulf Coast region and distributed to those in need.

State employees will have another opportunity to support fund-raising efforts during Soups, Brews & Stews, an Oct. 31 luncheon and silent auction to be held at MoDOT's District 4 office. Employees will be assembling themed baskets that will be sold to the highest bidders during the silent auction.

**Thank you Saturday, Oct. 1 volunteers!**

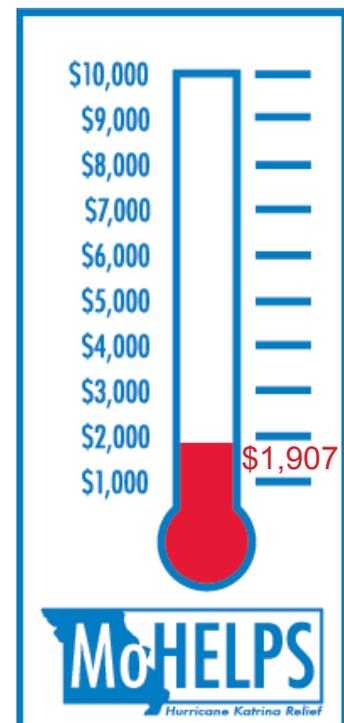
**Kearney:** Bill Glazier, Bobby Smith & Eric St. John

**Liberty:** Marla Devlin, Don Gaddis, Kirsten Munck, Melissa Piney & Joe Sims

**Northmoor:** Dennis Calton, Glen Holcomb & James Regan

**Stadium:** Mike King & Mike Singleton

**Stockroom:** Don Bunch & Rick Forbes



## Commission Approves 2006 Legislative Agenda

The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission approved MoDOT's legislative agenda for the 2006 session of the Missouri General Assembly at its September meeting.

The department's proposals are packaged into two categories: safety and economic development.

### SAFETY

The department will once again support passage of a primary safety belt law. Missouri currently has only secondary enforcement, which means that motorists can be ticketed for failing to buckle up only if they're already pulled over for another offense. Missouri is currently below the national average in seat belt use – 76 percent of motorists buckle up. Federal statistics show that moving to primary enforcement would increase seat belt use by 11 percent, saving 90 lives and preventing more than 1,000 injuries per year.

MoDOT will propose legislation increasing penalties for repeat traffic offenders in highway work zones. The proposal would create the offenses of "endangerment of a highway worker" and "aggravated endangerment of

a highway worker," which would include increased fines and suspended or revoked licenses. In 2004, 28 motorists were killed and 1,167 people were injured in work zone crashes. Two MoDOT employees were killed, and 69 were injured.

The department will also pursue legislation to refuse, suspend or revoke the registration of motor carriers who are prohibited from interstate travel by federal law.

### ECONOMIC

MoDOT will pursue two relatively new concepts this year that could generate revenues for multimodal operations and construction projects. Both proposals are designed to promote economic development throughout the state.

The first concept is multimodal financing. This proposal would dedicate at least 75 percent of the proceeds from state sales and use tax on construction materials for issuing bonds for funding multimodal capital improvement projects. Up to 25 percent of the proceeds will help local transportation providers meet the 20 percent local match requirement for federal

transit capital grants.

The second economic development proposal surrounds a new concept called public private partnerships. PPP's would authorize the MHTC to enter into contractual agreements with private entities to finance, build, maintain and operate major highway and bridge projects on the state highway system.

The 2006 session begins Jan. 4.

### econnections sources

**Construction** Bev Chrisco, 6341

**Design** Flo Noear, 0455

**Regional Counsel** LeAnn Francis, 6382

**Administration** Judy Magruder, 6309

**General Services** Toni Terry, 0050

**Human Resources** Belinda Fite, 6321

**Maintenance** Pat Rath, 0420

**Materials** Shana Blaylock, 6525

**Right of Way** Melbra Taylor, 6351

**Traffic** Dawn Phillips, 0401

**Editor** Jennifer Benefield, 6328

## D4 Motorcyclists Tour Missouri Countrysides

by Brian Ziegler

We had a small group for the fourth D4 motorcycle ride. It was a wonderful day a bit cool for some, but we managed to miss the rain and enjoyed some wonderful Missouri countryside that most on the trip had not seen before.

