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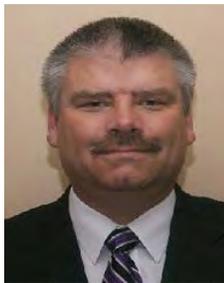
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January 2016

President's Report

By Duane Ratermann, PE
Knox County, Illinois



What happens at Cragun's, stays at Cragun's! That has long been the motto of the Minnesota County Engineers Association. The MCEA has met at Cragun's Resort in Brainerd, Minn., annually for a number of years. This year was their 71st Annual Conference on January 19-22.

The MCEA is one of NACE's strongest affiliates with over 115 voting members. Nine of our Past Presidents are from Minn. and twelve of their County Engineers have won either the Rural or Urban NACE Engineer of the Year Award. They've hosted the NACE Annual Conference three times, most recently in 2011.

I will admit that when MCEA first invited me to attend their conference, I was a little reluctant to commit. Unless you're an avid snowmobiler or ice fisherman, is there a reason to venture to the frozen tundra of in January?! I've never ridden a snowmobile and have only been ice fishing twice in my life. It turns out El Nino brought some mild weather up north. The temperature stayed above zero with only a dusting of snow during my trip.

I did try my luck at ice fishing one afternoon, but the fish weren't biting. But who cares? The heated hut and cold beverages make it an enjoyable experience.

The MCEA Annual Conference was a little unique with a banquet on the first night. They hosted 300 plus attendees, with representatives from Minn. Department of Transportation, consulting firms, and suppliers. John Brunkhorst (McLeod County), Immediate Past President, was the emcee. If you know John, you can only imagine the good time we had.

He was also the recipient of the MCEA Outstanding County Engineer Award. Following the banquet, attendees and exhibitors networked around the indoor swimming pool. They held many interesting sessions. Lee Bjerke (Winneshiek County, Iowa), President of the Iowa County Engineers Association, gave an update on their activities. Every year Minn. and Iowa have a President exchange for their annual conferences.

Recreation night was a Beach Party, featuring many "tasteful" costumes. Everyone enjoyed cribbage, volleyball, poker, bags, ping pong, b_ _ r pong, and basketball. The good news—there were no serious injuries.

I thank MCEA for a great learning experience, and a special thanks to Rich Sanders, Polk County Engineer, for being a great host. If you know anyone from Minn., you know they like their "Ole and Lena" jokes. Here's a great one!

Ole and Sven grabbed their poles and headed out to do some ice fishing. As they were augering a hole in the ice they heard a loud voice from above say, "There are no fish under the ice."

Ole and Sven moved about 25 feet over and started to make another hole. The voice said a little stronger, "There are no fish under the ice."

They both looked around and then looked up. Ole said in a humble voice, "Are you God?"

The voice spoke back, "No ya idiots! I'm the ice rink attendant."

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November 2016

President's Report

What's New at the Whitehouse

By **Brian Stacy, PE**
Pierce County, Washington



I know my patience runs low after long, drawn out political campaigns and I suspect I'm not alone in that. So for me, it's a relief that the process is finally over, so we can start to think about moving forward regardless of what side of the political spectrum we are on.

I'm also aware, after talking with many of my colleagues, there are some folks feeling anxious about what our future holds and how they may be affected directly or indirectly.

I think it's fair to say since both presidential candidates campaigned on platforms that promoted infrastructure, as county transportation officials we have reason to be optimistic. In fact, President-Elect Trump has spoken on many occasions about his desire to invest anywhere from \$.5 - 1 trillion in infrastructure improvements.

Even with a President who's repeatedly referred to our nation's crumbling infrastructure, we have the reality of the Legislative branch. Funding infrastructure improvements will require an act of Congress. Having both the Legislative and Executive branches controlled by the same party should result in an improved platform for cooperation, and hopefully agreement. But we still are faced with the harsh reality of how to pay for it.

Although the odds are long that we'll see an increase in the gas tax, we at NACE will still advocate for that, as we have in the past, hoping to bridge the gap until the nation becomes more willing to embrace a user fee approach of some type (miles driven, etc.).

A glimmer of hope is the stated desire to prioritize tax reform, which could hopefully include the Highway Trust Fund. Other financing discussions include repatriation of overseas funds, an infrastructure bank, private/public partnerships, and infrastructure bonds. These are all healthy discussions, but in the end it will be up to Congress to act.

The most promising element from our NACE perspective is streamlining and environmental reforms. Both the President-Elect and Republican Congress have voiced a desire to reduce "red tape" at the Federal level. NACE has positioned ourselves to support some common-sense-based changes in project delivery that will certainly help our members save time and money in their construction programs.

With a new Administration comes new Administrators. We've been fortunate with both Victor Mendez and Greg Nadeau as FHWA Administrators, as they've supported NACE over the years. We'll now have to build new relationships with the new Administration. Rest assured that we have outstanding relationships with the career managers that will remain and likely advise the incoming Administration.

Change brings uncertainty, but I believe NACE has the pieces in place to embrace the new Administration all while anticipating a successful outcome!

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January 2016

Early Bird Registration Discount Ends February 26



Need another reason to attend? How about Networking Opportunities!

