



PENNDOT BATTLES ANOTHER PENNSYLVANIA WINTER *AND MORE!*



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For more information please visit our website: www.PennDOT.pa.gov

Pennsylvania Motorcycle Safety Program: www.penndot.pa.gov/PAMSP

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This quarterly newsletter highlights our latest efforts to improve mobility and quality of life in Pennsylvania.

As always, feel free to send story ideas or requests for information you want to see. If you’re involved in an interesting or innovative project or initiative, have ever wondered about other parts of PennDOT’s operations or have other suggestions, email the Communications Office at DOTcomm@pa.gov.

We hope you enjoy this latest issue!

PENNDOT OUTLINES WINTER PREPARATIONS, GUIDANCE FOR PUBLIC READINESS, AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES



The public can access travel information on nearly 40,000 state-maintained roadway miles year-round at www.511PA.com

Before the winter season, PennDOT Secretary Mike Carroll, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency Director Randy Padfield, and Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) Chief Executive Officer Mark Compton held a media briefing to outline plans for winter services, highlight job opportunities, and discuss how the public can prepare for the season.

The public can access travel information on nearly 40,000 state-maintained roadway miles year-round at www.511PA.com, and during the winter they can find plow-truck locations and details of when state-maintained roadways were last plowed. The information is made possible by PennDOT's Automated Vehicle Location technology, which uses units in the over 2,600 department-owned and rented plow trucks to send a cellular signal showing a truck's location.

To help the public prepare for the season and share information about winter services, PennDOT offers operational information and traveler resources at www.penndot.pa.gov/winter. The site also has a complete winter guide with detailed information about winter services in each of PennDOT's 11 engineering districts.

In discussing traffic safety, Carroll announced that PennDOT is adding 15 variable speed limit, or VSL, signs – which quickly reduce speed limits when visibility or roadway conditions call for lower speeds – bringing the statewide total to 78 locations:

- 36 locations along I-80 in Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, and Union counties (mile marker (MM) 97-210);
- Six locations on I-80 in Clarion and Jefferson counties on the approaches to Emlenton Bridge (MM 42-45), North Fork Bridge (MM 78-81), and Kyle Lake Bridge (MM 92-95); and

- 36 locations along I-81 from I-78 to I-80 in Lebanon (five locations), Luzerne (seven locations), and Schuylkill (24 locations) counties

VSL signs quickly reduce speed limits when visibility or roadway conditions present the need for more cautious driving. Preliminary results show this solution effectively slowed traffic 4-9 mph during winter road conditions at the 63 locations last winter. Additionally, crashes decreased by an average by 22% on I-80 in Clearfield County last winter when compared to the previous five-year average. Locations were chosen based on crash and weather data, such as frequency of wintry conditions that demand safer driving, and where crashes caused by whiteout conditions led to roadway closures of more than three hours.

While the VSLs are in place, permanent speed limit signs are covered, and the normal posted speed limit is displayed on the VSL unless visibility or winter weather conditions call for slower speeds. When speed limits are reduced, a yellow light at the top and bottom of the VSL will be flashing to ensure motorists are aware of the change.

With more than \$197 million budgeted for this winter's statewide operations, PennDOT deploys about 4,700 on-the-road workers, has more than 700,000 tons of salt on hand across the state and will take salt deliveries throughout the winter.

PennDOT is actively seeking temporary equipment operators statewide for the winter season to supplement the department's full-time staff. The department is also looking to fill other in-demand jobs like diesel and automotive mechanics; transportation construction inspectors; and engineers. Learn more at www.employment.pa.gov/penndot.

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If motorists encounter snow or ice-covered roads, they should slow down, increase their following distance and avoid distractions. Last winter in Pennsylvania, preliminary data shows that there were 135 crashes resulting in one fatality and 61 injuries on snowy, slushy or ice-covered roadways where aggressive-driving behaviors such as speeding or making careless lane changes were factors.

It's also important to know the difference between a weather watch and warning:

- A watch means there is increased risk of a hazardous weather event, but its occurrence, location, or timing is still uncertain. Pay attention to forecasts and plan out what you will do if/when it occurs.
- A warning means the weather event is imminent or is happening. Take immediate action to protect lives and property.

In addition, snow squalls can often produce dangerous and deadly travel hazards on otherwise clear winter days. The National Weather Service now issues "Snow Squall Warnings" which alert drivers of whiteout conditions and slippery roadways, so motorists can avoid traveling directly into these dangerous squalls.

Motorists should prepare for potential wintry weather by ensuring they have supplies in their cars before heading out: food, water, blankets, extra gloves and hats, cell phone charger, hand or foot warmers, windshield brush and scraper, and any specialized items like medications or baby and pet supplies.

For more information on PennDOT's winter preparations and additional winter-driving resources for motorists, visit the department's winter website.

STATE EMPLOYEES HONORED FOR REPLACEMENT OF FERN HOLLOW BRIDGE IN PITTSBURGH



Governor Josh Shapiro presented a group of employees from PennDOT with the Governor's Awards for Excellence in recognition of their efforts to replace the Fern Hollow Bridge in less than a year after its collapse, restoring a critical connection between communities in the City of Pittsburgh.

The honorees are all based in District 11, PennDOT's Pittsburgh regional office:

- **Michele Mara Acitelli, Senior Civil Engineer Manager;**
- **Robert Byrnes, Senior Civil Engineer Supervisor;**
- **Zachary Kamnikar, Civil Engineer Manager;**
- **Brian Rampulla, Structure Control Engineer;**
- **Douglas Seeley, Assistant District 11 Executive, Design;**

- **Shane Szalankiewicz, Senior Civil Engineer Manager;**
- **Michael Szurley, Senior Project Manager;**
- **Douglas Thompson, Senior Civil Engineer Manager;**
- **Mark Young, Environmental Planning Manager; and**
- **Jason Zang, District 11 Executive.**

The Fern Hollow Bridge carries Forbes Avenue over Frick Park, Fern Hollow Creek and Tranquil Trail, collapsed on the morning of January 28, 2022. The cause of the collapse is still under investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).

Immediately following the collapse, then-Governor Tom Wolf and Pittsburgh Mayor Ed Gainey issued Declaration of Disaster Emergency Proclamations, which permitted the City of

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PENNDOT EMPLOYEES HONORED FOR INNOVATIVE ACHIEVEMENTS

By PennDOT Bureau of Innovations



PennDOT recognized employees with Innovation Awards for their efforts to improve work practices and create efficiencies. Leaders from PennDOT's central and district offices gathered Nov. 1 to present 28 employees with Innovation Awards, and to present PennDOT's District 6 team with the George W McAuley Jr., P.E. Award for their exceptional response to the I-95 bridge collapse in Philadelphia.

