

ODOT Prepares for Winter, Asks Motorists to do the Same

Joel Hunt,
Central Office

ALTHOUGH EXPERTS PREDICT THE 2006-2007 winter season will be a mild one, ODOT is reminding motorists that no matter how harsh or mild the winter, driver behavior plays a role in how safe the roads are through the winter season.

Driver error continues to be the leading cause of crashes during snow and ice season. Last winter, there were a total of 8,092 accidents attributed to snow and ice on ODOT maintained roads and 32,063 snow and ice related accidents on all Ohio roads. The most common causes of these crashes were failure to control, excessive speed and following other vehicles too closely, indicating motorists need to do their part to keep themselves and others safe during the winter months.

"There is no question that inclement weather slows down traffic regardless of our crews treating the roads," said Tony Vogel, ODOT's deputy

director for Highway Management. "That's why, in addition to clearing the roads, ODOT works to provide as much information as possible so motorists can plan ahead and allow extra travel time during snow and ice season."

ODOT calculations show travel times can be up to two and a half times longer during inclement weather. To help them plan ahead, motorists are strongly encouraged to use ODOT's BuckeyeTraffic.org Web site at: www.buckeyetraffic.org. The site is a one-stop-shop for closure information, road conditions and traffic cameras. During snow and ice events, road conditions are updated as often as necessary, with information such as current weather, roadway

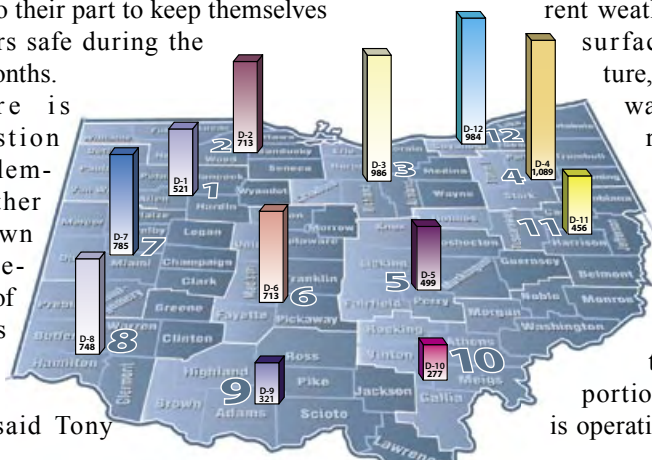
surface temperature, general roadway condition reports from

more than 90 ODOT county garages and outposts. The winter weather portion of the site is operational between Nov. 1 and April 15 each year.

BuckeyeTraffic.org also offers year-round access to Road and Weather Information System (RWIS) data from weather monitoring stations located in every county of the state. RWIS combines solar, wind and conventional power with cellular and radio frequency technology to transmit weather, pavement conditions and traffic speed information to the site every three to five minutes.

In addition to planning ahead during snow events, Ohio State Highway Patrol Sgt. Jon Payer said motorists should make preparations before winter weather hits. He recommends that motorists make sure their engines are mechanically sound and keep plenty of gas in their tanks and air in the tires as well as top off all fluids. A cell phone, blanket and a white flag or distress kit are also good items to keep in the car.

Although last winter started with several major storms, it was a mild winter overall. The department spent just over \$40 million statewide clearing state-maintained highways and used almost 500,000 tons of salt. ODOT typically spends about \$56 million annually and uses about 650,000 tons of salt. ODOT has more than 1,500 trucks and 3,200 drivers to cover 38,800 lane miles of highway across the state. In addition, ODOT's 230 salt barns were stocked with about 500,000 tons of salt in time to start dry-run inspections in October. As of Nov. 3, more than half of ODOT's 12 districts have hit the road at least once to battle early rounds of winter weather. 🟢



ODOT System Snow & Ice Crashes by District for 2005
(Interstates, U.S. and State Routes)



file photos

Helping Our Guardians

Ron Poole, Central Office

ON NOV. 20, 2001 – JUST OVER two months after the national tragedy of 9/11 – Gov. Bob Taft signed Senate Bill 164 (SB 164) into law. Called the Military Pay Bill, the new law ensured state employees called to full-time active service would suffer no loss of pay or health benefits while serving. Then existing pay limits were removed, allowing state employees to collect the full differential between state and military pay and allowances, and continue to receive full health care benefits for themselves and their families.

The protection of the Military Pay Bill is just a part of the support the state of Ohio offers its employees, whether they are members of the Reserve, the National Guard or veterans. Under the state's administrative rules, the state first provides paid military leave for shorter periods away from work for service. Both exempt and bargaining unit employees can take up to 176 hours per calendar year under this kind of leave. They become eligible under SB 164 if they must serve a longer term. Since June of 2005, nearly 40 ODOT employees have used paid military leave. Of those, 10 have been called to full-time active service and received pay and health benefits under SB 164.

"I would say the state's support of its reservists has been outstanding," said retired Air Force Col. Anthony Augello, director for the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR). "The state employs the largest number of guardsman and reservists in Ohio, and having these

policies in place is most important. State supervisors have been very responsive in learning the law and supporting the rights of their employees as they are called to service."

The ESGR recognizes exceptional employer support shown by state or other organizations by sponsoring programs such as the Patriot Awards. Guard members, reservists and veterans can submit the names of their offices or specific individuals to receive an official certificate of appreciation for aid given above and beyond the normal course of their duties.