Networking—such an overused word, but it works!

Business Networking is a valuable way to expand your knowledge, learn from the success or failure of other county road officials, and share your county's practices with others.

Have you heard that you could try a hydraulic driver attached to an excavator to place H piles? How about helical piling for bridge abutments and repairs? You would if you belonged in Buchanan County, Iowa, Engineer Brian Keierleber's network!

Here are 7 benefits of networking.

1. Seek Advice

Having like-minded county road officials to talk to also gives you the opportunity to get advice from them on all sorts of things.

2. Encourage Mentors

Seek out people with lots of experience who are willing to share their knowledge with you. Successful experienced county road officials are usually generous with passing along advice to younger engineers or those new to the profession.

3. Find Suppliers

Whatever sort of supplier you are looking for, motor grader, GIS solution, snow control equipment, bridge design firm, you will come across them all through your networks.

4. Get New Ideas and Innovations

Meeting and talking about county road practices is a fantastic way of learning new ways and innovative products. Early adopters are usually eager to share and promote the latest technology or method. You just need to figure out how to incorporate these great ideas into your county's practices.

5. Improve Your Communication

Yes, even an engineer can take the initiative to get out there and introduce yourself to strangers. At first it can be hard, but practice and familiarity soon makes it second nature. Plus, it helps strengthen your confidence.

6. Feel Good

Yes, we get great satisfaction from helping someone else solve a problem they have and hearing about their fantastic results.

7. Make Great New Friends

Although we initially focus on work conversations, we tend to talk about more relaxed, social topics eventually. Being around like-minded county road officials that want to exchange ideas regularly leads to strong friendships over the years.

So check out the [Networking Opportunities](#) you'll experience at NACE 2016!

Feel free to contact us if you have any questions: nace@naco.org or 202-393-5041.

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David Brand, PE – Undisputed Safety Champion

By **Brian Roberts, PE**
NACE Executive Director

As you know Dave Brand, PE, Madison County Engineer (Ohio) and Northeast VP for NACE, passed away on December 31 after battling pancreatic cancer for the last several months.

Dave was such a force in NACE over the years and we are blessed to have known him. It is rare to find someone that had so much positive influence on a national level. He is one of, if not the most revered local highway safety advocates. Dave was always everyone's first choice to serve as an advisory capacity on this issue.

Dave was recognized by FHWA Deputy Administrator Greg Nadeau for his work on the Every Day Counts (ECD) initiative during the 2013 NACE Annual Banquet. Specifically, Dave was recognized for his success on the Safety Edge program, for which he led the 3 year process involving federal, state and local stakeholders. Dave's insights in local practices were instrumental to developing the outreach materials for local agencies.

Just last week I was reading an article in *Public Roads* magazine where Dave was the quoted source on the new Systemic Safety Project Selection Tool. Dave has represented NACE on numerous roadway safety initiatives, including the Center for Excellence in Rural Safety (CERS), the National Local Technical Assistance Program Association (NLTAPA) Roadway Safety Working Group the Every Day Counts (EDC) Safety Edge Team, Towards Zero Deaths (TZD), and most recently the new National Center for Rural Road Safety.

Dave served on the NACo Waters of the US (WOTUS) Task Force in 2008. He testified in front of a Congressional Subcommittee on behalf of NACE and NACo against changes to the Clean Water Act. CEAO named him the 2008 County Engineer of the Year.

Dave was elected to the position of Madison County Engineer in November 2000. He was re-elected 3 times, serving his 4th term.

On a personal note, Dave was responsible for introducing me to the importance of local road safety. But his influences went well beyond that. Dave had such a unique combination of traits and I don't think I will ever know anyone quite like him again.

He had all the characteristics of an engineer combined with a unique sense of humor, strong passion to do the right thing, high intelligence, and a beloved "quirkiness." I don't know what I liked best – seeing him get all excited and wound up at meetings or making him laugh. I never had to second guess his intentions – they were always honorable. Combine that with his incredibly adventurous spirit –traveling, hiking, racing cars – and you can see why there will only be one Dave Brand. Above all, I admire most his love for his wonderful wife, Julie, and his children Sophie and Andrew, who we were so blessed to have at our Annual Meetings – a reminder of what is most important in our limited time on this earth.



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Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Realizes Benefits of Adopting a Digital Print System for Statewide Traffic Sign Production



Traffic signs must meet very strict requirements for reflectivity and durability in order to protect the traveling public, and Avery Dennison's technology has been instrumental in making highway and street safety solutions brighter with prismatic signs since 1924.

In addition to leading the industry with the most comprehensive range of reflective sheeting, Avery Dennison also provides innovative, digital print solutions such as the TrafficJet™ integrated inkjet printing system. TrafficJet is a simple, clean, cost effective way for government agencies and private sign shops to improve their production capacity and streamline their operations, while outputting specification-compliant and durable traffic signs.