It was a boring ride until we hit the eastern side of Johnson County and really started hitting some of the fun roads. We left the main highway to take in part of the Lewis and Clark Trail starting in Loose Creek where we took Rte. A to Bonnots Mill. (Oops sorry about the dead end!)

But after a tight u-turn and leaving town before the banjo music started, we were off to Rte. C, which was supposed to have taken us to Hwy 100. Rte. C took us through Frankenstein which many on the trip were surprised to find out is an actual town in Missouri!

From there we were back on track and off to Hermann and just in time, as I was beginning to hear my stomach growl over the loud

pipes on the bikes. After a cold drink and a bite to eat at the oldest continuous operating tavern west of the Mississippi that my great uncle used to own, better known as The Barrel, we were off again.

We then hit the road headed North across the mighty MO where we took Highway 94 west back to Johnson County and our stop at the state capitol.

It was a long fun day and by the time we all made it home we had put in around 10 hours and 400 plus miles. We all had a fun safe ride so the complaints about being sore and tired were out-weighed by thanks for the tour and bidding farewell.

So until the next time, so long and hope to see more on the next ride; maybe we can schedule an over night and enjoy even



**D4 motorcyclists make a stop at Missouri's state capitol building Sunday, Sept. 25 before returning to Lee's Summit. The 400-mile day trip included stops in Tipton, Hermann, Linn, Jefferson City and Sedalia.**

*Photo: Brian Ziegler*

more of the beautiful countryside our state has to offer.

*Brian Ziegler is a Mechanic Supervisor in District 4 General Services.*

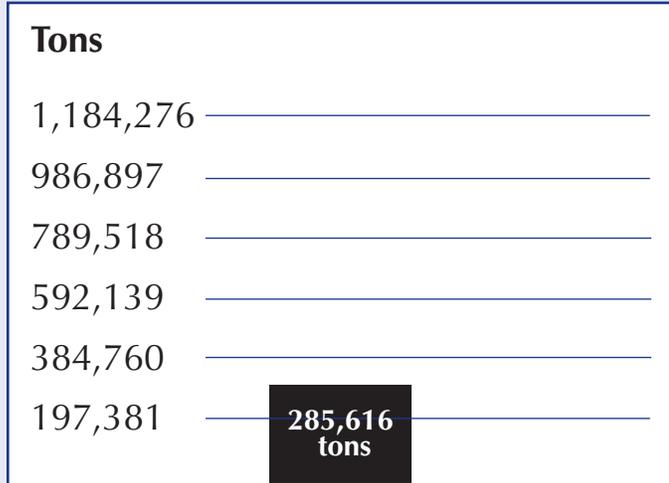
# Smooth Roads Initiative

490 centerline miles of the Kansas City Area's busiest roadways in good condition by Dec. 2007

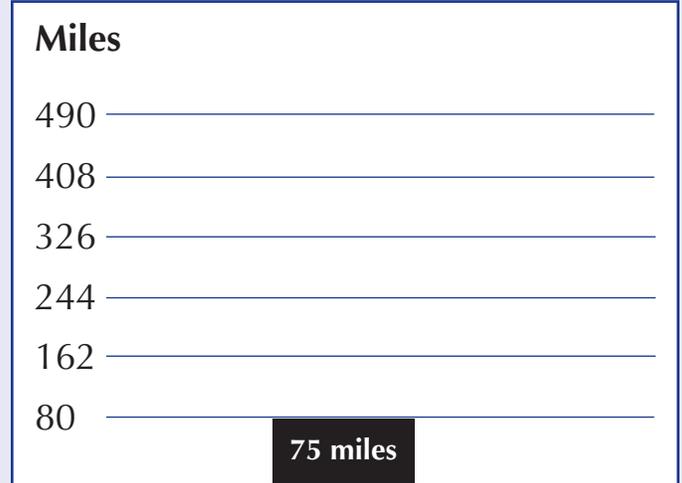
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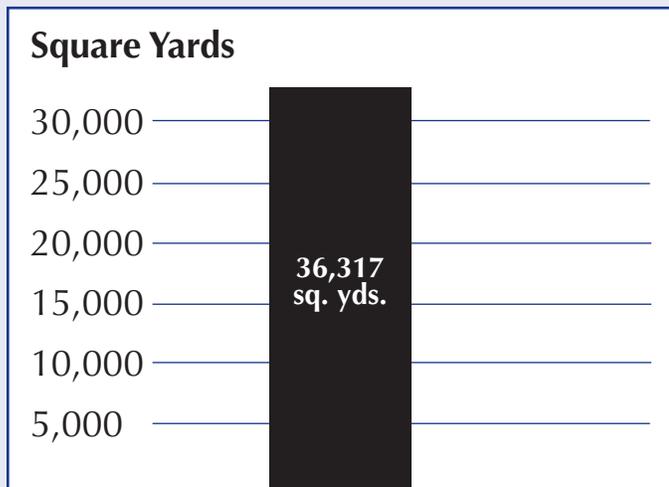
***Smoother, Safer, Sooner***  
***Amendment 3***