District 4 employees Shawn Bennett and Tony Perez nominated members of the district's Office of Production for Patriot Awards last year. Bennet, a transportation technician specialist with the office is also a first lieutenant with the National Guard; Perez works as a transportation technician in Production and holds the rank of a first sergeant with the Guard. Both men served in the Middle East for more than a year, and found their office co-workers highly supportive. Bennett recommended his then administrator Jack Noble for allowing him the flexibility to go to military school prior to his full-time deployment. And both Bennett and Perez nominated the

entire Office of Production for a separate Patriot Award for the care packages they received from the office while serving with the Guard.



Photos courtesy of Jeff Peyton, Central Office



"They sent pillows, blankets – comforts we could not get easily over there," said Perez. "When I got back to the office, the feelings were overwhelming. We are a family here."

Providing needed assistance to active military personnel and veterans is a normal part of business for ODOT. Christine Hunt, a landscape architect with Equipment Management in Central Office, discovered a mistake in her records that was limiting her salary and vacation benefits. ODOT personnel worked with the Department of Administrative Services to correct the error. Hunt nominated ODOT's Deputy Director of Quality and Human Resources, Christine Dietsch, for a Patriot Award. Dietsch received her recognition in September.

ODOT's commitment of support can extend to the families of its service men and women as well – helping to provide them some peace of mind while their loved ones are away. A member of the Office of Con-

tracts in Central Office, Jeff Peyton, was suddenly called to deploy with his Ohio National Guard engineering unit in February 2003. While overseas, Peyton was grateful for the helpful way ODOT staff worked with his wife concerning health and other benefits.

"My wife had our second child while I was deployed," he said. "The last thing she needed to worry about was a lapse in our health care. The payroll and human resources people were great. They were always available to answer any questions she had, and took the time to make certain she understood what had to be done. The people at ODOT really stepped up to the plate when I needed them." 🍀



Taft Announces Start of Wilmington Bypass Project

Lindsay Komlanc, Central Office

THE \$97 MILLION WILMINGTON BYPASS project to relocate State Route 73 north of the city of Wilmington is moving forward. Governor Bob Taft joined ODOT Director Gordon Proctor and local officials to announce the fulfillment of this long-standing commitment to the region and to officially kick off the project on Oct. 23.

"This bypass is a priority for residents and businesses," said Taft. "It is a true example of state and local leaders working together to develop a project that will benefit the entire region. I am proud to say that the state of Ohio is fulfilling its commitment to southwest Ohio by awarding this project on time."

Through the governor's \$5 billion Jobs and Progress Plan to rebuild Ohio's urban arteries, complete rural routes, increase safety and reduce congestion, ODOT committed to selling the first phase of the project in 2006. ODOT awarded the \$8.5 million contract for

the first phase of construction on Oct. 12. Minor mobilization and preparatory work such as utility relocation and surveying will begin in 2006 and continue through the winter. Major construction will begin in 2007.

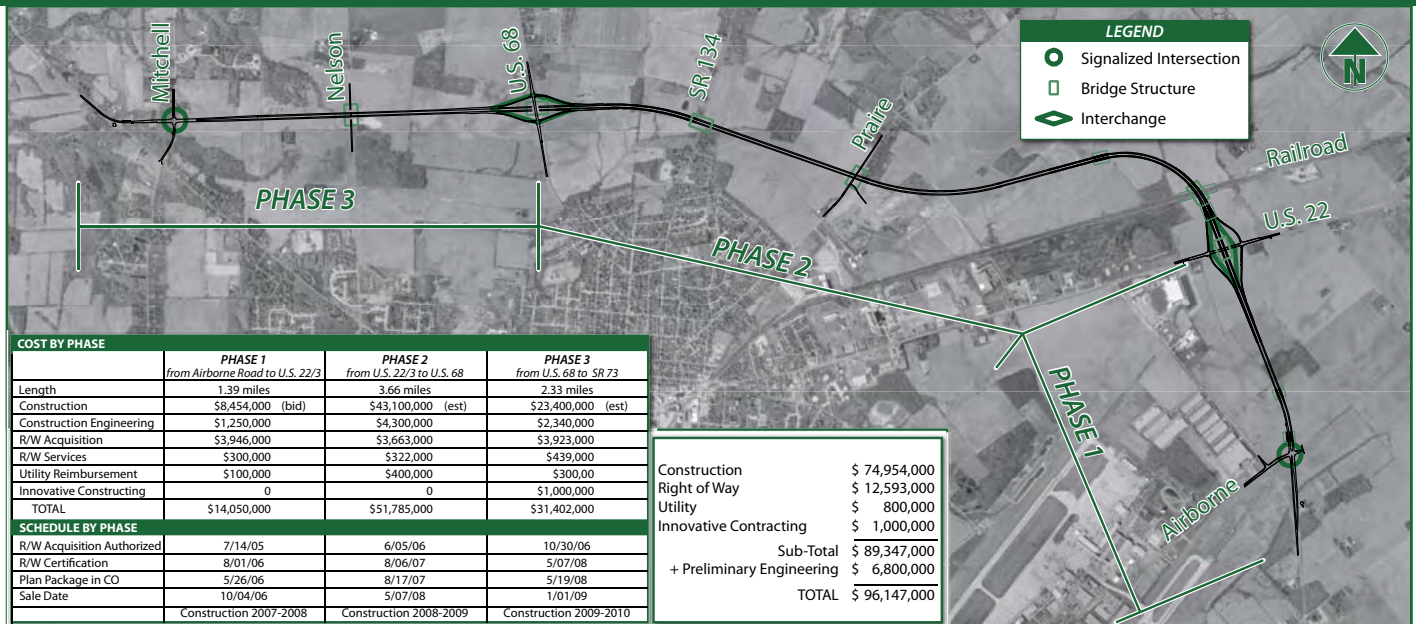
"This project marks the launch of a series of major investments into southwest Ohio including projects to rebuild Interstate 275, the Interstate 75 corridor and Interstate 71," Proctor said. "Overall, Ohio will invest more than \$1 billion into the region's highway system to reduce congestion, increase safety and upgrade it to accommodate 21st century needs."