"PennDOT employees have demonstrated a tireless dedication to the Department's mission and goals," said PennDOT Secretary Mike Carroll. "I'm proud to see so many examples of that dedication and recognize these employees for their creativity in solving problems and improving processes."

The annual Innovation Awards Ceremony recognizes some of the best and most innovative ideas cultivated and implemented by PennDOT employees across the Department. Employees who assessed and improved processes, systems and tools they were using to meet the need of Pennsylvania drivers are considered for the award. Each employee receives a custom award that represents PennDOT's appreciation for their dedication and commitment to efficient and effective operations at all levels of the organization.

The George W. McAuley Jr., P.E. Award

PennDOT's District 6 I-95 Bridge Collapse Emergency Response Team

To commemorate the late Executive Deputy Secretary George W. McAuley's commitment to the continuous pursuit of innovation,

this award recognizes employee-driven teams of three or more that help to promote and foster continuous improvement at PennDOT by advancing an innovation or solving a problem.

On the morning of June 11, 2023, a fuel tanker truck carrying an estimated 8,500 gallons of gasoline exited the northbound Cottman Avenue off-ramp from I-95 in Philadelphia and subsequently crashed. The explosion and intense fire caused the structure carrying the northbound lanes of I-95 to collapse.

The District 6 Regional Traffic Management Center (RTMC) was immediately engaged, and the Incident Command Center (ICC) was activated. Once the fire was extinguished, an immediate assessment of the damage was performed with an all-hands-on-deck response coming from PennDOT, the City of Philadelphia, the Pennsylvania State Police, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and others.

District 6 was recognized for their efforts to manage the situation as it evolved, assess the damage and craft an innovative reconstruction approach that utilized relatively a new material consisting of recycled foamed glass to help reopen the bridge to traffic in 12 days.

"I am incredibly proud of our District 6 team," said District 6 Executive Lou Belmonte. "The Philadelphia region's transportation network is well taken care of by our dedicated staff who work tirelessly each day to provide safe and efficient transportation for our communities."

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Other Innovation Award Recipients include:

Planning

Mike Ballinger, John Moloney, and Joe Piper were awarded for their efforts to create a Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) Mobile Application. The application allows Metropolitan Planning Organizations, PennDOT Districts and PennDOT's Bureau of Planning and Research (BPR) HPMS staff the ability to electronically collect and review annual HPMS samples using a laptop or mobile device. This allows for more accurate data and substantial time savings during the HPMS sample review season. Ultimately, this results in cost savings as less time is spent on the road and out of the office verifying samples.

Highway Administration

Phillip Hendrickson received an award for implementing the use of LiDAR in survey data collection. This innovative tool increases crew safety by allowing them to easily set up and move around a project site and capture data from a safe distance, upwards of 75 feet away from potential hazards. Project efficiency has been increased because field crews are able to capture more data in less time, resulting in reduced costs for travel and fewer overnight expenditures.

Multimodal

Ian Detamore was awarded for utilizing Microsoft Power BI to develop several applications in support of the Bureau of Public Transportation's transit oversight efforts. The applications included an Admin Portal to centralize key data of the 50 transit agencies across Pennsylvania, a dotGrants Comparison Tool to allow program managers responsible for transit agency oversight to easily compare the information reported for the current period against the same information reported in previous periods, and a Ticket Analysis Tool for auditing of Service Level Agreements conformance. These tools have resulted in several efficiencies for transit agencies and BPT staff, including streamlined processes, greater accuracy and improved response times.

Driver and Vehicle Services

Julia Pryor received an award for the design and creation of the Bureau of Driver Licensing (BDL) Support Guide. The BDL Support Guide provides employees with the most accurate and up-to-date information regarding policies, procedures or other processing guidelines right at their fingertips. This enables front-line Driver License Center employees and field support staff to quickly reference the guide and find the necessary information to assist customers efficiently.

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Administration

Terrance G. Pearsall Jr., ProFM, FMP, SFP, was awarded for his idea to enhance the system that tracks deficiencies in Department-owned buildings. These improvements help to validate when deficiencies are addressed and allow for a significantly faster and less cumbersome project close out process. Due to the positive results seen from adding this feature, it's now being added to other agencies using WebiFM, including the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission.

District 1

Josh Austin, Saxon Daugherty, Jill Harry, and Vincent Mazzocchi, P.E., were awarded for their work on a modernized visitor sign-in system at the district office that utilizes QR codes and smartphones.

District 2

Morgan Whited was awarded for her work in creating new maps denoting areas that are not to be mowed and allowed to become naturalized. "No Mow Maps" are an on-hand, readily available resource for county crews.

District 3

Todd Hardy was awarded for his innovative idea to use emergency grout bags for repairs when there is undermining of bridge substructures. Use of the grout bags saves time and helps minimize impacts to the traveling public by shortening the length of potential bridge closures.

District 4

Michael Heller was awarded for improving safety and saving money by renting culvert cleaners instead of a flush truck to clear blocked culverts quickly and efficiently. The culvert cleaners can also be used for more applications than a flush truck. In 60 hours of use, District 4 realized a cost savings of nearly \$5,650 in rental equipment costs by using a culvert cleaner instead of a flush truck.

District 5

Michael Haney was awarded for saving \$210,000 through the purchase of a STRATOS Asphalt Distributor Trailer to be used in place of a Truck Mounted Asphalt Distributor. District 5 is expected to save \$12,000 per year in maintenance costs moving forward.

District 6

Jacob Knapp and Joe Rudi received an award for the use of iber Modified Courses (FMC) mix with standard asphalt as an alternative to the polymer-modified Superpave Asphalt Mixture Design. The FMC mix gives suppliers an alternative method for achieving design performance and leads to lower bids and longer paving seasons.

District 8

Paula Beatty received an award for suggesting additional functionality be added to the PA VideoLog system, making it a more productive and user-friendly system.

District 9

James T. Pruss Jr., P.E. and Scott A. Roberts, P.E., were awarded for their work in creating a cost-effective solution for tracking project deliverables. This unique solution offers a user-friendly automation for project delivery personnel and provides real-time management reports on key project delivery metrics.

District 10

Timothy Clevenger was awarded for his innovative idea to purchase an excavator-mounted tree shearer in an effort to increase safety and production during tree removal operations within the Department's Right-of-Way. The tree shear removes trees up to 15" in diameter and allows for the removal of 30 or more trees per shift. Most importantly, it allows for safe placement of the tree on the ground where finish sawing and chipping can occur.

District 11

Ben DeVore, P.E., was awarded for the implementation of the HAAS Alert Safety Cloud, a Responder-to-Vehicle system that alerts motorists using the Waze app of first responders at incidents when emergency lights are activated. The use of this system helps to protect tunnel staff and first responders during incidents.

District 12

William "Dale" Baird, Jeffrey Edmonds, Ryan S. Medvitz, P.E., Brandon Ross, Matthew Walker, and Thomas Younkin were awarded for their efforts to reboot and reinvigorate the Spring Foreman Safety Summit after a 3-year hiatus stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. The interactive format, which consisted of materials, discussions and demonstrations to improve operations and safety, received overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees.