Many DOTs and private fabricators are still using decades-old technology to produce traffic signs. Not only is the older, screen-printing method resource intensive, it also requires a unique screen to be constructed and maintained for every unique sign face. Any damage to the screens can result in flawed prints, wasted material and time. The screens also require toxic chemicals that can only be disposed of by barrel storage and shipping to a specialized waste management service. Because of these factors, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is the first state agency in the U.S. to adopt digitally printed signs on all state and county roads. But, they did their due diligence in reaching that conclusion.

Before deciding on a digital print system, the agency conducted an extensive study comparing digital printing to traditional print methods of sign fabrication. The findings indicated that digitally-produced traffic signs are more durable and significantly easier to produce than those printed via traditional methods. Additionally, due to the efficient nature of the digital process, agencies can reduce their production time per sign, thus outputting more in the same amount of time. CDOT sign shop supervisor Bernard Cole said because of digital printing, "More dollars can be invested in maintaining roads, improving safety and reducing congestion. Digital printing techniques will also reduce the amount of hazardous waste produced in the process by using less ink and cleaning chemicals to produce the signs – protecting our employees."

After CDOT made the decision to adopt a digital system due to the study findings, Cole said, "CDOT estimates it will save Colorado taxpayers approximately \$100,000 annually by converting all of its traffic sign production from traditional screen printing and overlay film production to digital printing."

The digital printer is also allowing CDOT to get signs out the door faster than ever before and also allows for more complex and colorful signs. Unlike a screen-printing process where multiple colors take a long time to produce and dry because of individual setups for each color, the digital printer can create multi-colored signs in one step.

Because of the success it has had with the digital solution, CDOT is encouraging other county and state agencies to consider one as well. "With this type of innovation we believe the ultimate winner will be the driving public, who will have a better functioning transportation system," said Shailen Bhatt, executive director of CDOT. "Colorado is continually seeking to not just innovate on behalf of our employees, but also for a better return on the taxpayers' investment."

For more information on the innovation efforts, please visit [CDOT](#). For more information on the TrafficJet print solution, please visit [Avery Dennison](#).

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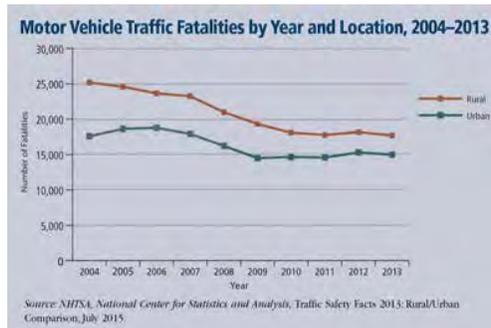
The Roads Less Traveled

By Rosemarie Anderson and Pamela Beer

A new toolkit from FHWA is paving the way for safer local and tribal rural highways.

When most people think of a rural road, they most likely picture a pastoral setting with beautiful scenery. Although it is true that many of the Nation's rural roadways offer scenic views, they also present challenges for local and tribal governments and agencies when it comes to improving safety for road users.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Traffic Safety Facts: Rural/Urban Comparison, fatalities on rural roads in 2013 accounted for 54 percent of all traffic fatalities, even though only 19 percent of the U.S. population lived in rural areas at that time. In fact, the fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled was 2.6 times higher in rural areas than in urban areas.



To help address this issue, the Federal Highway Administration has developed a toolkit and two user guides for transportation professionals and elected officials who are working to improve safety on rural roadways. Improving Safety on Rural Local and Tribal Roads--Safety Toolkit (FHWA-SA-14-072) is intended for local and tribal road practitioners, local public works staff, and Federal and State safety engineers. The Safety Toolkit's accompanying user guides, User Guide #1: Improving Safety on Rural Local and Tribal Roads--Site Safety Analysis (FHWA-SA-14-073) and User Guide #2: Improving Safety on Rural Local and Tribal Roads--Network Safety Analysis (FHWA-SA-14-074), offer a step-by-step process for safety analysis.

"With over half of all roadway fatalities occurring in rural areas, we believe that providing resources, like this toolkit, to safety professionals in rural and tribal areas will significantly improve their ability to make their roads safer for all users," says Tony Furst, associate administrator for the FHWA Office of Safety.

Challenges on Rural Local and Tribal Roads

Improving safety on these roadways might be easier if they were all the same. But they are not. A rural road may be straight or winding. It may go through mountains or farmland. The road may be subject to rain and snow. Its surface may be paved or unpaved. A need exists to provide information and assistance to rural local and tribal road practitioners throughout the country to enable them to address safety concerns on these diverse rural roads, and the toolkit is a step toward meeting that need.

In 2013, FHWA reported that 71 percent of the more than 4 million miles (6.3 million kilometers) of roadways in the Nation are in rural areas. Further, the majority of the rural roads (74 percent) are locally owned and maintained.

Addressing safety on rural local and tribal roads presents several challenges. As a result of low traffic volumes, fatalities and serious injuries tend to be dispersed, making it difficult to identify hot spots, specific locations with safety issues and strategies to address them. Many rural safety problems, such as wildlife crossings, rockfalls, and severe weather, happen randomly, making it nearly impossible to plan for when and where they will occur. The roadways in rural areas are often winding and hilly, lack shoulders, and have excessive vegetation, all of which can present challenges for the implementation of infrastructure improvements.