Construction of the Wilmington Bypass is critical to improving the infrastructure to provide a safe, efficient route that can handle growing volumes of traffic. The completion of the bypass will reduce congestion and truck traffic in and around the city of Wilmington, reduce truck traffic and noise in residential neighborhoods, reduce accidents and keep the region competitive for econom-

ic growth. Estimates show that predicted truck volumes through Wilmington will be reduced by as much as 60 percent over the next 25 years. The promise of the bypass has already yielded positive results for the region as it was a factor in DHL's decision to stay in Ohio, retaining 6,000 jobs for the state with the possibility of an additional 900 full and part-time jobs being created.

The Wilmington Bypass will be constructed as a four-lane highway in three phases with major work on the first phase scheduled to begin in early 2007. Phase one runs a length of 1.42 miles from Airborne Road to U.S. Route 22/3. Phase two will run from U.S. 22/3 to U.S. Route 68 with construction scheduled for 2008. Phase three will run from U.S. 68 to SR 73 with construction scheduled for 2009. It is anticipated each phase will take two construction seasons with all construction completed by 2010. 🍏

above: ODOT District 8 Deputy Director Mike Flynn, Project Manager Hans Jindal, Governor Bob Taft and Clinton County Commissioners Randy Riley, Darleen Myers and Mike Curry were part of the group turning the ceremonial first shovels of dirt for the first phase of the Wilmington Bypass project, just off of Airborne Road and State Route 73. below: A map and details of the project's phases.



OTEC Recognizes Interstates' 50th Anniversary

Ryan Larzelere, Central Office

THE 2006 OHIO TRANSPORTATION Engineering Conference (OTEC) marked the 60th annual meeting of the statewide conference. The two-day conference was held Oct. 24 and 25 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center.

OTEC featured nearly 200 commercial exhibitors and Ohio universities that displayed recent transportation research and ideas. The conference was attended by more than 2,000 visitors consisting of engineering professionals, consultants, government officials and university students and personnel.

The theme for this year's conference was "The Interstate System's 50th Anniversary: Mile Markers, Milestones, Miles to Go." In recognizing this anniversary, OTEC planners felt it was important to look at how and why the interstate system started, how it has grown and its needs for the future.

"OTEC has long been known for featuring best practices from around the country and innovative new methods for the construction field," said OTEC Administrator Terri Barnhart. "This year, we felt it was important to include the his-

tory aspect as well."

Speakers at this year's conference included Bruce Seely and Henry Petroski. Seely is a historian of technology with a special interest in transportation and the development of America's interstate system. He has been widely published in transportation journals and is the author of *"Building the American Highway System: Engineers as Policy Makers."* Petroski is a professor of civil engineering and history at Duke University who specializes in geotechnical research and engineering. He has written broadly on the topics of design, success and failure and the history of engineering and technology. His books on these subjects, which are intended for professional engineers, students and general readers alike, include *"To Engineer Is Human,"* which was adapted for a BBC-television

documentary.

"Mr. Seely and Mr. Petroski offered a great deal of knowledge to support the theme this year," Barnhart said. "Each brought a wealth of experience directly relating to engineers about how our interstate system started and what the future holds for it."

The goal of OTEC is to share the latest knowledge and studies in the various engineering disciplines and to explore emerging concepts and trends. This is done largely through the technical sessions offered. These sessions are led by ODOT employees and other engineering professionals from outside firms. This year's sessions included "Concreting into the Future", "The History of the Interstate System and Urban Development", "Innovations in Pipelines" and "Ramp Metering in Ohio." In total, 57 technical sessions were offered this year.

For the first time at OTEC, there were a number of sessions on knowledge management. Moderated by ODOT Library Administrator Janet Bix, a session called "From the Interstates to the Internet: Traveling the Information Superhighway," focused on the effects of transportation libraries and the Internet on the transportation industry.

Maureen Hammer, Ph.D., a knowledge management officer for the Virginia Department of Transportation, made a presentation on the past, present and future of her department's knowledge management operations. Other sessions focused on how the Online Computer Library Center helps transportation engineers and others tap into the Internet to manage their information needs more effectively.



Luncheon Speaker - Henry Petroski



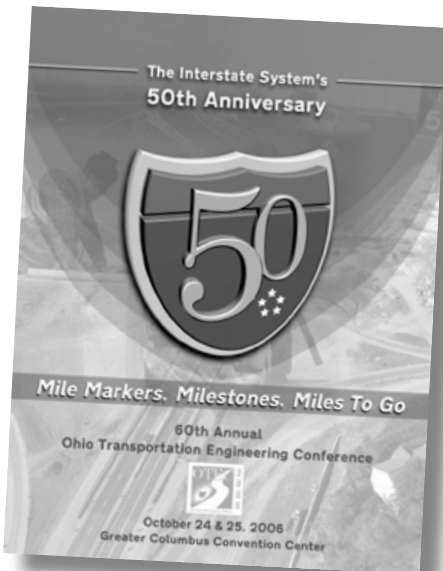
OTEC's Main Exhibit Hall

This year also marked the eighth year of the Student Sponsorship Program, which matches Ohio college students from transportation-related disciplines with leading transportation organizations throughout the state. During the conference, sponsors paired their representatives with students to teach the students the roles their organizations play in the transportation industry.