SHAPIRO ADMINISTRATION MARKS I-95 MILESTONE: FIRST SECTION OF NEW BRIDGE COMPLETED AHEAD OF SCHEDULE



PennDOT Secretary Mike Carroll marked a major milestone as work on the permanent repair of I-95 continued safely and efficiently. PennDOT was joined by Federal Highway Administrator Shailen Bhatt, City of Philadelphia Deputy Managing Director for the Office of Transportation and Infrastructure Michael Carroll, P.E. and other officials to commemorate the shifting of traffic from the temporary roadway onto the newly completed outer travel lanes of the new permanent bridge on Interstate 95 in northeast Philadelphia. This traffic shift began ahead of schedule.

After a fire on June 11 caused the roadway to collapse, Governor Shapiro and Secretary Carroll led a coordinated state, local, and



federal response to reopen the roadway safely and as quickly as possible, and efforts were ahead of schedule each step of the way to get traffic flowing on I-95 again. A temporary roadway with six lanes of traffic opened on June 23, only 12 days after the initial fire and collapse.

The entire new structure, plus reconstruction of the lower portion of the Cottman Avenue off-ramp, is expected to be completed and the northbound interchange reopened in 2024.

For more information on the permanent reconstruction project, visit PennDOT's I-95 Cottman Avenue Updates page: www.penndot.pa.gov/RegionalOffices/district-6/Pages/AlertDetails.aspx.

"TRAINING THUNDERSTORMS" TEST DISTRICT 4 EMPLOYEES

By Jessica Ruddy, Community Relations Coordinator, District 4



Unexpected record rainfall rolled in on Saturday, September 9th between 7:00 and 8:00 PM in Lackawanna, Luzerne, and Wyoming counties causing major flooding never seen in the hardest-hit areas. Water rushed down the mountain wiping out roads, flooding vehicles, houses, and bridges.

Accuweather called the storms "Training Thunderstorms." This occurs when storms sit over an area and dump large amounts of rain. The intensity was unexpected and unfortunately devastated some areas.

PennDOT crews were deployed immediately and began scoping and cleaning up throughout the three counties affected.

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INNOVATIVE TRAFFIC CONTROL TECHNOLOGY USED ON THE ROUTE 220 BRIDGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT IN LYCOMING COUNTY

By Maggie Baker, Community Relations Coordinator, District 3



Innovative traffic control technology was used to maintain traffic flow on the Route 220 bridge improvement project in Woodward Township, Lycoming County. Route 220 is a major connector between the City of Williamsport, Jersey Shore, and Lock Haven, which carries approximately 20,000 vehicles a day.

Traffic was controlled by using an innovative traffic control technology called a movable median barrier system. This technology is new to District 3 but has been used in more urbanized areas to address traffic control and congestion.

For the Route 220 bridge improvement project, the barrier system separating northbound and southbound traffic was moved daily to ensure two lanes of travel northbound for the morning commute and two lanes southbound for the afternoon commute. Opposing direction of traffic will be restricted to one lane.

The movable barrier system reduced the time needed to complete the project by over one construction season and removed six traffic phases and it facilitates traffic flow in and out of the City of Williamsport through the project area.

The median barrier includes 16 concrete sections with a metal section on either side which is for expansion. These are "pinned" together with approximately 12-inch pins. A mile of barrier can be moved in approximately 10-15 minutes by a machine operated by two drivers simultaneously.

On Tuesday, October 24, 2023, the movable barrier was removed for the winter shut down, but will return in the spring of 2024 when construction resumes on the project.

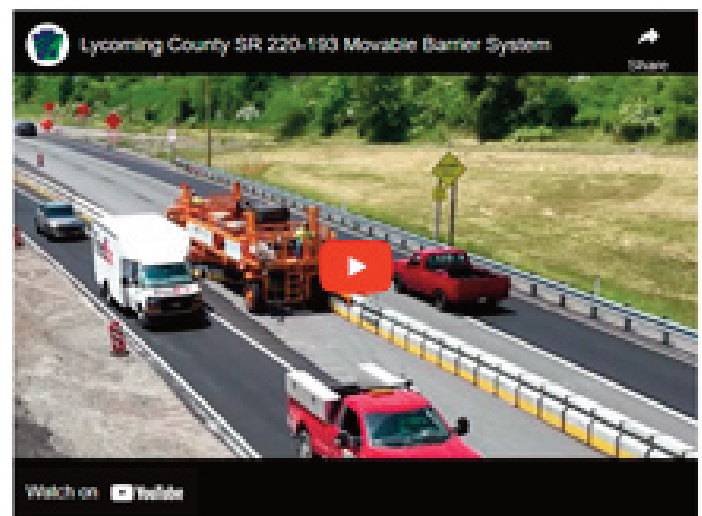
The Route 220 bridge improvement project will replace two structures carrying Route 220 over the Fourth Street off ramp, as well as rehabilitate two structures over Antlers Lane, and two

structures over the Lycoming Valley Railroad in Woodward Township and the City of Williamsport, Lycoming County. The project includes \$13.4 million in federal funding, made possible through the BIL.

Under this project, PennDOT's contractor, Susquehanna Valley Corporation, will remove and replace the structures over Ramp A to West Fourth Street and rehabilitate two structures over Antlers Lane and the two structures over the Lycoming Valley Railroad.

To watch a video of the movable barrier system please visit the link provided beneath this post.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=R_yoVzfkU-o



HELP US “PUT THE BRAKES ON FATALITIES”



2019, fatalities dropped to 1,059, the lowest since record keeping began in 1928.

PennDOT recently added a new year-to-date dashboard to the Pennsylvania Crash Information Tool available online at www.crashinfo.PennDOT.gov. Crash data is submitted to PennDOT from police agencies across the state and then processed and reviewed for accuracy. The data displayed in the new dashboard is based on police reports received and processed by PennDOT to date, so the numbers may change as new and updated information is received.

Areas of concern within 2023 statewide crash data include motorcyclist fatalities, fatalities in crashes involving drivers aged 65 and older, fatalities in crashes involving speeding, and fatalities in lane departure crashes.

October 10 was "Put the Brakes on Fatalities" Day. This national campaign encourages all road users to do their part to help prevent traffic fatalities.

According to estimates from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), national traffic fatalities dropped in the first half of 2023 by approximately 3.3 percent as compared to the same time frame in 2022. The estimates show fatalities decreased in 29 states, while 21 states, including Pennsylvania, have projected increases in fatalities.

In Pennsylvania, current 2023 preliminary data projects deaths on our roadways will increase by approximately five percent. In 2022, fatalities decreased by about four percent, from 1,230 in 2021 to 1,179 in 2022, after two straight years of increases. In

Drivers can help reduce crashes and fatalities by always following the speed limit and paying attention when behind the wheel, especially in work zones where roadway conditions can change every day.