In addition, law enforcement and emergency medical services (EMS) in rural areas often operate with limited resources. Law enforcement officers frequently patrol large geographic regions, which presents challenges with enforcing traffic laws. Many

EMS responders in rural areas are from volunteer units, and hospitals and trauma centers are few in number. The nearest hospital may be many miles away from a crash, which may increase the time before an injured individual receives medical care.

Another challenge to improving safety on rural roads is that the mitigation strategies are diverse and draw from several safety areas. In many cases, local agencies and tribal transportation agencies do not have the resources (such as funding or staff with transportation safety experience) to address roadway safety issues.

“Tribal traffic safety can be very challenging,” says Dennis Trusty, director of the Northern Plains Tribal Technical Assistance Program at the United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck, ND. “There are a lot of different issues. Some of them deal with the lack of transportation codes and laws, such as the [driving] age. Another problem involves roadways that were built 40 to 50 years ago and often have features that are unsafe. And there is a lack of adequate law enforcement [because the officers] are often dealing with other pressing problems.”

Resources for Rural Road Safety

Local rural and tribal agencies have a number of resources available to help them meet these challenges and improve traffic safety.

[View](#) the FHWA Office of Safety site dedicated to local and rural road safety issues.

The site includes information on FHWA’s Highway Safety Improvement Program and specifics on safety issues such as roadway departures, pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and intersection safety. Site visitors will also find links to partner organizations and agencies, such as the Local Technical Assistance Program/Tribal Technical Assistance Program (LTAP/TTAP), National Association of County Engineers, and National Association of Development Organizations.

In addition, FHWA recently launched a center devoted to local and rural road safety issues, the National Center for Rural Road Safety, accessible at <http://ruralsafetycenter.org>. The major focus of the center is on providing training and technical assistance to rural local and tribal agencies. To this end, the center’s Web site is a resource for putting training tools and resources for rural transportation safety into practice.

The LTAP/TTAP centers are focused on providing assistance to tribes, counties, parishes, townships, cities, and towns to improve their roads and bridges by supplying them with a variety of training programs, an information clearinghouse, new and existing technology updates, personalized technical assistance, and newsletters. In addition, the Tribal Transportation Safety Web site at www.tribalsafety.org is sponsored by the TTAP centers. The site is a useful resource for safety practitioners with a focus on safety issues and strategies for tribal roads. It offers safety information pertinent to the tribal community, including safety planning and funding, and provides a discussion forum for various safety topics.

Although rural and tribal agencies have access to information and resources, they might not know how to obtain them quickly and efficiently. Many staff in rural and tribal agencies have myriad responsibilities. Therefore, opportunities to improve safety may be missed, despite awareness of the need to address safety issues. FHWA’s Safety Toolkit aims to help rural and tribal transportation professionals easily find the information they need.

Benefits of the Toolkit

The benefits of the Safety Toolkit are inherent in its purpose--a one-stop shop for information on the safety analysis process and resources, presented in plain language for anyone wanting to address roadway safety issues.

The step-by-step approach presented in the toolkit and its user guides is based largely on the safety analysis process given in the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials’ Highway Safety Manual. This process involves three components: evaluating the network (road system), selecting improvements, and implementing and monitoring those improvements.

“Because crashes in rural areas tend to be linked more by contributing factors than by location, the challenge is that you need to look at the entire system to be able to identify trends,” says David Brand, a county engineer in Madison, OH. Contributing factors may include causes such as low roadway friction around a curve or constraints on sight distance.

Brand continues, “The toolkit is helpful in explaining the best way to identify these trends in crash causes and to select the right low-cost safety countermeasures to reduce serious and fatal injuries on rural systems.”

Each component of the safety analysis has a series of steps. The first component--evaluating the network--includes the following three steps: (1) compile data, (2) conduct network screening, and (3) select sites for implementation.

Two steps come under selecting improvements, the second component: (4) diagnose site conditions and identify countermeasures, and (5) prioritize countermeasures for implementation.

The final component, implementing and monitoring the improvements, includes the final two steps: (6) implement countermeasures, and (7) evaluate their effectiveness.

[Read a brief description](#) of each step.

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Rural Local & Tribal Road Safety Toolkit & User Guides Webinar Series

Getting the most from the Toolkit and User Guides to address safety on rural local and tribal roadways where fatal crash risk is 2.4 times higher than urban roadways.

Webinars will provide an overview of the safety toolkit and user guides along with presentations from practitioners who have used the toolkit and identified tools.

February 9

1:00 pm - 2:30 pm EST

February 23

1:00 pm - 2:30 pm EST

March 22

1:00 pm - 2:30 pm EST

[Register for a webinar.](#)

FHWA Toolkit for Rural, Local, and Tribal Road Safety provides a step-by-step safety analysis process along with the tools, examples and resources. Gone are the days of searching multiple websites or documents for information on rural road safety to make a meaningful impact on safety.

View the [Safety Toolkit](#).

For more information contact Rosemarie Anderson at rosemarie.anderson@dot.gov.