Another new feature to the conference this year was the opportunity for professional engineers to earn Continuing Professional Development (CPD) hours from the technical sessions. If an attendee was present at a technical session during each time slot of the conference, they are entitled to 9.0 CPDs. Attendee name badges were scanned upon completion of each technical session to confirm their attendance. Attendees will be able to print their own tracking sheet with the details of the CPD credits earned.

"We were excited to be offering the Continuing Professional Development hours to attendees for the first time this year," Barnhart said. "We feel this is another tool that helps make OTEC the premier transportation conference in the country."

OTEC is co-sponsored by ODOT and The Ohio State University. For more information on the conference, please visit www.otecohio.org.



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RAIL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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Moving The Economy.

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OHIO MOVES FASTER, FARTHER, SMARTER.

Ohio Hub Arrives on the Web

New Web Site Debuts at Station Development Workshop
Stu Nicholson, Ohio Rail Development Commission

THE CONCEPT OF FAST TRAINS NEEDS a fast message in a Wi-Fi world. Now you can get on track and up to speed with the state's major passenger and freight rail plan through the first-ever Web site dedicated to the Ohio Hub Plan: www.ohiohub.com. As the Ohio Rail Development Commission moves through the planning stages of the study, it's important for the public to be able to recognize the Plan and its involved documents so interested parties can easily follow its development and build support. The Web site will serve as a one-stop-shop for information on the Plan and will contain all of the latest updates and documents. To help start the identification and recognition process, the site features the Hub Plan's new logo as well as animation to show that this is a plan for the 21st century.

Now, you can get on board with a click to see the latest planning updates, maps, meeting information and even

an Ohio Hub video. www.ohiohub.com also offers downloads of the plan itself, as well as power-point presentations on both the Hub Plan and from visiting experts in the field of passenger and freight rail development.

The Web site made its debut this summer at the ORDC "Ohio Hub Station Development Workshop," where there were guests from all over Ohio and four neighboring states. Among the attendees were representatives of city and county planning departments, metropolitan planning organizations, mayors, land use officials, transit au-

thorities, engineering consultants and transportation

choice advocates. The aim of unveiling the Web site at the workshop was to get community leaders and planning officials to begin thinking ahead about not only where Ohio Hub trains could make station stops, but if they are ready for the kind of rail-oriented development that grows around stations and along rail corridors.

www.ohiohub.com



Environmental Process Preserves Resources, Keeps Project Moving

Joel Hunt, Central Office



Workers from Complete General Construction Co. recently uncovered two gateposts from a World War I training camp in Ross County. The posts have been reset at the nearby Veterans Administration Hospital.

Photos by Bruce Aument, Central Office

AN AGENCY WITH ODOT'S JOB DESCRIPTION is not new to finding potentially valuable cultural resources when planning and building roadway projects. Not surprisingly, the department has experts to handle just this type of situation.

ODOT's Office of Environmental Services (OES) is responsible for monitoring and implementing environmental laws, rules and regulations through ODOT's environmental, design, construction and maintenance programs to efficiently and effectively deliver projects.

"By the nature of what we do, ODOT's

projects are disruptive to the area in which we are working," said OES Administrator Tim Hill. "Through the Office of Environmental Services, we do everything possible to integrate environmental decisions into all operations within ODOT."

To deal with the impacts of projects to potential cultural resources, the OES has a Cultural Resource Section that is composed of two sub-sections: Archaeology and History/Architecture. The Cultural Resource section's primary responsibilities are to efficiently and effectively assist in the timely delivery of projects and

to monitor the application of state and federal laws in the evaluation of the impacts of transportation projects on Ohio's cultural resources.

Cultural Resources include prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, historic bridges and buildings, and locations and districts of historical significance. OES staff members conduct field surveys and compose the resulting reports for coordination with the Ohio Historic Preservation Office and the Ohio Historical Society. OES also reviews surveys and reports of this nature completed by consultants working for ODOT. OES is there to make sure that all projects go through the proper reviews and evaluations to keep them moving forward environmentally. They are also there to support district environmental staff and to take the proper steps to keep a project moving if a cultural resource is found unexpectedly.

ODOT's *Construction and Material Specifications* book states that if contractors discover a historic or prehistoric artifact, they have to notify the project engineer. Statewide, about 10 percent of ODOT's annual projects have significant historic and/or prehistoric resources that require more extensive excavation. The resources are most often located along Ohio's major rivers and historic population centers.

One of ODOT's most recent historic finds came in District 9. With the demilitarized Camp Sherman and five prehistoric earthwork complexes surrounding Chillicothe, Ross County is a hotbed of historic and prehistoric artifacts.

ODOT Staff Archeologist Bruce Aument, Ph.D., said ODOT knows road-building in Ross County can be challenging because there are overlapping historic and prehistoric artifacts all over the area.

"When we work in Ross County we allow extra time for excavation," Aument said. "We advise the district and consultants it could be a lengthy process so they can make contingency plans in advance."

(see **GATES** on page 7)



left - Each gatepost weighs eight tons and required special equipment to be brought in to transport them. below - Six other gateposts have stood untouched in the area since the camp was demilitarized.

GATES (from page 6)

While excavating for the installation of under drains for the new State Route 207 connector, ODOT contractor Complete General Construction Co. unearthed two of the eight gateposts that originally flanked the north and south entrances to Camp Sherman, the third-largest World War I army training camp. Despite the gateposts being quite large and their discovery being a complete surprise, ODOT was able to keep the project moving smoothly with assistance from the contractor and OES staff.