Although driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol is completely avoidable, fatalities in crashes involving an impaired driver still amount to nearly 40 percent of all traffic fatalities in Pennsylvania. Drivers can help save lives by always planning ahead for a sober driver or using public transportation or a ride-share service.

To learn more about PennDOT's safety initiatives, visit www.PennDOT.pa.gov/Safety.

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Pittsburgh, which owns the bridge, to enter into a legal agreement to allow PennDOT to manage the design and construction of the new Fern Hollow Bridge. The proclamations also provided the Federal Highway Administration and PennDOT the approval to immediately contract with Swank Construction Company and HDR Inc. for the removal of the collapsed structure, and the design and construction of the new Fern Hollow Bridge. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), signed by President Biden in November 2021, allowed PennDOT to quickly dedicate \$25.3 million in federal funds to the project without impacting other critical regional needs.

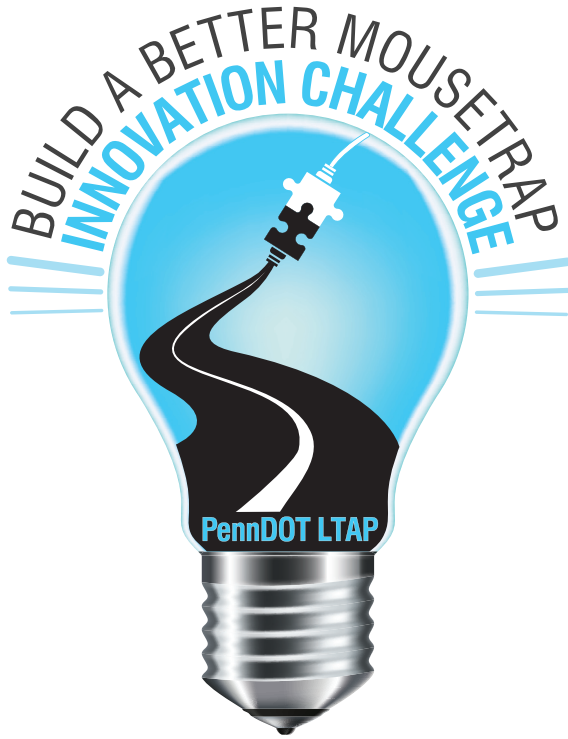
Thanks to collaboration with the City of Pittsburgh and PennDOT's innovative approach to the standard design process, multiple design phases occurred simultaneously including

foundation, substructure, superstructure, utility relocation, environmental, and aesthetic aspects of the project, which allowed project delivery to be expedited by multiple years. The bridge opened to traffic on December 22, 2022, less than a year after the collapse.

The Governor's Awards for Excellence recognize exemplary job performance or service that reflects initiative, leadership, innovation and increased efficiency. The PennDOT team was among 54 employees from eight state agencies honored by Governor Shapiro for exceptional accomplishments in 2022.

PENNDOT, LTAP OPEN SUBMISSIONS FOR 'BUILD A BETTER MOUSETRAP' AWARD

By Zachary Appleby, Deputy Communications Director, Central Office



PennDOT LTAP announced that the annual Build a Better Mousetrap Innovation Challenge (BABMT) is now accepting submissions from Pennsylvania municipalities. The BABMT challenge is open to municipalities for solutions that employees have designed, built or adapted that innovated maintenance, equipment or processes to better serve Pennsylvania travelers.

In past years, winners have included a widener repurposed from a berming machine, a specialized storage rack for spreaders, and a high-pressure undercarriage sprayer.

"Pennsylvania's strength and ingenuity lies in its municipalities," PennDOT Executive Deputy Secretary Larry Shifflet. "The men and women of our municipal governments are on the front lines

of cost-saving efforts around the state, and I'm excited to continue bringing light to their efforts."

"Every day, township road crews do more with less to maintain tens of thousands of miles of roadway across the commonwealth," said PSATS Executive Director Dave Sanko. "The Build a Better Mousetrap Innovation Challenge provides townships a chance to showcase innovations and money-saving ventures that make their jobs easier, and Pennsylvania's roadways safer."

Submissions can be anything from the development or modification of tools and equipment to processes that increase safety, reduce costs, or improve the efficiency or quality of transportation. Technological innovations and unique use of new tools such as drones, apps, computers, smartphones, and tablets are also welcome.

Following a competitive statewide selection process, the winning entry will be submitted to the national competition to compete for recognition. Winners of the national competition will be announced at the annual LTAP/TTAP national conference. All entries at the national level will be posted on the LTAP/TTAP program website and compiled into an electronic booklet.

The submission deadline is Friday March 1, 2024.



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While clean-up was taking place, residents offered food and beverages to the crews in appreciation for all their hard work. Local residents could not be happier with the crews' efforts. On Monday morning, a press conference was held at the District Office where the Secretary, PEMA, EMS, and elected officials gathered to receive updates, share stories, and collaborate on how they can help all affected.

Sadly, there were two fatalities because of the flooding on Shady Lane Road in South Abington Township, and there were four injuries when a bridge succumbed to the rushing water on a bridge in Newton Township.

To add insult to injury a PennDOT employee was accosted and hit by a motorist who ignored the road closed signs, proceeded up Newton Road, and then fled the scene. Luckily, co-workers tracked down the assailant, and the man was arrested immediately after the incident and has been charged.

District 4 crews worked diligently throughout the next 2 weeks to open roads ahead of schedule, document damage, and begin pursuing funding for the unexpected monumental expenses associated with the "Training Thunderstorms" that pummeled District 4.

NICHOLSON TOURISM TRAIN STATION OPENED IN SUMMER 2023

By Jessica Ruddy, Community Relations Coordinator, District 4



The Nicholson Heritage Association invited locals to celebrate the grand opening of the Nicholson Tourism Train Station in July. This station was known as the former Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western Railroad's (DL&W) Nicholson Station and is located off Route 11 in Wyoming County. Despite the station sitting unused for decades, it has remained a well-known landmark in the area. Until recently it has been in the same condition for the past 170 years.

The station's updates consist mostly of refurbished materials from the original station that date back to 1849. Wood flooring, doors, and a working weight scale have been preserved. The

station also has many historical pieces on display to be viewed by the community.

The cost of the preservation project totaled \$1.4 million dollars. Nearly all the costs of this project were funded by grants and donations, including the PennDOT Transportation Alternatives Program. This program played a huge role in the reopening of the historic station helping to cover most of the costs.

"For 9 years I have been a part of this project and have seen the excitement grow year after year. I'm proud of the work that has been completed together between PennDOT, the Nicholson Heritage Association, the Wyoming County Commissioners, DCNR, The Norther Tier, the Endless Mountains Heritage Region, and John Perry Contracting who made the Train Station come alive," said April Hannon, PennDOT District 4 Project Manager.

