



KS LTAP Newsletter

Winter 2014

A quarterly newsletter of the Kansas Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) at the Kansas University Transportation Center with funding from Kansas DOT and the Federal Highway Administration

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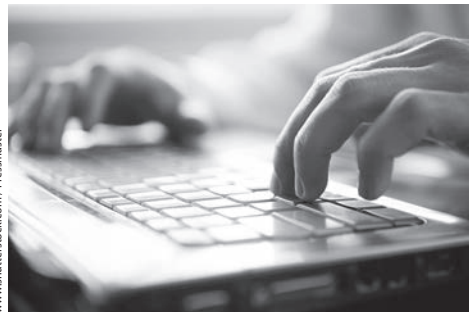
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Please help us reach more people in your agency by routing this newsletter:

- administration
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Using Free Online Tools to Bring New Life to Old Sign Data

By Dylan Dreiling, Barton County summer intern



A summer intern project in Barton County to simplify their GIS capability has brought new life to old data and is opening the doors to new ways of mapping and storing information.



If you haven't already noticed, the world of technology is growing, fast. We now have daily access to technology that was previously unimagined, and today's toys are quicker, cheaper, and more efficient than anything people used in the past. The practical applications of new technology seem infinite. It may seem difficult and overwhelming at first, but it is highly advantageous to keep yourself and your workplace in the loop and at the forefront of all these changes. And Barton County is doing just that.

I was hired by the Barton County engineering department last summer to assist them in catching up with the times. The department wasn't exactly stuck in the Stone Age when it came to data management, but there was definitely room for improvement. For example, road crews who were assigned projects from the department really had no efficient way of relaying details of said projects to one another. It was “simply” done with dozens of paper maps highlighted with colored markers. These maps were constantly needing to be redrawn and there was no easy way of comparing past jobs with current projects. Not to mention... the amount of time and resources it took to deal with so many stacks of paper were less than ideal.

The computer side of the engineering department faced problems too. For many of its tasks, the department was using a high-powered Geographic Information System (GIS) from a popular GIS vendor. The department keeps track of copious amounts of information and needed something powerful enough to handle it all.

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Preparing for Leadership and Supervisory Roles

By Mike McCarthy, Minnesota LTAP

Most people don't want to lead or be “the boss” because leadership is hard. According to Mike Colestock, leading people can be a very difficult job, and you can't do it well if you don't really like people. Colestock, an instructor with Hennepin (MN) Technical College, presented “Leadership Skills for New and Upcoming Supervisors” during a general session at the 2012 Minnesota Fall Maintenance Expo and Snow Roadeo.

Colestock provided an overview of what it takes to prepare for a leadership or supervisory role. His presentation focused on the challenges and difficulties associated with taking a

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Preparing for leadership *Continued from page 1*



Moving into leadership starts with learning—about what makes effective leadership and about your employees, as people.

leadership position. Colestock also offered tools, tips, and techniques needed to build personal influence and succeed as a leader.

Leadership is about influence

“Leadership is about people because it’s about influence—understanding what’s important to people, what motivates them, why they get out of bed everyday,” Colestock said. “Can you motivate your people?”

Colestock began the presentation by saying that employees who aspire to leadership need to know why they want to be leaders.

“The best bosses are the ones who are good leaders,” he said. “Supervision is about tasks—leadership is about people. People want to be led well.”

Pay attention to communication styles. To lead well, Colestock continued, a supervisor must be aware of his or her own leadership style. Along with educational and technical competence, leaders need to understand the kind of person they are and the way they best communicate.

Colestock also stressed the importance of supervisors knowing the communication styles of their employees. “Part of leadership is knowing how you communicate and how your people communicate,” he said. “Don’t take [your workers] for granted. You need to get to know them.”

Engage your workers. Though leaders may be unable to change the attitudes of their worker, Colestock said, leaders can create an environment where people can be fully engaged in their work. An engaged employee is someone who has a larger perspective on what the company is trying to accomplish, knows the most efficient ways to do the work,

and thinks for the organization.

“Good leaders engage their people,” Colestock said. “I want to hire what’s between their ears, not just their hands.”

Know what good leadership looks like, and practice it. According to Colestock, good leadership traits are critical to success. Indecisiveness, lack of direction and organization, vindictiveness, and micromanagement are all signs of bad leadership, and these methods disengage workers. Colestock explained that in conflict, good bosses shouldn’t be frustrated by their people, but instead should focus on the behavior that needs to be changed.