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A Successful Wisconsin Winter Road School

By **Mark Servi**
Barron County

Members of the Wisconsin County Highway Association (WCHA) attended our Winter Road School January 18-20 at the Chula Vista Conference Center in Wisconsin Dells. The event had over 575 attendees and included a three day trade show that featured 72 vendor displays.

The program included WCHA Committee meetings, 8 general session presentations, and 11 break-out sessions. Topics included Innovative Road Improvement Methods, and Ethics and Legislative Priorities. Wisconsin Department of Transportation Secretary Mark Gottlieb was the keynote speaker. DJ Buthe of South Dakota, our NACE Regional Vice President, was our special guest.



Wisconsin Transportation Development Association (TDA) Director Craig Thompson spoke to the group about TDA's new initiative "Just Fix It". Mr. Thompson is traveling the state presenting to various groups the condition and needs of Wisconsin's transportation infrastructure. He has gathered information from counties, including pictures of failed and failing roads and bridges, to help support the argument that Wisconsin, like most states, does not adequately address the needs of the transportation.

Recent data compiled by the Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance gives Infrastructure Availability a highway condition rating of D. Clearly not acceptable. Craig led an activity that included the audience using their cell phones to sign and send an e-mail letter.

The tool TDA developed uses your zip code to search out your elected officials. Once you review the letter and electronically sign it, it is e-mailed the respective Senator or Assembly Representative.

During this presentation, almost 100 of us used our smart phones to send the letter from our meeting room. This use of technology clearly can help inform our elected officials about our needs, and provided an easy way to contact them.

Of the many issues WCHA is working on none is more important than providing safety for our employees in the performance of their jobs. This past year was tragic for Highway Department's across Wisconsin. Three separate counties had employees killed in work zone accidents, all involving being hit by drivers as they passed through the work zone. These unfortunate occurrences have resulted in a focus on Work Zone Safety by WCHA and the formulation of a Work Group to develop safety recommendations and champion safety.

Ernie Winters of Winnebago County is leading this effort. The group is striving to develop additional education for county employees as well as education tools for the public. The goal is to have the educational tools in place for use in the upcoming Work Zone Awareness Week, which is April 11-15.

This meeting also saw the installation of new officers for WCHA: President Ron Chamberlain of LaCrosse County, Past President Emmer Shields of Ashland County, and Secretary Mark Servi of Barron County. Congratulations to these men as they serve WCHA for the next 2 years.

WCHA has two Road Schools annually, Winter and Summer. The next Road School will be held June 6-8 at Chula Vista in Wisconsin Dells. We invite participation from others. Check out our website for information regarding this event.

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FHWA Peer Exchange Testimonial: Embracing The Local Road Practitioner

By: **Richie Beyer, PE**

Elmore County, Alabama



I have been fortunate to have participated in a number of peer exchange events related to safety over the years. Each event has been a wonderful and humbling experience as I have had the privilege of representing my county and State in an environment full of great professionals from across our Nation. These engaged professionals aren't afraid to share their experiences, good or bad, with the group about how they have tackled or are currently coping with similar safety issues.

This past September I had another one of those opportunities, as FHWA held a peer exchange in Nashville, TN, to share information and promote the systemic safety implementation approach. When I was asked to share my perspective about the event, I considered writing about the multitude of different practices and methods used by the States that participated, but I felt compelled to share

a few of the overarching thoughts that I came away with from the meeting.

First, I have left each of these exchanges in awe of the professionalism exhibited. Whether it is the FHWA staff facilitating the meetings or the State DOT and local representatives, these individuals' commitment and dedication to safety never ceases to amaze me. I have always come away pondering the ways I can improve our efforts for the citizens we serve. The energy and ideas I receive out of these events improve the way I perform my job and provide a catalyst in many cases to re-energize our efforts on the home front. While the outcomes of attending these events may be difficult to measure in dollars, having the additional knowledge and tools to prevent even a single fatality makes the effort invaluable.

Second, I have witnessed an evolution in transportation safety practices since 2005, when I was asked to serve as the county engineer representative on our State's SHSP development committee. Since that time, I have witnessed safety programs in general utilize data more efficiently and proactively to prevent fatalities rather than react to fatal hot spots. The most recent peer exchange I attended was about improving safety using the systemic safety approach, a concept that was not initially embraced. There were few who truly had systemic methodologies in place, but it is becoming standard practice. Being able to witness and participate in this positive movement toward improving the public's safety has been very enlightening for me.

My final thought is centered around the makeup of the participants in these peer exchanges. Too many times, we as local government representatives hear how FHWA's mission is geared to support State DOTs. Although this relationship is one of great importance, very few trips take place only on State and Federal roads. Local roads and bridges dominate the landscape of our country, accounting for 75 percent of our Nation's road network. Through these peer exchanges, it is refreshing to see how FHWA has ensured inclusion of local governments in the process so that the citizens are afforded roads and bridges that are exemplars of best practices in roadway safety, regardless of who owns and maintains these roads. FHWA is fostering an environment where it is the norm to include local road practitioners in discussions on roadway safety side-by-side with their State and Federal partners. As a "local," that has been a refreshing transition, and I can only hope that the trend continues in the future.

Reprinted from FHWA Safety Compass Newsletter, Winter 2016 issue.