On October 19th at the State Museum of Harrisburg, the Nicholson Tourism Center at the Historic DL&W Railroad Station received a Preservation Pennsylvania Leadership Award its Impact and enrichment of the community.

The station is currently open to the public on the weekends. The hope for the new and improved Nicholson Train Station is that it will increase tourism to the area and serve as a historical educational center where the community can gather and reminisce.

PENNDOT DISTRICTS SHARE RESULTS FROM 2023 CONSTRUCTION SEASON



Over the past few weeks, PennDOT's engineering districts wrapped up their construction season, highlighting improvements and upgrades completed in 2023.

"Across the Commonwealth, our PennDOT teams are hard at work fixing roads, highways and bridges to make travel easier and safer," said PennDOT Secretary Mike Carroll. "We're proud to deliver these results for the people of

Pennsylvania and will continue to build on this progress in the years to come."

A snapshot of results from districts around the state can be found at: <https://www.penndot.pa.gov/PennDOTWay/Pages/Article.aspx?post=690>.

Statewide from January through November, PennDOT improved 6,531 roadway miles, including 2,237 miles of paving. The miles improved have already surpassed the 2022 total of 6,414. Through November this year, 587 state and locally owned bridges were put out for bid to be repaired, replaced, or preserved by PennDOT or industry forces. Additionally, 453 construction contracts for highway, bridge, and other improvement projects were completed statewide through PennDOT's private-sector partners so far this year.

See more results as well as featured projects at the statewide and local levels on our PennDOT results page. Find PennDOT's planned and active construction projects at www.projects.penndot.gov.

CAMBRIA COUNTY BRIDGE DEDICATED TO WORLD WAR II VETERAN AND AN ADVOCATE

By Jay Knarr, Community Relations Coordinator, District 9

The October 13 dedication of the Charles J. Vizzini Memorial Bridge on U.S. Route 22 in Ebensburg is the culmination of a story that owes its start to what might best be described as either incredible luck or divine intervention.

A decorated WWII veteran, with two Purple Hearts and a Bronze Star, Vizzini, a native of Colver, Cambria County, died in 2009 at the age of 85 after a lifetime of veterans' advocacy and community service that included acting as Commander of the Ebensburg VFW Post 4963, and organizing memorial services for veterans and victims of local coalmine disasters.

"I personally love hearing the stories of our WWII veterans, like Mr. Vizzini," said Assistant District Executive – Maintenance Dave Kammerer during the dedication ceremony. "You can see from his lifelong accomplishments and actions exactly why his generation is often referred to as 'the Greatest Generation.'"

None of Vizzini's accomplishments could have been possible, however, if not for a miraculous event that happened decades earlier during the war, detailed in Section 21 of HB 2630, Act 140 of 2022.

While fighting in France, then U.S. Army PFC, Vizzini was struck in the chest by bullets from a German pistol. In a scene reminiscent of a Hollywood action film, Vizzini was saved from serious injury and possibly death when the bullets struck the



Catholic Bible in his left breast pocket and a Catholic Missal (a book containing the prayers and instructions for a Roman Catholic Mass) in his right breast pocket.

After surviving the war – in astonishing fashion – and making the most of his second chance, Vizzini now has his name attached to a bridge. With only 44 of Cambria County's 333 bridges named by legislative decree, it is an honor befitting his exceptional effort.

CONSTRUCTION BEGINNING ON MAJOR BRIDGE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS



Construction Beginning on Major Bridge Public-Private Partnership Projects Work is beginning on six bridge replacement projects across the state under PennDOT's Major Bridge Public-Private Partnership (MBP3) program. Both the I-81 Susquehanna Bridges and I-80 Canoe Creek Bridges projects started this last fall, with the other bridge replacements beginning next year. To learn more about PennDOT's MBP3 program visit the program web page at www.penndot.pa.gov/ProjectAndPrograms/p3forpa/Pages/Major-Bridges.aspx. You can also find specific details and sign up for each bridge's mailing list on applicable project pages you can find on each district web page.

[I-80 Canoe Creek Bridges](#)

[I-80 North Fork Bridges](#)

[I-78 Lenhartsville Bridge](#)

[I-80 Nescopeck Creek Bridges](#)

[I-80 over Lehigh River Bridge Project](#)

[I-81 Susquehanna Project](#)

WASHINGTON COUNTY MAINTENANCE MANAGER CELEBRATES OVER 32 YEARS AT PENNDOT, OFFERS ADVICE

By Toni Hartley, Community Relations Coordinator, District 11



Did you know Washington County is the third largest county in the state with over 1,100 miles, more than 500 bridges, 35 interstate interchanges, and 100+ employees.

Susan Howard is Washington County's first female County Maintenance Manager.

Susan Howard celebrates 32+ years with PennDOT in District 12 where she began her full-time career as a Clerk Typist I,

holding a variety of positions that provided both knowledge and growth, to her current position as the Washington County Maintenance Manager. Susan's first introduction to working with PennDOT was as a Government Student Intern (GSI) on a milling crew. Other positions held during her career include Clerk Typist II, Garage Clerk, Roadway Program Technician I and II, and Roadway Programs Coordinator. Susan is a 2006 Star of Excellence recipient.

Experiences and opportunities proved to be great sources of information and skills for success including the LEAD (Leadership, Education, and Development) Program, a comprehensive career development program to support the professional advancement of women in the agency. LEAD fosters career progression of participants through the protégé-mentor relationship and monthly educational workshops that address current competencies and skills required of effective leaders in state government. The 12-person workshop meet for a week each month over one year.

Susan cannot speak highly enough of LEAD and how beneficial the training was to her. She was matched with a mentor who

introduced her to successful women within the Department while broadening her horizons and leading her in the direction of success. Although the training was to bridge the equality gap, the leadership fundamentals gained were pivotal to Susan's career progression. This foundation coupled with working under four County Managers, taught her different managerial styles and outlooks in managing staff and operations.

Susan has always felt empowered as a department employee and has been able to work in different facets of the Department. She was quick to volunteer for a project or assignment that allowed her continuous growth and increasing knowledge which led to more opportunities. Pride is a word she uses to describe what being a long-term employee means to her. The hard work and dedication of our employees allows Washington County to be successful and she is proud to be a part of it.

Some of her best memories and proudest moments have come from the friendships built. Great times, sad times, lessons learned, and mentorships over the years have made the ride worth the admission. Susan will fondly look back on a great career stemming from great co-worker experiences.

The best advice Susan can offer to someone considering working for PennDOT or someone early in their career is to "hang on, you're in for a great ride, enjoy it". "Working for PennDOT allowed me the opportunity to attend everything at our kids' schools, be present at sporting events, and have quality family time. The life/work balance is truly one of the best perks of the job."