“Good leaders focus on the tangibles—here’s what’s wrong, and this is the behavior I need corrected. You have to get to the bottom of the issue,” Colestock said.

Build and show respect. Fostering respect in the workplace is also critical for engaging employees. Colestock believes that when leaders respect their employees, employees will respect their leaders.

“We have to realize that we’re both professionals and we’re here to do our jobs. I can’t get work out of a worker if he doesn’t respect me. Without respect, that worker is disengaged,” Colestock said.

Give credit where credit is due. Colestock suggested leaders practice “window-and-mirror” maturity with their employees. When something goes well, good bosses should look out the window and give credit to their workers. When something goes wrong, good leaders should look in the mirror and take it upon themselves to fix the problem.

“Your reputation as a leader shows up before you do and hangs around well after you leave,” Colestock said. “You need to know what creates success.”

Show your employees that they are valued. Ultimately, when leaders can demonstrate to their employees that they are valued, Colestock said, it helps motivate those employees to engage in their work.

“Good leaders fight for their folks,” he concluded. “The more people who understand that I care about them as a human being, the more they will engage and give all of their effort.”

A 1.5-minute video of Mike Colestock’s presentation is on the Minnesota LTAP website at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CNYMG3RIYYA>. ■

Become a Road Scholar! An excellent way to get training in supervisory skills is to enroll in the Kansas Road Scholar Program and earn certificates in Level II Supervisory Skills and Level III Executive Development. The Kansas Association of Counties will be offering a course on supervision at two locations in May; see page 14. For more information on the Road Scholar Program, visit <http://www.ksroadscholar.org>.

Source:

• Adapted from: McCarthy, Mike. Preparing for leadership and supervisory roles. Minnesota LTAP Technology Exchange. Winter 2013. <http://www.mnltap.umn.edu/publications/exchange/2013/winter/leadership.html>.



Old data, new life *Continued from page 1*

However, as the saying goes, “With great power, comes great responsibility.” This proved true for Barton County. The GIS cost the county several thousand dollars to purchase initially and needed further investment of thousands of dollars for regular maintenance fees.

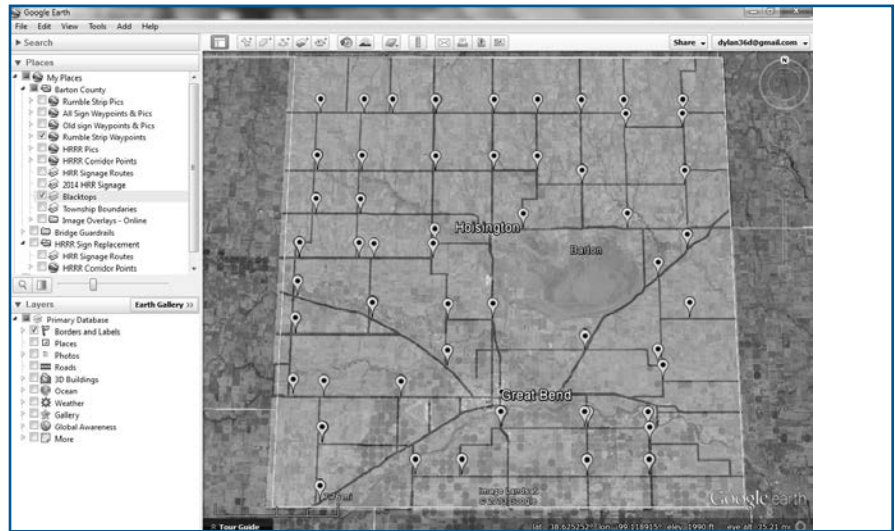
The department’s GIS package was thought to be a necessary expense for the County for longest time. However, it was an innately complex program with a very steep learning curve for its users. It was loaded with unnecessary features and tools the department simply did not need.

County staff began to wonder if all that complexity and cost was really necessary. This led to a rather straightforward wish list—and a task assigned to me: Figure out a new system that loses no functionality, is user friendly, and is easy on the bank. Easier said than done, right? Wrong. With today’s technology it was almost just as easy to do it as it was to say.

As an avid fan of technology, computers and electronics, this job proved to be fun and exciting as I scoured the internet for ways to solve the problems at hand. This kind of work was similar to how I spend my free time, so I quickly stumbled upon a number of possible solutions.