The first gatepost crews found was partially buried under the original brick road. When performing the excavation work, the contractor hit something too big to move, tipping him off that he had found something important. District 9 called OES in to investigate.

Aument immediately recognized the concrete monument as a Camp Sherman gatepost because it was identical to a set on the south side of the property. Each camp entrance had two large and two small gateposts. The four posts on the south side of the camp are still standing near their original location. The two small posts from the north entrance were moved nearby to a training center for the Ross Correctional Institution.

Based on the pairing of gateposts at the south end of the property, Aument said he knew a second post would be close by. It turned out they were buried on either side of State Route 104. "We estimate the gateposts stood undisturbed until the 1930s or '40s when State Route 104 was widened," Aument said. "Luckily they weren't destroyed; they were just pushed over and buried."



Ashley Hoskins, Complete General project engineer, said after the first gatepost was found, they went about business as usual, but with the awareness that another gatepost would likely be close by. "We were excavating brick and sand and asphalt. We were careful and we watched what we were doing, but something like that sticks out," Hoskins said.

ODOT entered into an agreement with the Veterans Administration, Hopewell Culture National Historical Park, Ross County Historical Society, Ohio State Historic Preservation Office and the Federal Highway Administration to reset the pair of gateposts at the entrance of the Veterans Administration hospital, near their discovery site.

Complete General agreed to set the posts free of charge and they were in place at the hospital in mid-October. ODOT is continuing to work with the interested parties to determine what, if any, restoration may be needed to preserve the gateposts.

The ODOT District 9 SR 207 connector project begins at state routes 104 and

Camp Sherman History

The Office of Environmental Services has located clippings from the Sept. 8 and Oct. 10, 1919 issues of *The Scioto Gazette* which describe construction of the Camp Sherman gateposts. According to the articles, construction of Camp Sherman, named after General William Sherman, began in July 1917. The 2,000 acre camp was situated between Mount Logan and Adena, the historic home of Ohio's first governor, Thomas Worthington.

In Sept. 1917, when the camp was 95 percent finished, the first trainees arrived to man the 83rd Division under Maj. Gen. Edwin F. Glenn. The camp housed more than 40,000 soldiers. Eventually, four divisions were trained at Camp Sherman; however, the war ended before the last two divisions were sent overseas.

Camp Sherman cost \$12.8 million to build and included 1,370 buildings. The camp had three theaters – two movie theaters and one live theater, a hospital, a waste disposal plant, a laundry, a library, a prison and a working farm complete with grain elevator, dairy cows and vegetable garden.

After the war's end in Nov. 1918, soldiers were discharged and some of the camp facilities were used to teach veterans a trade so they could find jobs. War casualties were also cared for at the camp hospital. When it was determined long-term care facilities were needed, the Veterans Administration Hospital was established.

Nothing is left of the original camp as it was systematically dismantled by the U.S. government during the 1920s. The land itself is still owned by the government and on it stand the Ross and Chillicothe Correctional Institutes and the Hopewell Culture National Historical Park.

207, just north of the city of Chillicothe and extends to U.S. Route 23. This \$25.7 million project began in January 2005 and is expected to be open to traffic later this year.

The discovery didn't delay the project and the additional excavation costs were minimal. ☺

Statewide Plan Aims to Reduce Fatalities

Ryan Larzelere, *Central Office*

IN ORDER TO KEEP UP WITH GROWING TRAFFIC and crash trends, Ohio recently became one of the first states in the nation to adopt a statewide plan to reduce fatalities on its roadways. The Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan (CHSP) identifies the greatest threats to motorists and outlines strategies to lower the number of injuries and deaths that occur each year. The document is considered comprehensive because it asks government agencies and safety advocates to work across jurisdictional boundaries to address crash problems regardless

of where they occur.

Last year there were 358,127 total crashes in Ohio – 1,326 people were killed and 88,583 people were injured.

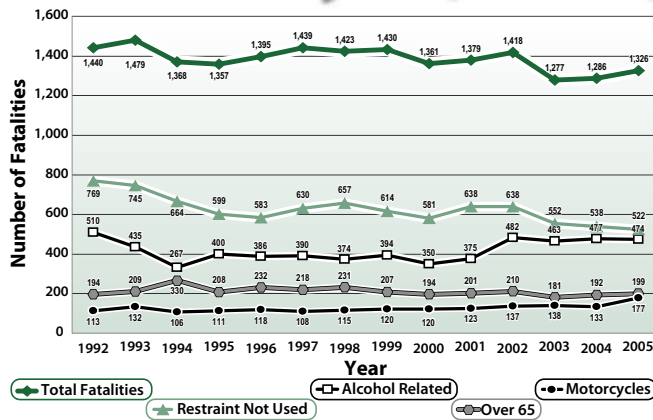
Ohio's goal is to reduce fatalities to no more than 1,100 by the end of 2008. If Ohio reaches this goal, at least 1,000 lives will be saved between 2002 and 2008.

"Ohio has become a national leader in combating highway fatalities and crashes," said Dennis Decker, division administrator for the Federal Highway Administration. "The state has the seventh largest highway network and the fifth highest traffic volume, yet it has the ninth lowest fatality rate in the nation."