Susan and her husband have been together for 30 years and married for 26. They have three children and six grandchildren that she loves spending time with. She credits her family to her many accomplishments and sincerely appreciates their support in making this journey achievable.

COMMITTEE EMPLOYEE PROFILE – A CONTINUING SERIES

By Nicole Haney, Community Relations Coordinator, District 11



James Thornton, a 15-year employee, values time spent with family, hard work, and freedom of choices. I set up this day as a part of the District's Diversity Committee to highlight more of our workforce. However, I got so much more than that. Spending a day in the life of James, I started my day at the Lovedale shed in Elizabeth, PA. Outfitted in my personal protective equipment, I received a safety overview before climbing into James' truck. We made the trip to the staging area as we waited for the base repair operation to begin and where I started my day of questioning about his job, life, and diversity.

Q: A 6 a.m. start – have you always had this shift? What is it like in the winter?

A: I have been a part of the paving crew for 12 years now, I spent a few years on chipping (sealcoat) and originally started on the night crew. I prefer paving over winter because I get to move around more and the stimuli of all the moving parts with the paving operation and moving around the county depending on where the work is that day and/or week. My

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winter route is roughly Squirrel Hill Tunnel to Wilksburg and back. Rain days we typically work on our trucks, clean, etc.

Q: How long have you been with the Department?

A: I began in September 2008 as a temporary operator before moving to full-time TEO-A. I started in the Pine Creek section, went to Findlay for three years, then ultimately landed in Monroeville where I have been ever since.

Q: What made you want to join the Department?

A: Before joining the Department, I did labor work and though it was good work, you'd often finish a job and then get laid off until the next one came along. I knew a few folks at the time that told me to go for a job with the state and with the labor work, I knew I wanted more stability for me and my family.

Q: If you weren't working at PennDOT, what would your dream job be?

A: After graduating from Westinghouse High School, I started taking business classes at Cheyney University of Pennsylvania where I received an athletic scholarship. Unfortunately, I did not complete my schooling.

After we talked through these few questions, the operators received their direction and safety overview for the day from the foreman. As traffic control was set and all trucks were lined up, the miller began filling trucks for base repair operations. While the milling occurs, operators begin cleaning the milled area to start prep work for the asphalt. When it is James' turn to get loaded, he listens and watches closely to hear when his truck is filled and see signals from the milling machine operator, which are typically use of hand signals and the horn to dictate certain movements. Once James' truck was filled, we started the journey to the Derry Construction Company asphalt plant in Delmont, PA. If not for me chatting his ear off, James would have had 96.9 on to pass the time.

Q: If you were in your personal vehicle or at home, who would you be listening to?

A: Sirius 66 (Jazz), Donny James, Prince, Michael Jackson, Mariah Carey, Herb Albert are all on rotation.

Q: Tell me about your family.

A: My wife and I went to the same high school and reconnected a few years out of school. We have been married for 42 years and have 7 kids together ranging from 27 to 49. I also have another that I consider as my adopted daughter who has four kids that I refer to as my grandbabies.

Q: Who inspired you most in life?

A: Family is key, and both my parents and grandparents taught me everything I know. My dad worked for Joseph Horne's and had a cleaning company. My grandfather was a minister but worked 9-5 weekdays. They all taught me the value of hard work which I tried to instill in my family. Growing up in Homewood, I feel privileged to grow up when

I did. Everyone looked out for one another.

Q: What is something most people do not know about you?

A: I love to cook and have been cooking since I was 19 years old. My two signature dishes are lasagna and potato salad. I use turmeric in a lot of my dishes. I also like to bike. I have a stationary bike that I use each night after a shift because it helps with sitting most of the day.

At this point, we completed the hour plus drive to the asphalt plant where James waited to have his truck weighed before dumping his millings. After emptying the truck, James sprayed his truck down in preparation for the asphalt material. Once loaded, weighed, and paperwork was received, we made the trip back to the base repair operation location.

Q: What is the best thing you have seen in your time with the Department?

A: I feel that management and employees both have become better as the years have progressed. Not only is there better and more open communication from the top down but there appears to be better initiatives. This helps with feeling more inclusive/diverse and I feel it has allowed more folks to open up and have better conversations.

Q: What do you hope the Diversity Committee achieves with their efforts or what does diversity mean to you?

A: My goal for the committee is that I would like to see a standard that would stay no matter who is there. We routinely have positions open and someone takes on the role, but they come with something different. I understand everyone is different but if there is a specific work standard withheld, then personal values can be appreciated but not influenced in the day to day. I also hope for a strong mentorship program. When I came on, training with an operator went through the basics and routes but with a designated mentor – someone can take on new employees "under your wings", go through the ins and outs, what can be done/not be done, who to go to for various questions and answers, etc.

To me, diversity could mean change, the optimism for change and people looking for it. I try to follow the "treat people how you want to be treated" way of life. It is ok to disagree with one another but ultimately, you need to remember the job still needs to be done. The maintenance staff is very diverse in education, background, likes/dislikes, etc. and you can tell that the work done by these folks there is a lot of pride in providing a solid finished product.

While James and I come different generations, upbringings, and life experiences, we both share one thing in common – the same pride in working hard and for a purpose. I cannot thank him enough for spending time with me, showing me the ropes, and explaining a day in his life. I have always known that our organization is full of incredible people and James really highlighted that during our time together. Thanks to the folks in our Maintenance forces who are out rain, shine, or snow.

PENNDOT GEOTECHNICAL CREW REPAIRS 29 LANDSLIDES IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY

By Cassidy Snyder, Press Assistant, Communications Office



when exposed to air or water. When the claystone rock turns weak, it can cause a downslope movement of rock, debris, or earth. These landslides can happen over a long period of time, or suddenly.

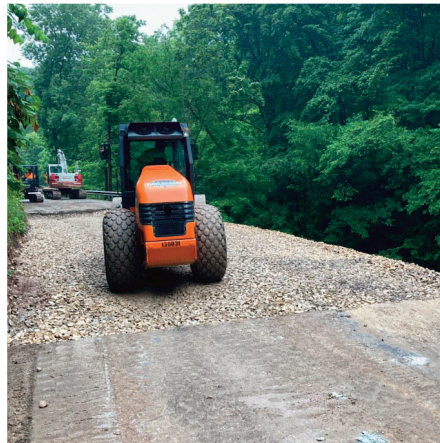
"Most of our rockfalls are also caused by red beds. The red beds in cut rock faces along highways can erode over time, which cause the stronger rocks above them to lose support and fall," said District 11 Civil Engineer Manager Daniel Bliss, P.E.

Smaller landslides may not cause a lot of damage, but larger landslides can cause damage to buildings, homes, utilities, and impede transportation routes. Allegheny County has a geotechnical crew that fixes these larger landslides. This year, the crew fixed a total of 29 landslides in six months.