After researching various software programs similar to the one the County was using, along with finding other online tools that could potentially help with our problems, I began to find myself often coming back to products developed by the technology giant, Google. Google is extremely well known for its search engine but what many do not realize is that Google also offers numerous other software programs that cover a wide variety of applications—often with little to no charge.

Inspired by Miami County’s Matthew Oehlert and Matthew Landes, I took to using the program Google Earth. Both Matthews were featured in LTAP’s Winter 2013 issue describing their approach to enhancing presentations with low cost software such as Google Earth. It proved to be exactly what Barton County needed.



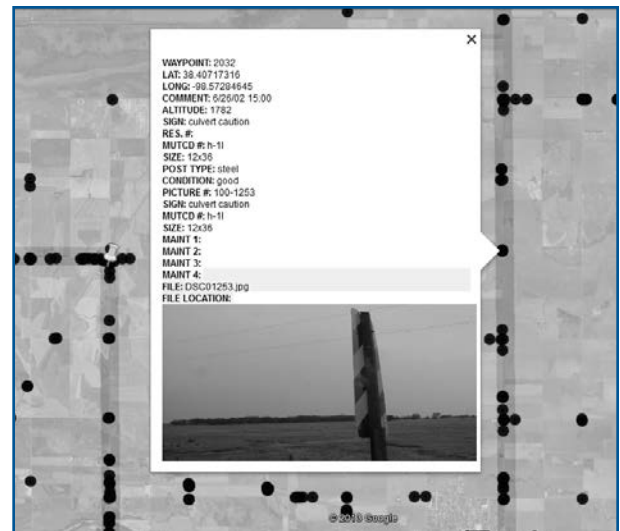
Barton County

Above, a Google earth map showing locations of signs on blacktop roads in Barton County. **Below,** an example of the detailed data available on each sign, one click away.



The first task to tackle was building a database or inventory of all of the road signs in the county. Thankfully, I didn’t have to start from scratch. I began the overhaul by using data collected by Adam Krug and Jamie Rusco who were also featured by LTAP back in the Fall 2003 newsletter issue. As past interns, they were faced with the task of gathering huge amounts of data for road signs. They assembled a three person crew, drove up and down every county road, and manually recorded information about the signs, including pictures. Once gathered, they assembled their data into several Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. This worked back then, but again, it was time for an upgrade.

Using a Google web application called Fusion Tables, I imported all of the previously gathered data into one table and let modern technology do its thing. Fusion Tables manages large sets of data very uniquely. Because each



Barton County

of these signs had a corresponding set of GPS coordinates, Fusion Tables was able to make a virtual map with showing the location of each sign, complete with all other necessary information, in a matter of minutes. Once created, I was able to immediately download that map and open it within Google Earth. So, after nearly 10 years of sitting dormant, the old data came alive, complete with satellite and 3D imagery—all in one afternoon.

The Google Earth map now became the department’s “filing cabinet,” with the ability to share and edit the information

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Old data, new life *Continued from page 3*

at a moment's notice. Google Earth also comes with easy-to-use tools and features to make maps even more interactive. Paths and polygonal areas can be overlaid on the maps for detailed and user-friendly labeling.

The other major program I decided to use for the department was yet another free program from Google, "Google Picasa." Picasa is picture-managing software capable of handling large amounts of pictures all at once. Because Picasa is a Google product, it can be synced seamlessly with Google Earth. Pictures can also be placed as place marks on a map complete with whatever information is added.

The Google Earth map now became the department's "filing cabinet," with the ability to share and edit the information at a moment's notice.

The geocoding and photo-documenting work previously done with a carload of equipment can now be done with a small digital camera with GPS capabilities. What once took thousands of dollars and hours of man power can now be done with a couple hundred dollars and minutes of computer time.

Like I mentioned before, this technology is by no means limited. Word of the work we were doing quickly spread to other departments in public works. They are finding unique ways to implement the same tools for their own purposes. [See one example in the sidebar on this page about how Barton County is using Google Earth to document flood damage.]