ODOT and its safety partners like the Ohio State Highway Patrol and the Governor's

(see **PLAN** on page 9)

Ohio Fatalities by Year (1992-2005)



Low-Cost, Short-Term Safety Projects Help Address High-Crash Locations

Joel Hunt, *Central Office*

OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS, ODOT embarked on a mission to dramatically improve safety on Ohio's roadways. The department doubled its safety program to \$65 million annually and began aggressively analyzing crash data and assisting local governments with implementing safety projects all over the state.

As a result, Ohio's fatality rate improved from 21st best to 9th best in the nation. But despite ODOT's best efforts, rear-end and injury crashes remain nearly as high as before the initiative began. With growing volumes of traffic using Ohio's roads, ODOT must continue to find strategies to further reduce crashes if it is to meet its goals of reducing crash frequency, rear-end crashes and reducing the state fatality rate.

In many cases, rear-end crashes are caused by congestion from limited freeway capacity. While ODOT has been systematically addressing these clogged urban arteries, these projects take years

to develop, design and build and cost hundreds of millions of dollars. So ODOT must also look for short-term strategies to reduce congestion and accidents while major projects are being planned. These strategies must also be low-cost and simple to implement so they can be completed quickly and have an immediate impact on motorists.

"In keeping with the aggressive nature of our safety program, ODOT has developed a series of countermeasures that we are implementing state wide through our county work forces," said Dave Holstein, administrator of ODOT's Office of Traffic Engineering. "While some states are trying methods in spot locations, we've already completed detailed research on these measures and are implementing them to have an impact statewide."

These measures include new reflectors for guardrails and barriers, to make them more visible at night and during inclement weather. These reflectors help motorists stay on the road and identify obstructions off the road.

ODOT is also adding reflective sign

post delineators, which are highly reflective strips that fit in or on sign posts, on critical traffic control devices. Red sign post delineators are being installed on all "Stop," "Yield," "Do Not Enter" and "Wrong Way" signs across the state. Yellow delineators are being installed on all chevrons, "Stop Ahead" and large directional arrow signs.

Dual "Stop" and "Stop Ahead" signs are being placed at all rural high-speed (more than 45 mph) state and U.S. routes. ODOT is also installing these additional signs and warning signs at county and township roads approaching state routes that have more than 11 intersection angle crashes in the most recent three year period.

Flashing Light Emitting Diode (LED) or beacon "Stop" signs are being installed at intersections that have 14 or more intersection angle crashes in the most recent three year period. The signs are designed with flashing LED lights on all eight points of the sign or a flash-

(see **PROJECTS** on page 9)

PLAN (from page 8)

Highway Safety Office attribute the low rate to better crash analysis techniques, improved coordination between agencies and innovative approaches to addressing problems.

The CHSP represents a broad approach to improving highway safety by drawing upon engineering, enforcement and educational strategies to reduce crashes. It also strengthens the relationship between emergency response and health care professionals, who respond to crashes and rehabilitate the injured. Their input can add new insight into the human and financial costs of crashes, which may influence how we prioritize and attack crash problems.

"The plan recognizes that we have to make the roadway safer and improve the

quality of driver using the road," said Jennifer Townley, administrator of ODOT's Office of Systems Planning and Program Management, which oversees the Safety Program. "Many high-crash locations are being targeted for driver education and law enforcement – as well as roadway improvements – to save lives."

The CHSP, which was developed by local, state and national safety advocates, uses data to analyze Ohio's worst crash problems. It identifies five areas where the state intends to focus its resources to reduce fatalities over the next three years.

Targeted areas include:

- Improving the quality and accuracy of crash data;
- Reducing the occurrence and severity of run-off-road, intersection and head-on collisions;
- Addressing high risk behaviors such as

low seatbelt use and impaired driving;

- Targeting motorcycles and commercial vehicles, which are more likely to be involved in serious crashes; and
- Reducing the high number of rear-end collisions caused by congestion

"Knowing which trends to target is half the battle," Townley said. "Through its detailed data analysis, the Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan will keep us on top of any emerging or changing trends and causes of crashes. It will focus the department's efforts in achieving our safety goal."

The document will serve as a guidance document for directing key safety initiatives in the state through 2008. It will be updated as needed when new information is available and as new trends emerge. The CHSP can be viewed on the Safety Program Web site at <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/planning/Safety/>. ●

PROJECTS (from page 8)

ing beacon above the sign. These signs actually create their own light, greatly enhancing the visibility of the sign.

"All of these measures are designed to draw motorists' attention to important traffic control devices as well as guide them along the highway during times of low visibility or in potentially confusing construction zones," Holstein said.

Once the treatments have been installed, the department will monitor crashes at each location to gauge the effectiveness of the program.

Through the county work plan, county forces will spend at least 600 hours in their annual work plans implementing the measures in Fiscal Year 2007. ODOT's goal is to have them all in place by spring 2007.

"For an initial investment of about \$1.3 million we can potentially prevent hundreds of crashes from occurring by making important traffic control devices more visible and harder to miss or ignore," said Michelle May, program manager

for the Highway Safety Program.

ODOT continually monitors and researches safety methods being used around the country and will implement them in spot locations or statewide when appropriate. Cable barriers, tensioned steel cables supported by steel posts used to prevent cross-median crashes, began

as a single-location pilot in District 8 and are currently being expanded to 14 other locations across Ohio. Other safety measures have been approved for use and will be installed in

select areas, including rumble stripes/strips and curve warnings and linear delineation for barrier in workzones.

And Ohio isn't the only state trying low-cost, short-term countermeasures. According to a Sept. 7 *USA Today* article, state transportation officials across the nation are turning to low-cost, low-tech methods to combat potentially deadly behaviors, such as speeding and tailgating.