"I'm just really proud of this crew. They worked hard all summer to get these landslides repaired," said Allegheny County Assistant Highway Manager Brad Stevens.

In 2016, Stevens worked as a foreman on the geotechnical crew that repairs landslides before moving into his current role. Now, he manages the crew and helps to plan the repairs. One step of the repair process is to identify if water was the cause of the landslide.

"We face a lot of uncertainty when going into a project. We start observing in the winter, but they could get worse or stay the same," Stevens said. "We don't know what is under the road until we start digging." "If the crew finds a spring or other source of water, they redirect the water out and away from the slide, so it does not cause another slide to happen somewhere else.



Landslides are a natural phenomenon that can happen anywhere. But did you know that most Pennsylvania's landslides happen in the southwest region? The unique geography presents a challenge for local PennDOT teams as they perform critical work to restore infrastructure impacted by landslides.

Due to the large presence of claystone rock, the southwest region of the state is more susceptible to landslides than any other area of Pennsylvania. In fact, it is one of the more landslide prone areas of the United States. The claystone rock in the southwest region of Pennsylvania is often referred to as the Pittsburgh Red Beds, getting its name from the sedimentary rocks that are typically red in color.

The claystone rock that makes up the Pittsburgh Red Beds is very hard when confined underground. However, it can become weak

The crew started the construction season in April with a goal to repair 27 landslides, meeting and surpassing the goal with two more repairs completed before their end date of October 6. One major repair project this year was Route 1016 Log Cabin Road, which had several large landslides. The geotechnical crew was able to complete the repairs and get the road reopened for traffic after being closed for nearly 10 years.

"It's a team effort. I'm able to plan the repairs, but the foreman and the crew carry the weight. They were unstoppable this year," Stevens said.

Members of the geotechnical crew include Vincent Provenza, David Borowski, Jason Jones, Michael Jordan, Colin Eckroat, Nicholas Sterling, Lance Anthony, and Scott Brady.

SHAPIRO ADMINISTRATION OPENS PENNSYLVANIA'S FIRST EV CHARGING STATION COMPLETED UNDER FEDERAL PROGRAM, ONE OF THE FIRST STATES TO REACH THIS MILESTONE



Infrastructure Law (BIL), and administered by PennDOT.

This milestone helps to further the Shapiro Administration's work to address climate change, grow the Commonwealth's economy and ensure that Pennsylvania is ready for the next generation of transportation, one that will be cleaner, safer, more affordable, and more reliable than ever before. Pennsylvania is one of the first states in the country to reach this milestone.

"The Shapiro Administration is quickly making these federal investments work for Pennsylvanians and I'm proud that we remain among the nation's leaders in expanding EV charging options," Carroll said. "In partnership with the companies electrifying these sites, we are creating healthier communities by reducing our carbon footprint and supporting clean-energy jobs."

The charging station was installed at the Pilot travel center at 417 Route 315 in Pittston, as part of Pilot Travel Center LLC's collaboration with General Motors. The cost of construction is supported by \$610,393 in NEVI funds. Pilot Travel Centers LLC will own the charging station, working with EVgo to deploy the chargers as part of its eXtend service. The site gives EV drivers access to four charging ports capable of providing up to 350 kW of power. While charging, customers will have 24/7 access to restrooms, Wi-Fi, food, beverages, and other convenience items for purchase.

Pennsylvania remains among national leaders in deploying EV-charging investments from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

PennDOT Secretary Mike Carroll, U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, U.S. Department of Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm, U.S. Senator Bob Casey, U.S. Representative Matt Cartwright and other federal officials announced the completion of Pennsylvania's first electric vehicle (EV) charging station. The station – which opened to the public on December 21, 2023, and has since provided over 285 charging sessions – was built as part of the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) program, funded by the federal Bipartisan

"President Biden's infrastructure law is delivering results for Pennsylvania, from repairing aging roads and bridges to building new electric vehicle charging stations," said Buttigieg. "These investments are helping America lead the electric vehicle revolution into the future."

"As more Americans choose to drive EVs, Pennsylvania is delivering on President Biden's Investing in America agenda, building out a robust and reliable EV charging network that is accessible and easy to use," Granholm said. "With federally-funded charging stations popping up all around the country, Americans can expect hundreds of thousands more as a result of

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the collaboration between the public and private sectors—paving the way for widespread electric mobility that works for everyone."

This location is one of 56 projects in 37 counties which were selected to expand access to and reliability of EV charging in Pennsylvania. The projects that were conditionally awarded funding in Pennsylvania's first round will receive a total \$34.8 million. The investment is part of the \$171.5 million PennDOT will receive and distribute for EV charging infrastructure over five years through the BIL.

"The Federal Highway Administration is excited to celebrate the opening of Pennsylvania's first federally funded EV charging station made possible by President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law," said Federal Highway Administrator Shailen Bhatt. "This milestone represents an important step forward not only for Pennsylvania, but for the entire nation's historic transition to electric vehicles with a national network of publicly accessible EV charging stations that will ensure a convenient, accessible, reliable, and equitable charging experience for drivers along America's highways."

"Thanks to funding from the infrastructure law, Pennsylvania is leading the way on building an efficient and reliable electric vehicle charging network that helps clean up the air for generations to come and keeps our economy competitive," said U.S. Senator Bob Casey (D-PA). "This investment will help ensure that no Pennsylvanian, from cities to college campuses to rural communities, will be left behind as we strengthen our burgeoning electric vehicle industry and reduce our carbon footprint."

"Northeast Pennsylvania is leading the way by taking full advantage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the resources it affords," said U.S. Rep. Matt Cartwright, (PA-08). "With every new electric vehicle charging station that's introduced, we're modernizing our infrastructure, reducing our carbon footprint, and creating good-paying jobs."

"The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is catalyzing public-private partnerships that are creating convenient, accessible high-power charging infrastructure to serve our nation's growing population of EV drivers," said EVgo Chief Executive Officer Badar Khan. "Through our collaboration with GM and Pilot Company, EVgo is delivering an elevated customer experience, and we commend the leadership of the Shapiro Administration and PennDOT for moving swiftly to deploy NEVI funding that will connect

communities within the Keystone State."

"It's energizing to celebrate the opening of another NEVI-funded charging station, and the first in Pennsylvania, to provide EV travelers with more places to charge across the nation," said Tim Langenkamp, vice president of business development-sustainability at Pilot Travel Centers LLC. "Our partnerships with GM, EVgo, PennDOT and federal stakeholders show our joint commitment to building the necessary charging infrastructure for convenient, safe EV travel across the US."

The NEVI funding supports the Commonwealth and federal goal of expanding EV charging along the previously designated Alternative Fuel Corridors (AFCs). Pennsylvania has over 1,800 miles of AFCs. Per guidance from U.S. DOT, NEVI formula funds must first be used to "build out" designated AFCs (meaning there must be no more than 50 miles between stations and less than 1 mile from an AFC exit) and meet U.S. DOT minimum standards and requirements.