Even though the pace of change in technology can seem intimidating, it really is a good thing. The hardest part of "teaching old dogs new tricks" is

Flood Damage Layer Added

By Lisa Harris

Barton County Road & Bridge (R&B) "took the ball and ran with it" when they sought to use the online tools created by Dreiling to document flood damage. Clark Rusco, county engineer, said that heavy rainfall in August 2013 caused a lot of damage—requiring damage assessments to be done for disaster declarations for the county and also many of the townships. R&B staff needed a way to track this information, and they decided to try Google Earth. However, Dreiling had left for college, and Rusco, who was the only other person with the county with much experience with the tools Dreiling developed, was out of the office more than not, preparing damage assessments.

So R&B staff tried it on their own. They applied the user manual made by Dreiling, geocoded the flood-damaged sites, and developed a flood damage layer that contained cost estimates, project status, and final project costs. They used this information in communicating with FEMA about flood assistance.

Rusco said "The flood damage layer has been a great tool that was developed out of necessity, and with very little input from me. I know [R&B staff] like the flexibility of the system and have plans for several other layers."



An example of the flood damage: This washed-out entrance was the only entrance into a farmstead. John Remmert, R&B dispatcher, had the field crews take geo-tagged photographs of each site. The sites were mapped using Google Earth.



the transition. Giving up old ways to be replaced by new ones is difficult at first, but well worth it when the payoff comes around. When used correctly, the tools available in today's world can improve your ability to perform any task in a timelier, cost-effective fashion. Counties across the state should be able to follow in Barton County's footsteps if they, too, feel the need to give

themselves an upgrade.

You can learn more about the Google products used by Barton County at <http://www.google.com/about/products/>



Sources:

- Harris, Lisa. Using Google Earth to Enhance Presentations. KS LTAP Newsletter. Winter 2013.
- Krug, Adam. Students Have a Whale of a Time Collecting Data in Barton County. KUTC Newsletter. Fall 2003.
- Interview. Clark Rusco. March 4, 2014.



Traffic Signal Technicians and Where to Find Them

By Lisa Harris

Traffic signal technicians are important contributors to transportation safety in a community. This article will outline the types of positions responsible for maintaining traffic signals, qualifications needed, where to obtain training in our area, and tips on where to find qualified signal technicians.

Positions and qualifications

According to John Hightower, traffic signal specialist for Overland Park, about 80 percent of the signal technicians in Kansas are certified by the International Municipal Signal Association, or IMSA. The Federal Highway Administration has guidelines for signal maintenance qualifications, and IMSA is specifically referenced in those. FHWA's guidelines include general tasks for different positions, plus recommended education, experience and physical requirements (see sidebar at right). More detailed job descriptions for Levels I and II can be found at this FHWA link: http://tmcops.gtri.gatech.edu/backgrounddocs/tmcpd/tmcpd_02.php.

Different levels of IMSA certification

IMSA offers three basic levels of signal maintenance certification I, II and III), plus few specialty certifications, including signal inspection. Level II has four sub-specialties.

- Level I Signal Technician
- Level II — Bench
- Level II — Construction
- Level II — Design
- Level II — Field
- Level III
- Traffic signal inspection
- Electronics in traffic control signals
- Microprocessors in traffic signals

The IMSA website has detailed descriptions for tasks for these certifications. Go to <http://imsasafety.org>.

Recommended Qualifications for Signal Maintenance Personnel

Requirement	Technician 1	Technician 2	Maintenance Supervisor
General Tasks	Replacement and repair of controllers, signals, wiring and other field equipment. Works under direction.	Skills include programming of traffic controllers, troubleshooting controllers and ancillary equipment. Requires minimal direction. Provides direction and training to Technician 1 level.	Full supervisory responsibility. Supervises Technician 1 and Technician 2 levels. Greater technical knowledge than Technician 2 is required. Administrative duties include ordering spares and supplies, contract administration, budgets, provision for training.
Education and Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High school (minimum). • Knowledge of electrical standards, codes, practices and repair techniques. • Certification to IMSA Traffic Signal Level I within one year of employment. 	Minimum of 2 years as Technician 1 plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certification to IMSA Traffic Signal Level II. • Minimum of two years experience as Technician 1. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combination of training, education and experience for a total minimum of five years. • Certification to IMSA Traffic Signal Level II. • Additional training beyond IMSA Traffic Signal Level II.
Physical Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be able to work for long periods in inclement weather. • May be required to lift heavy objects, work from bucket trucks 	Same as Technician I.	

Source: Traffic Signal Operations and Maintenance Staffing Guidelines. FHWA. 2009.