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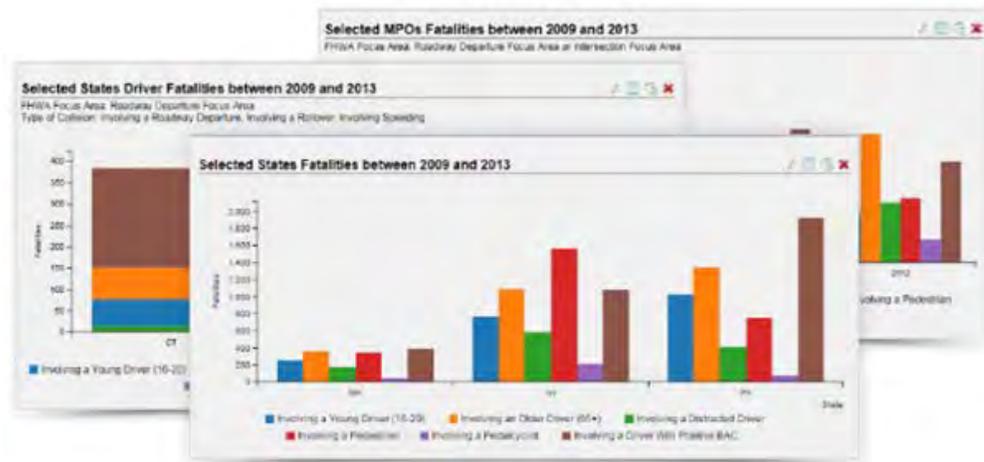
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"New and Improved" Roadway Safety Data Dashboard Now Live!

By **Danielle Betkey**
FHWA Office of Safety

The FHWA Office of Safety recently launched the "new and improved" [Roadway Safety Data Dashboard](#). The data dashboard has been completely redesigned to improve usability and expand the capabilities of the site.



Since fatality data can be very complex, the dashboard allows users to convert data into graphical displays that make it easier to see trends and make comparisons between States, metropolitan planning organizations (MPO), and regions. Using data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), users are able to generate charts and graphs to display the data elements that describe the crash, the vehicle, and the people involved.

Some of the exciting NEW features enable users to:

- Condense workflow with a single step-by-step procedure and drop-down menus;
- View new combinations of display and comparison options to include: types of collisions, persons involved, and location and setting;
- Create and view multiple graphs to compare different States, regions, and MPOs in a single dashboard;
- Take advantage of new display options, such as line, spline, and area charts;
- Generate a web link to share your dashboard;
- View and export the underlying graph data into an Excel spreadsheet; and
- Edit graph options to easily change criteria of type of graph.

The Office of Safety will continue to make updates by adding new features and data to the data dashboard to ensure this tool is beneficial and valuable to our safety partners. We are also interested in your feedback, so please [click here](#) to let us know (good or bad) what you think about the data dashboard, what data or features would you like to see added, and any issues you may have experienced when creating your dashboard.

For more information, please contact Danielle.Betkey@dot.gov.

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Foxx Says There Are No Plans for the Federal Regulation of Autonomous Vehicles

Speaking to the media after a panel discussion at the CES technology trade show in Las Vegas, Nevada, in early January US Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx said there are no plans for national legislation to regulate self-driving or autonomous vehicles, and that those decisions are still best made at a state-by-state level.

"It's not completely out of the question," he said, to eventually see blanket regulations for autonomous cars at a federal level, and noted that the government should be more concerned with speeding up the time that it takes for the Department of Transportation to evaluate the new technologies.

"There's a lot the federal government can do in terms of laying out safety standards and producing guidance for model legislations at the state level," Foxx said. "It may happen at some point that there's a desire for a national approach for these things, but I think we're a little ways away from that point. Right now, we've got to develop a mechanism to evaluate the technology that comes to us and as rapidly as we can."



During his panel discussion about the future of mobility, Foxx said that it is the USDOT's job to ensure that products in the marketplace are safe. "Our goal as an agency is to step up the speed with which we can make those evaluations," he explained. "We don't want to be in a situation where technology is presented to us and it takes four years for us to evaluate it. We have to move faster. The industry is at a moment where the convergence of technology and transportation offers enormous opportunities for communities all across the country and world."

However, there are some members of the automotive industry that would like to see a nationwide regulation of driverless car technology in the USA. During an industry roundtable discussion about autonomous vehicles, representatives from Audi noted that it is difficult to test the latest technologies, because each state has different rules. Audi executives noted that New York State is the only one that that requires a driver's hand to be on the wheel at all times, so the company would not be able to test its 'piloted driving' vehicles there.

Reprinted from TrafficTechnologyToday.com, January 15 issue.

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HSIP National Scan Tour Webinar

February 3 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM EST

In the fall of 2015, FHWA conducted a Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Scan Tour to identify and document key characteristics of HSIP administration, planning, implementation, and evaluation practices from seven States —Alaska, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Oregon and Utah.

Please join us on to learn about the HSIP noteworthy practices identified during the 2015 HSIP Scan Tour. This webinar is open to transportation professionals from the public and private sectors who are interested in learning how to enhance or improve HSIPs. The webinar will include an overview of the Scan Tour findings and presentations from three of the States visited during the Scan Tour.