The PA NEVI program includes multiple rounds of funding. During Round 1 selection, the focus was on building out the AFC network along the interstates to meet the NEVI requirements. Once AFCs are fully built out, PennDOT will shift to expanding the footprint EV chargers for Pennsylvania's community charging infrastructure.

For more information on NEVI funds in Pennsylvania visit the [PennDOT website](#).

Pennsylvania can compete for billions of dollars in federal funds across a wide range of federal grant programs through the BIL, also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). To help communities and organizations learn about these opportunities, PennDOT created a web page, www.penndot.pa.gov/IIJA, with details on federal grant opportunities to help municipalities, townships, and other community agencies with understanding the multiple transportation program grants that are available. The page includes Grant Alerts, guides, and links to important resources for local municipalities and organizations interested in pursuing federal funding opportunities.

Information about state infrastructure in Pennsylvania, including completed work and significant projects, is available at www.penndot.pa.gov/results. Find PennDOT's planned and active construction projects at www.projects.penndot.gov.



IMPROVING SAFETY FOR CRASH RESPONDERS AND MAINTENANCE CREWS AROUND PENNSYLVANIA

By Zachary Appleby, Deputy Communications Director, Central Office



After successful use of the HAAS Safety Alert Cloud system in District 11, PennDOT is implementing responder-to-vehicle notifications statewide.

As the only district with a tunnel maintenance organization, District 11, based in the Pittsburgh region, is home to the Fort Pitt, Squirrel Hill, Liberty and Stowe tunnels. District 11's tunnel system presents a unique challenge as any time an incident occurs inside or even near the tunnels, it has a significant impact on traffic and can make responding to incidents difficult and unsafe for tunnel maintenance crews and other first responders.

With tunnel crews responding to an average of 2,600 incidents each year, they are responsible for operating tow trucks to clear lanes and crash trucks to protect incident scenes, and to assist first responders.

To aid in these efforts and improve safety, the district began leveraging a crash-prevention technology that connects emergency lights and sirens with navigation apps. The HAAS Alert Safety Cloud is a Responder-to-Vehicle system that alerts motorists using the Waze app of first responders at incidents when emergency lights are activated. Since 2021, all vehicles used to respond to incidents in the tunnels have been outfitted with the HAAS Alert Safety Cloud equipment. Since its implementation in District 11, more than 111,000 notifications have been sent to drivers to help protect tunnel maintenance crews and first responders.

"First responders and highway workers being struck by passing motorists while working on roadways is a very real danger," said County Maintenance Manager Ben DeVore. "We want to take every step we can to prevent this from happening in Pennsylvania."

Now, PennDOT is working to implement a similar system around the state to improve safety for work crews and crash responders.

As in District 11, the state-wide system will be powered by information provided by PennDOT's Data Exchange, including real-time Department vehicle location information for all trucks that have Automated Vehicle Location (AVL) systems installed and are currently in work zones or engaged in maintenance activities. The system will send alert to motorists to the incident via Waze and other apps.

The received notifications, and subsequent incident avoidance by drivers, will allow PennDOT maintenance crews, staff and first responders more rapid access on scene and improve safety overall.

PennDOT's Data Exchange is expected to be up and running by the end of Spring 2024. The Data Exchange will allow PennDOT to share Department vehicle location information with Waze and others in near real time.

Statewide, the system is expected to continue to reduce crashes involving emergency response vehicles during incidents.



SHAPIRO ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES RESULTS OF OPERATION SAFE STOP 2023

The results of Operation Safe Stop, an annual school bus enforcement and education initiative aimed at enhancing school bus safety for students across the Commonwealth was held on October 18 this year. This is a one-day targeted enforcement and education event during which law enforcement agencies and participating school districts document occurrences of drivers violating Pennsylvania's School Bus Stopping Law and emphasizes the importance of school transportation safety. A press conference was hosted by PennDOT, the Pennsylvania State Police, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, West Shore Regional Police, and West Shore School District.

This year's Operation Safe Stop data revealed that participating school districts and law enforcement agencies reported witnessing 176 violations of the law, (down/up) from the 252 reported last year.

The School Bus Stopping Law requires motorists approaching a school bus with its red lights flashing and stop arm extended, to stop at least 10 feet from the bus. Motorists approaching

from all directions are required to stop. However, motorists who encounter a school bus stopping on the opposite side of a divided highway are not required to stop when lanes of the highway are clearly separated by a divider, such as a concrete barrier or grassy median.

Some safety tips for students to remember while waiting for or loading and unloading the bus include:

- **Get to the school bus stop at least five minutes early, so you won't have to run across the road to catch the bus.**
- **When waiting for the bus, stay away from traffic.**
- **Line up at least five giant steps away from the curb or the roadway to wait for the bus.**
- **Never run after the school bus if it has already left the bus stop.**
- **Never push when getting on or off the school bus.**

PennDOT YOUNG AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

ATTENTION 10th - 12th GRADE STUDENTS!

Attend virtual education sessions.	
Conduct a community assessment & create summary presentation.	
Organize & participate in at least one community cleanup event.	
Conduct one community education event or activity.	

PennDOT and Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful (KPB) recently announced the 2023-2024 cohort of Young Ambassadors of Pennsylvania. The program, administered by KPB, seeks to build community stewards and civic leaders by inspiring, engaging, and empowering young Pennsylvanians to keep their communities beautiful and become ambassadors for a shared vision of a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania.

Students applied to the program and were chosen through a competitive application process, and they have committed to eight months of service as an ambassador while representing and upholding the mission and values of KPB. From October through May 2024, participants will develop civic leadership skills and

experience to champion and advocate for clean and beautiful communities across Pennsylvania.

A list of 2023-2024 Young Ambassadors of PA can be found at: www.penndot.pa.gov/pages/all-news-details.aspx?newsid=1086.

KPB will provide education and training to program participants on such topics related to the impacts of litter, litter prevention, waste management and recycling, civic engagement and related public policy, volunteer management and social media marketing. The program will provide networking opportunities to not only build a sense of community within the program but also to promote the professional development of the individual students.

For more information about the program and the Young Ambassadors, visit the program page or contact Kylie McCutcheon at kmccutcheon@keepbeautiful.org.

The Young Ambassador program was recommended in the commonwealth's litter action plan, announced as part of the Litter Action Plan, announced by the Wolf administration in 2021 in response to a 2019 Pennsylvania Litter Research Study which found Pennsylvania has more than 500 million pieces of litter on its roadways. The action plan includes strategies for all Pennsylvanians to fight litter in their communities.

PennDOT provides many additional litter cleanup volunteer opportunities, including AdoptAHighway, Litter Brigades, and more at their roadside beautification web page.