Certification training offered in KS

Hightower is the trainer for IMSA's Central Section that includes Kansas. Signal maintenance training is typically held once a year, in March, at the annual conference of the Central Section. However, if a community can assemble five or more people who wish to be certified, Hightower will travel to their location to provide training.

Hightower's classes typically have a mix of municipal and contractor attendees. Oftentimes the attendees are experienced technicians who are not yet certified. Class size varies for the annual training; this year there were 10 registrants for Signals Level I and four registrants for Signals Level II.

Where to find a certified technician

If a community were looking for a certified technician, where would they look? Hightower suggests advertising for the position at the website for IMSA International. He said the City of Olathe has hired some people through that service. Currently about 20 positions are advertised on the site, a few of

which are traffic signal technicians.

Go to <http://www.imsasafety.org/jobs/jobopps.htm>. Two other options are the IMSA newsletter and the *Kansas City Star*, because there are many signal technicians in the metro area.

Is certification required in Kansas?

Hightower said there is no statewide requirement for certification; different agencies have different policies to address qualifications and liability. KDOT has a requirement for Level II field certification. Some cities require a Level II or III signal technician on the payroll, like Overland Park. Some communities contract-out their signal maintenance and specify certified technicians.

For more information

For more information, contact John Hightower at (913) 327-6670. The next IMSA Central Section annual certification training will be March 2015. Check the Central Section's website later this year for the location—<http://www.central.imsasafety.org/>. ■

Sources:

- Federal Highway Administration. Traffic Signal Operations and Maintenance Staffing Guidelines. March 2009. <http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop09006/fhwahop09006.pdf>
- IMSA International Web site. <http://www.imsasafety.org/>
- Interview. John Hightower. February 27, 2014.



How to Reach with Seniors With Your Agency's Communications

By Lisa Harris



When it comes to communicating with seniors in your community, it's not one-size-fits-all. Some seniors have computers and use the internet regularly, some don't and never will. How do you reach them all?



Small communities across the country have waning newspaper circulations and many are losing their newspapers altogether. The City of De Soto has faced this issue; five years ago, the local newspaper went out of business. This affects the city's ability to reach citizens with notices about public meetings and other time-sensitive information — especially older citizens and others who don't use the internet.

"Ever since the paper went out, it's been a struggle for us to reach our older citizens who can't or won't use electronic communications," said Mike Brungardt, De Soto city engineer. "Frustrated citizens tell our council members, and our council members tell us. These citizens really feel left in the dark with no reliable way to get good information."

Brungardt said that the city has tried to figure out ways to reach citizens who don't use the internet, but, in his opinion, they are coming up short,

Are Seniors Using Social Media?

The Nielsen Company did an interesting survey in 2009, to investigate how seniors use their time online. The top types of uses of the internet for seniors were the same as for most other users: e-mail, mapping, checking the weather, and paying bills. What sites did they visit most when surfing the web? #1 was Google search, #2 Windows Media Player, and #3... Facebook! Just the year before, Facebook was #45 spot among online destinations for seniors. In a year, Facebook went up 42 spots in use by seniors. And that was in 2009.

We checked a few prominent websites serving seniors, and sure enough, they have Facebook and Twitter accounts. Check out those links for the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability (<http://www.kdads.ks.gov/>) and AARP Kansas (<http://states.aarp.org/category/kansas/>).

The Neilson study indicates that seniors are a growing demographic in use of social media. That is good to keep in mind as your city or county uses this avenue for communication.

Source: <http://rescuealertofca.com/who-are-social-medias-newest-members-seniors>

compared with a newspaper. For example, the city has teamed up with the school district and the *Lawrence Journal-World* to produce a quarterly newsletter with city information. "It's nice, but it's not news," he said. "The information is provided by the city, and it is not objectively reported."

Brungardt said the *Journal-World* used to send an e-reporter to public meetings to report both sides of an issue, but they no longer do that, and even then, that content was only available online.

"The only private news publication left in De Soto is a little online newspaper that reports obituaries," Brungardt said, "but again, many seniors don't or can't access it."

So how DO you reach seniors? We will provide some ideas in the article, plus discuss some considerations for reaching the growing numbers of seniors who are using the internet to communicate.

Reaching seniors who do not use the internet

We did not find a lot of information out there on this topic, but we did find

a useful report from our neighbors in Canada about how to reach seniors in rural areas. Some senior residents may not want to use the internet or may not have the ability to access the technology in remote areas.