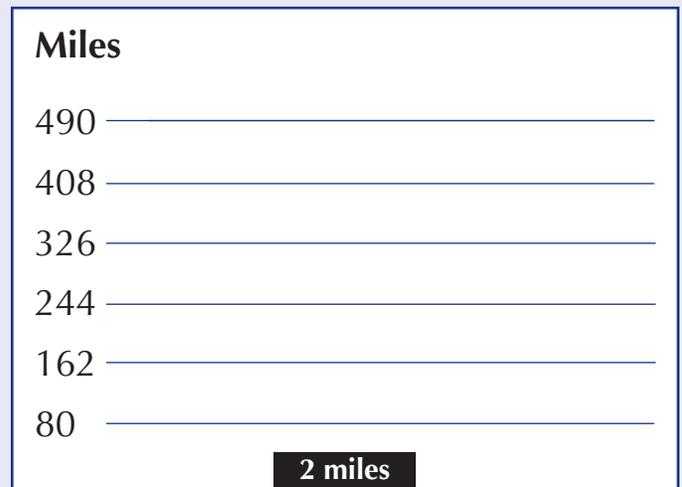
**Tons of asphalt**



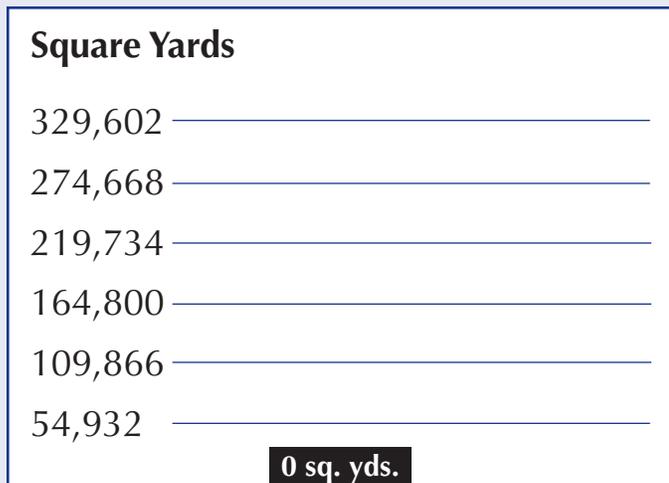
**Striping**



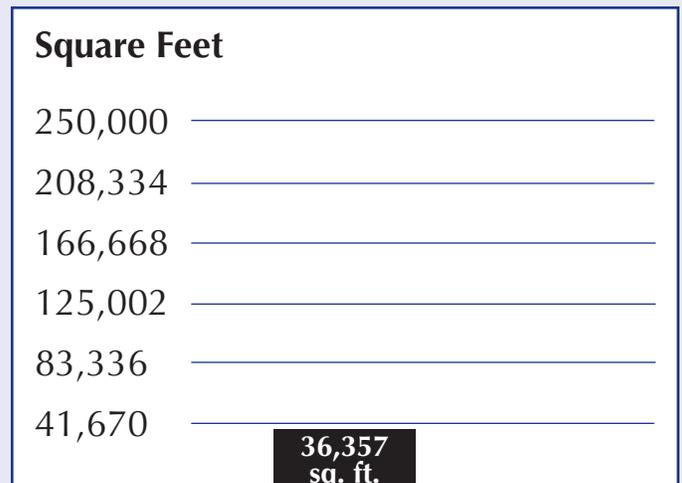
**Pavement repair**



**Reflectors**



**Ultrathin-bonded wearing surface**



**Signs**

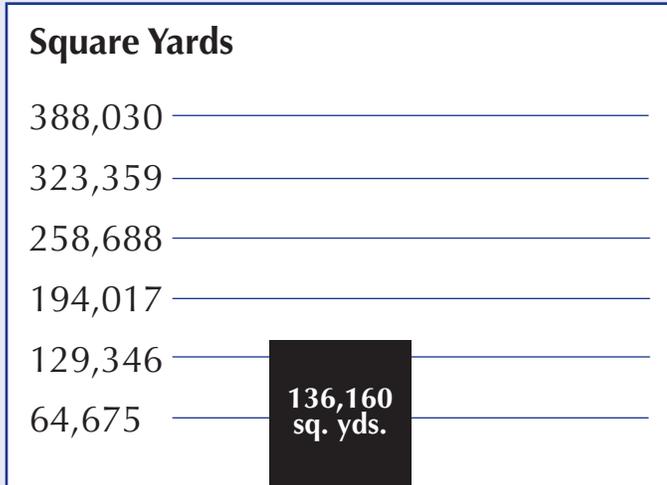