Agenda

- Overview of the Lessons Learned from the 2015 HSIP Scan Tour
- Presentations on Developing an Effective HSIP –State DOT personnel from Alaska, Oregon, and New Hampshire will describe how they developed a successful HSIP and highlight some of their most effective practices.
- Questions and Answers

Register [HERE](#).

Space is limited. While this webinar is open to everyone who is interested, non-USDOT employees must have an FHWA external collaboration account to register. If you do not have an account, please click [HERE](#) to request an account. It takes approximately one business day to obtain account login information.

Visit our [website](#) to learn more about the HSIP, including the current status of HSIP-related rulemaking efforts.

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Highway Boondoggles 2 : More Wasted Money and America's Transportation Future

The US Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) Education Fund has published findings that it believes represent money spent on unnecessary highway expansion, money which could be better spent on other transportation initiatives.

America is in a long-term transportation funding crisis. Our roads, bridges and transit systems are falling into disrepair. Demand for public transportation, as well as safe bicycle and pedestrian routes, is growing.

Traditional sources of transportation revenue, especially the gas tax, are not keeping pace with the needs. Even with the recent passage of a five-year federal transportation bill, the future of transportation funding remains uncertain.

State and federal decision-makers should reevaluate the need for the projects profiled in this report and others that no longer make sense in an era of changing transportation needs. State decision-makers should use the flexibility provided in the new federal Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) to focus investment on real transportation solutions, including repairing potholes and bridges and investing in public transportation and bicycling and walking options.

State governments continue to spend billions on highway expansion projects that fail to solve congestion.

Americans' long-term travel needs are changing.

The Federal Highway Trust Fund and many state transportation funds are increasingly dependent on the failing gas tax and infusions of general fund spending to sustain transportation investments.

States continue to spend tens of billions of dollars on new or expanded highways that are often not justified in terms of their benefits to the transportation system, or that pose serious harm to surrounding communities.

Questionable projects are poised to absorb billions of scarce transportation dollars.

Several states are re-evaluating the wisdom of boondoggle highway projects – either shelving them entirely or forcing revisions to the projects.

The diversion of funds to highway boondoggle projects is especially harmful given that there is an enormous need for investment in repairs to existing roads, as well as transit improvements.

Read the [Full Report](#).

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Congress Highway Trust Fund Crisis Right Around Corner, New Study Shows

By Dean Franks
ARTBA Vice President of Congressional Affairs

Highway Trust Fund Revenue Crisis Will Return



Prior to the FAST Act's Dec. 4 enactment, the Highway Trust Fund was facing average annual revenue shortfalls of \$14.6 billion. Beginning Oct. 1, 2020—when the law expires—the gap will average \$18 billion annually over the next six years, according to CBO.

The FAST Act supplements HTF revenue with a \$70 billion transfer from the federal General Fund. The new CBO data reflected in the chart above demonstrate that while this Band-Aid approach will support the FAST Act's modest highway and transit investment increases up to 2020, it will leave the trust fund in a worse fiscal predicament.

Reprinted from the ARTBA Washington Newsline, January 29 issue.

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South Dakota DOT Pays Out Nearly \$50M to Counties, Cities

The South Dakota Department of Transportation has paid out nearly \$50 million in state highway funding to counties and some city governments.

The department says the funds replaced federal highway dollars, giving counties and cities more flexibility to pay for road and bridge projects. The funds for the payouts are the result of a bill approved by the 2015 Legislature that included a package of tax and fee hikes to generate funds specifically for roads and bridges.

After the bill went into effect, the department began an exchange of the locally available federal funds for state funds. Unlike the federal dollars, the state funds aren't restricted to a particular highway project or road segment.

Transportation Secretary Darin Bergquist says the funds should immediately help local governments "address critical infrastructure needs."

Reprinted from the Daily Journal, January 5 edition.

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Snow Plow Policies



The following was derived from various county road departments' snow plowing policies. These may be something to add to your department's manual.

Districts

Each equipment operator is assigned a certain area for snow plowing during the year. When need arises, operators will assist in other areas of the County, depending on snow conditions.

School Bus Routes

School bus routes are given first priority. High-Use Roads High Volume Roads are given second priority.

Other Roads

Paved roads that are not school bus routes are given third priority. Gravel roads which are not school bus routes are given fourth priority. Unimproved dirt roads will be plowed as time allows and upon request.

Snow Removal for State Highway or other Jurisdictions

Contract services with providers or cooperative agreements with MDT, Cities, BLM, FWP, or other government agencies.

Operations

Equipment used for snow removal includes snowplows, motor graders, loaders, trucks, and chemical applicators. Abrasive material used to improve traction once a snow or ice floor (or frost) is established will be 3/8 minus graded material and sand. Rock salt or proprietary products may also be used.

Liquid Products: Salt brine, Magnesium Chloride, Calcium Chloride, may also be used for a variety of applications.

Applications include: 1. Anti-icing 2. Deicing 3. Treatment with abrasives

Snow fences are established in areas to prevent drifting of snow on roadways.