The sidebar on page 7 shows ideas for reaching senior citizens, including those who do not use the internet.

You will likely have to think of innovative ways to get the word out, perhaps partnering with organizations or services with frequent contact with seniors. It may be helpful to put together an advisory group of seniors to brainstorm ideas for better communication.

Internet users who are seniors

Email considerations. An article at govdelivery.com said studies show that senior citizens are fast adopting email as one of their primary methods of digital interaction and communication. The article cited a Pew Internet and American Life Project that said that 87 percent of senior citizens (age 66-74) and 82 percent of seniors age 75-plus use email and search engines. The Nielsen Company found that checking



email was the primary online activity for 88.6 percent of seniors. With these statistics, it is clear that government organizations could benefit greatly by reaching out to seniors via email.

Government organizations can greatly benefit from implementing email outreach campaigns and other digital communications efforts to engage and inform the senior citizen demographic. One benefit to email, unlike other forms of more costly communication, such as direct mail or telephone calls, people's preferences and response to emails can be tracked, allowing you to understand what is most interesting to this demographic so you can send information that is most relevant to them. Instead of waiting for senior citizens to come to your website, you could proactively send these citizens notices and news they are seeking.

Website and social media site design considerations. The Pew study shows that more than half of the senior citizens — even more than Millennials — are going online visit a government website to find information relevant to them. When tech-savvy baby boomers mature into the senior demographic, the US Census Bureau predicts nearly one in five Americans will be seniors — and likely using the internet. However, with age comes some impairments that affect the ability to see and process complex information. Governments should strive to have their internet communications be senior-friendly.

A publication titled *Age Friendly Communication: Facts, Tips and Ideas.*, contains some excellent information on ways to design online sites to be more attractive and usable for seniors. Its website checklist (pg. 26 of the publication) contains tips for typeface, writing style, use of images

and animation, and navigation that can be helpful for communicating with seniors. For example, the checklist recommends using a sans serif font in upper and lower case for the body text, for easier readability. It suggests presenting information in a clear, simple, and familiar way, and to use the active voice. It suggests supporting any icons with descriptive text, if possible.

All these tips help senior website users who may be become confused navigating a more complicated site for the information they need.

Conclusion

Start a dialogue with your government's communications manager, or with other departments, to see if you can improve communication and outreach to seniors, not only to report things that have happened, but to announce programs and meetings seniors might wish to participate in, or attend. Consider innovative ways to share information — or to partner in sharing information.

Some seniors are tech savvy, and more will be so in the next few decades. Keep in mind their information needs as you develop your web site and social media. Learn what makes website and social media site design more senior-friendly, and make some changes to your site designs, if needed.

For more information, consult the sources below. ■



Sources:

- Govdelivery. <http://www.govdelivery.com/blog/2012/07/tech-savvy-senior-citizens-on-the-rise/>
- Who Are Social Media's Newest Members? Seniors! Rescue Alert of California. Accessed March 12, 2014. <http://rescuealertofca.com/who-are-social-medias-newest-members-seniors>.
- Public Health Agency of Canada. 2010. <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/seniors-aines/publications/public/various-varies/afcomm-commavecaines/2-eng.php>
- Ryser, Laura and Halser, Greg. Communication Mechanisms for Delivering Information to Seniors in a Changing Small Town Context. *Journal of Rural and Community Development*. Volume 6, Number 1, 2011.
- Interview. Mike Brungardt. City of De Soto. March 14, 2014.

Recommendations for Communication Strategies in Reaching Seniors

Letter

Hard copy letter delivered to address

Notices and information at natural gathering places

- Doctor's offices
- Senior centers
- Public library
- Public functions
- Mall or grocery store displays / booths
- Nursing homes or senior housing

Two-way dialogue

- Education and information programs
- Meetings and presentations
- Workshops
- One-on-one meetings

Outreach via professionals / volunteers

- Public health
- Home care
- Long-term care staff
- Volunteer bureau
- Book delivery services
- Public transit services

Websites and social media

Partnering ideas

- Seniors' newsletter
- Welcome wagon package for new seniors
- Community directory
- One-stop information center

Adapted from Terrace and Area Seniors Needs Study, 2006. Cited in Communication Mechanisms for Delivering Information to Seniors in a Changing Small Town Context. *Journal of Rural and Community Development*. Volume 6, Number 1, 2011.