Some innovations other states are trying include optical speed bars painted on the road to trick drivers into thinking they're going faster than they actually are, and white dots, painted on the road with corresponding signs to encourage drivers to keep a specific number of dots between their car and others to discourage drivers from tailgating. ODOT is monitoring other states' research on these methods as well as continually studying crash data to pair the most appropriate countermeasures with particular crash problems.

ODOT has been quite successful in implementing low-cost, short-term safety measures, delivering more than 700 low-cost safety projects around the state since 2003, in addition to this latest round of statewide measures. ●



Safety efforts at high-crash locations include making traffic control devices, such as stop signs, more visible by adding additional reflective strips to sign posts (*above*) and flashing lights (*right*).



OHIO COORDINATION PROGRAM

A Decade of "Just Doing It"

Ryan Larzelere, Central Office

"JUST DO IT!" WAS THE THEME OF THE Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) sponsored workshop on transportation coordination in 1994. Since then, scores of individuals, organizations and groups around the state have "just done it." As the Ohio Coordination Program (OCP) celebrates its 10th anniversary, ODOT's Office of Transit reflects on some history, the current situation and what the future holds.

Since 1976, ODOT has incorporated coordination requirements in the Specialized Transportation (Section 5310) and Rural Transit (Section 5311) Programs, encouraging coordination between public and private transit systems and local human service providers. Moving one step further, in 1995, the Office of Transit



Photos by Leslie Dellovade, Central Office



beginning in 2001, projects were allowed to apply for continuation funds at a lower level. Most of the 17 coordination projects use continuation funds.

Currently, 17 projects serving 21 counties are being funded by the OCP. Every project is unique in that the organizational structure and the type of service provided are determined locally by the coordination partners. Hundreds of organizations, from county commissioners, community action commissions, senior centers, MR/DD boards, county

departments of Job and Family Services to private taxi companies, have or are participating in coordination projects around the state.

"This diversity is what makes coordination programs so successful," said Marianne Freed, administrator for ODOT's Office of Transit. "The Ohio Coordination Program allows each county to develop projects that best benefit their communities."

In the late 1990s into the early 2000s, 10 coordination projects successfully made the transition to become rural public transit systems. Although the reporting, record keeping and administrative functions are somewhat more restrictive as the systems receive federal funds, the services are now open to the general public at an affordable price. But not all coordination projects need or want to become public transit systems, yet they still needed support from ODOT. So beginning in 2001, projects were allowed to apply for continuation funds at a lower level. Most of the 17 coordination projects use continuation funds.

The success stories are numerous. The program has gone through changes over the years, and there are now several multi-county projects as well as a project in a large urban setting. Out of 88 counties in the state, only 14 remain without public transit or a coordination project. There are still challenges that the program faces, including insurance and funding issues, but opportunities for coordination do exist. With the success of the OCP and the support of local and national initiatives, coordination remains at the forefront of almost every grant program. ☺

A Timeline of the Ohio Coordination Program:

- In the late 1970s and into the early 1980s, ODOT was instrumental in forming a 17 member State agency ad-hoc committee on coordination to share ideas, discuss transportation issues and disseminate program information.
- In 1988 ODOT received a grant from the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Planning Council and the Ohio Department of Development to fund four coordinated transportation demonstration projects.
- The committee disbanded, but in 1989, ODOT and the Ohio Department of Aging were awarded a joint grant to study the problems and possible solutions of coordinating available resources for the expansion and provision of transportation for older Ohioans. Seven regional forums were held and a Best Practices document was published.
- An additional grant was awarded to ODOT in 1992 to support six communities in their coordination efforts. Also in 1992, the first version of the "State Handbook for Coordinating Transportation Services" was published.
- As a result of increasing requests for information and assistance at the local level, Office of Transit leaders decided to set aside a portion of transit's General Revenue Fund to initiate the OCP effective July 1, 1995.
- The first seven grant awards were made Jan. 1, 1996, and the program has continued to grow since then.

Summer Flooding Takes Toll on Northeast Ohio

Ryan Larzelere, Central Office

RECORD RAINFALL FELL IN NORTHEAST Ohio from the afternoon of July 27 until the morning hours of July 28. As a result, many residents were left to pick up the pieces of the homes and lives they once knew. And ODOT crews made major repairs to state routes throughout the region.

"Our crews are quite adept at responding to natural disasters that affect our routes as well as local routes," said Tony Vogel, ODOT's deputy director for the Division of Highway Management. "We have long recognized the importance of keeping the highway system moving, and our crews will do whatever is necessary to ensure that the roads are accessible."

On July 28, Gov. Bob Taft declared Lake County in emergency status. In a statement to the press, the governor announced that state resources had been activated to assist local governments and residents in response and recovery efforts. He also thanked the many state agencies assisting in the cleanup effort, including ODOT.

Lake County, in District 12, was one of the hardest hit in the state. Rain forced dozens of roads to be closed and until recently. Two of the hardest hit routes, State Routes 84 and 86 remained closed

for weeks. The west-bound lanes on SR 84 were washed out by the flooding. The repairs took more than two weeks to complete in an emergency contract. Flooding and mudslides closed part of SR 86. Making recovery more difficult, most of the side streets in Lake

The East Branch Reservoir surges under State Route 608 in Geauga County after record-breaking rains.

ODOT District 3's Alan Dickson, David Smith and Matt Dailey work to repair a culvert damaged by heavy rains and flooding in July on State Route 95 in Richland County.