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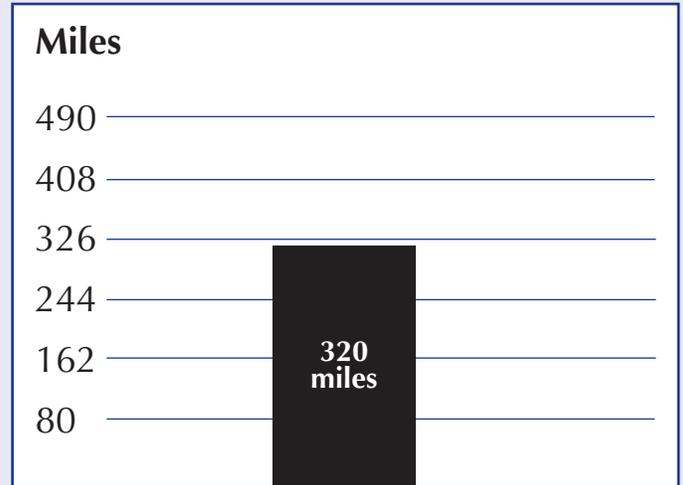
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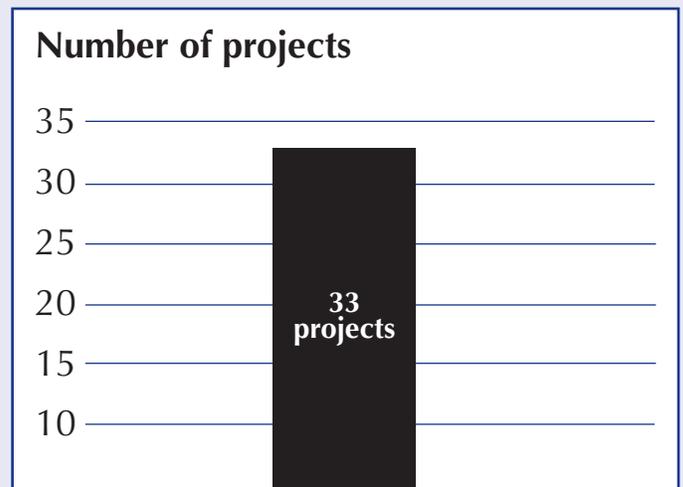
**Smoother, Safer, Sooner**  
*Amendment 3*



**Diamond grinding**



**Clear zones cleared**



**Projects designed**