Procedures

Jurisdiction roads will be kept as passable and as safe as natural occurrences allow. Winter storms vary in duration and severity. Officials will use forethought, judgment and skill to match maintenance application to winter storms and allowable budget.

As a storm moves in, a likely sequence might be:

1. Observe Weather Predictions.
2. Apply anti-icing chemicals.
3. Observe presence of snow and ice.
4. Plow to remove excessive snow.
5. Continue to plow and apply chemically treated abrasives in key areas such as intersections and approaches.
6. De-ice with chemicals in key areas using care not to use chemicals where drifting snow could cause refreezing.
7. Repeat Steps 1 and 2 as well as pray for sunshine.

General Policies

Normal snow plowing shall be conducted during daylight hours between 6:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., five days per week. Upon the discretion of the Road & Bridge Superintendent, snow plowing roads shall occur during early morning hours and/or weekends.

The Department will not plow snow during high winds, unless it is an emergency.

The Department will not be liable for any fence damage that occurs to fences which lie within the County's right-of-way.

The Department will not be liable for any mail boxes knocked over or damaged due to snow being plowed. However, the Department will replace any mail boxes which are physically hit by the Department's snow plows.

Paved roadways will be plowed when there is a significant accumulation of snow.

Graveled roadways will be plowed when there is a significant accumulation of snow according to priority list.

The Department will sand subdivision approaches inside the County right-of-way during emergency situations only.

When necessary, paved roads will be sanded on regular basis at major intersections, hills, curves, etc. Graveled roads will be sanded only in emergency situations, or at the discretion of the Road & Bridge Superintendent.

Graveled roads will be sanded only in emergency situations, or at the discretion of the Road & Bridge Superintendent.

Training New Drivers

Become familiar with designated snow routes.

Become familiar with School Bus routes.

Drive routes in summer or fall when roads are clear to become aware of hazards.

Keep driver consistent with route when possible. Have new driver ride with experienced operators.

Inform driver to get proper rest and nutrition. If driver is unable to perform safely he should not be used.

Reprinted from the LTAP Matters Newsletter, a publication of the Montana LTAP. Winter 2016 issue.

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State Practices for Local Road Safety

NCHRP Synthesis 486 : Highway Practice



According to the U.S.DOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics for 2014, approximately 76% of all road miles in the United States is owned and maintained by local entities. In addition, NHTSA's Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) for 2013 reports that approximately 54% of all fatal crashes occur on rural roads; 72% of which are owned by local entities.

Hence, many states are facing challenges in addressing safety issues on locally owned roads. This synthesis documents the state programs and practices that address local agency road safety. Of particular interest to this study has been information on state program size, funding sources, and administrative procedures; changes in local road safety programs

since the legislation of Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21); noteworthy local and state program partnerships and initiatives to improve safety; and the use of 4E (Engineering, Enforcement, Education, and Emergency Services) approaches to local road safety.

The findings of this synthesis will provide state departments of transportation (DOTs) and their local agencies with useful information on successful partnerships to address the reduction of crashes on local roads.

View the [Full Report](#).

The following major observations were made based on the DOT survey data, detailed interviews, and literature review:

MAP-21 has positively affected states in their ability, through significantly increased funding levels especially in the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), to address local road safety and the need for data-driven decisions that implement proven countermeasures to reduce crashes on local roads. Through the survey, federal funding was identified as the major source in many states (more than 80% of fund source) for the local road safety programs.

Thirty-three states have experienced a reduction of fatal and serious injury crashes since the implementation of MAP-21 legislation and reported the promotion of systemic lowcost safety improvements and initiation or expansion of state coordinated local road safety programs and partnerships as key factors in crash reduction. Increased HSIP funding and improved access to crash data for local agencies were also identified as elements that contributed to crash reductions.

States are using a variety of approaches to engage local government agencies. Many states are holding summits, conferences, workshops, and meetings to help educate and train local agencies in applying for safety funds and discussing safety requirements. In addition, many states are coordinating with their Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) centers to address issues with local agencies on local road safety.

Many states have adopted and/or support the Toward Zero Deaths Initiative within its own Strategic Highway Safety Program (SHSP), in which states address reducing crashes on all public roads by employment of a 4E approaches. Survey results revealed that most states (32) include an element in their SHSP that identifies and addresses goals and initiatives to improve the safety on local roads.

The majority of states responded that the administration and reporting requirements for the use of federal-aid dollars have been a deterrent to the participation of local agencies. Practices identified to encourage such involvement were a year-round fund application timeframe, streamlining and consolidating the solicitation process [e.g., a universal application (one application) for federal safety funds]; lowering local match requirements (e.g., providing state funds to match federal funds so that a local match

is not required); and providing training, technical assistance, and certification programs for local public agencies.

Key challenges faced by state DOTs in addressing local safety projects were the lack of local agency resources (44 states), followed by the limit of state DOT resources (29 states). Tools identified to address these challenges were providing workshops, training, and technical assistance; enhancing communication; outreach and engagement with local agencies; procedures documented in local road manuals; and comprehensive guidance and policy for local agencies.

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