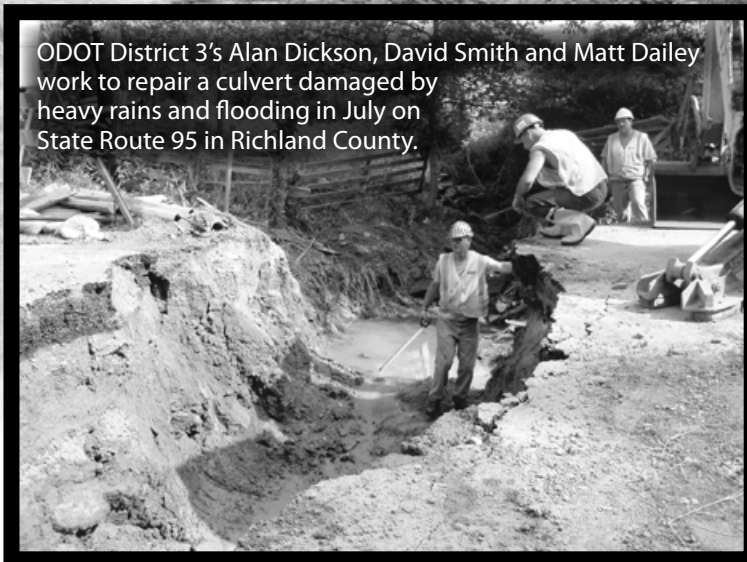


Photo by Joyce Dunford, D-3

County were closed due to high water and debris. Because of this, crews from Lake, Geauga and Cuyahoga counties assisted cities and townships with cleanup efforts in addition to working on state routes. Crews were out for up to 12 hours a day in record breaking temperatures repairing the damage left by the storm, clearing debris and making the road acces-

sible to motorists.

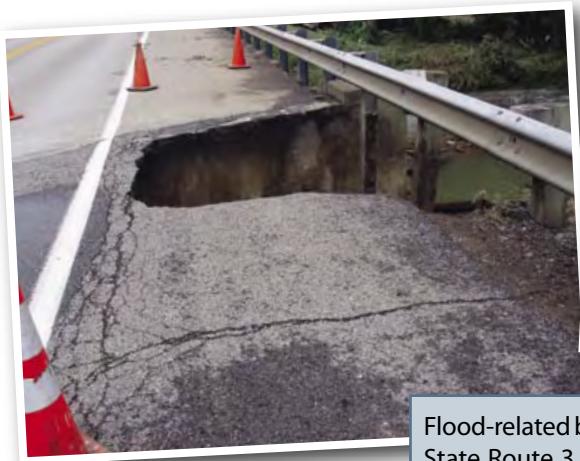
"Lake, Geauga and Cuyahoga County maintenance crews worked 24/7 to help local cities, villages and townships remove flood damage," said Dave Ray, highway management administrator for District 12. "Local officials were extremely appreciative of the work and commented on the overwhelming dedication of our people."

President Bush made a stop in Lake County on Aug. 2 to thank all the first responders for the effort they made in saving peoples' lives. He declared Lake County a federal disaster area the previous day, meaning victims could receive

(see **FLOODING** on page 12)

Repair and clean up on State Route 86 in Lake County.





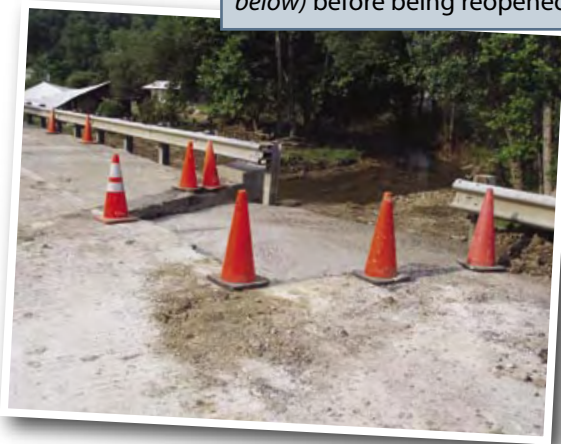
Flood-related bridge damage and erosion on State Route 3 in Ashland County (as shown above) required significant action (shown below) before being reopened to traffic.

federal aid money for the damage done to their homes.

Similarly, District 3 faced problems from the excessive rainfall from the storms. A number of U.S. and state routes were closed as a result of flooding. On State Route 39 in Ashland County, almost

20 feet of embankment washed away into a gravel pit behind the roadway. Near Mohican State Park, a State Route 3 bridge sustained heavy erosion of the material that backs up the bridge's support making it hollow underneath the roadway. The park sustained a large amount of damage as well. ODOT lent the park equipment to assist with cleanup efforts. District 3 crews also helped Hanover

Township by providing equipment and manpower to repair township and county roads, including clearing channels and



drainpipes, picking up litter and debris, reshaping ditches, repairing slips and spot berming.

Throughout the state, ODOT spent approximately \$5 million on flood relief efforts, including maintenance and overtime costs.

"Although more money has been spent on past Ohio flood events, there was a significant amount of county network damage

"Although more money has been spent on past Ohio flood events, there was a significant amount of county network damage for such a small geographical area. ODOT crews worked very hard and put in a lot of hours to provide desperately needed assistance. Once again, their efforts were truly appreciated by local communities."

Tony Vogel, ODOT Deputy Director of Highway Management

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desperately needed assistance. Once again, their efforts were truly appreciated by local communities."

To help recover some of the costs, the department applied for Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Emergency Relief Funding.

FHWA reviewed the damage and is completing Damage Survey Reports to include the final cost, which should be about \$4 million. ☺

Photos by Joyce Dunford, D-3

Transcript

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