KDOT Korner

“Buy America” Under MAP-21: Effects on Local Agencies

By Lisa Harris

The current Federal highway bill, MAP-21, made changes to FHWA’s Buy America that affect local agencies. The Buy American Act ensures that transportation infrastructure projects are built with American-made products. The statute pertaining to Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds, 23 U.S.C. 313, states that “The Secretary of Transportation shall not obligate any funds unless steel, iron, and manufactured products used in such project are produced in the United States.”

Local agencies are affected if they are participating in a federal aid project, and also if they are using their own local funds for projects that happen to include a NEPA review. The NEPA-related requirement is new under MAP-21, and has been effective since October 1, 2012.

If one contract, then all contracts

FHWA states that:

“Section 1518 of MAP-21 amends the Buy America statute at 23 U.S.C. 313 to require the application of Buy America to all contracts eligible for assistance under title 23 within the scope of a finding, determination, or decision under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), regardless of funding source, if at least one contract within the scope of the same NEPA document is funded with Federal funding provided under Title 23.”

In other words, if one contract within the scope of a NEPA document is awarded using Federal-aid funding, then the Buy America provisions would apply to all contracts within the scope of the NEPA document, regardless of the source of funding. Even non-Federal-aid contracts under the same NEPA document will be subject to Buy America provisions.

How is this different than under the previous highway bill? We talked with Ron Seitz, chief of KDOT’s Bureau of Local Projects about this. He gave a related example in Kansas of a community that used federal local aid funds for a gateway project that included an Italian decorative metal arch in the contract. The arch did not meet Buy America provisions. Before MAP-21 was enacted, a community could have split off a component like this into a separate contract to be paid with local funds, bypassing the Buy America provisions, and that is what this community did. Now that is no longer possible.



If one activity, then all activities

If Federal funds are used for any activity within the scope of a NEPA decision, then Buy America applies to the entire project. This includes:

- environmental studies
- document preparation,
- right of way acquisition,
- preliminary engineering, and
- other non-construction work.

For any contract or agreement for such work executed after October 1, 2012, all construction contracts on that project will be subject to Buy America regardless of whether Federal funds are used in any of the contracts for construction.

Is there any wiggle room?

FHWA does recognize that it is sometimes difficult to comply with Buy America. The Buy American Act has this language to allow some flexibility:

“The Secretary of Transportation may waive the requirement if the Secretary finds that:

- (1) It would be inconsistent with the public interest;
- (2) Such materials and products are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities and of a satisfactory quality; or
- (3) Inclusion of domestic material will increase the cost of the overall project contract by more than 25 percent” (This is a standing waiver codified in regulations when alternate bidding procedures are used).

All waivers have to be posted in *Federal Register*. All proposed waivers are first posted on the FHWA’s website for a 15-day comment period prior to publishing the final decision in the *Federal Register*.

FHWA provides information to the public on the waivers they have granted. The Agency has granted 22 waivers in the last three years. You can read about these waivers at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/construction/contracts/waivers.cfm>. You can sign up to receive an automatic notification whenever the FHWA is considering issuing a Buy America waiver.

Some difficulties with compliance are difficult to address. For example, Seitz said, if you are buying equipment or a vehicle for a project, it is difficult to know if all the steel in those items is American steel. This situation does not fall neatly under the waiver eligibility. In these cases, he recommends calling him to discuss.



Buy America noncompliance / enforcement

What are the consequences of not complying with Buy America? FHWA states in a Q&A document (see link in Sources): Awarding any such non-Federal-aid highway contract on or after October 1, 2012, without applicable Buy America provisions would render all contracts within the scope of the NEPA document ineligible for Federal-aid highway funds.

How will this be enforced? Seitz said his team will continue to check for Buy America compliance for communities that receive federal aid or administer their own federal aid money with KDOT oversight. It will be up to FHWA to address any noncompliance.

Contracts awarded prior to October 1, 2012

If the contract in question was awarded before October 1, 2012, it does not need to comply with Buy America. (However, FHWA notes that any other contract within the scope of the same NEPA review awarded on or after October 1, 2012, must comply with Buy America provisions.)

For more information

For more information on Buy America and how it affects local agencies, read the Q&A document in the sources below or call Ron Seitz at (785) 296-3861. ■

Source:

- Buy America Questions and Answers. US DOT. December 20, 2012. <http://www.dot.gov/highlights/buyamerica>
- Interview. Ron Seitz. February 18, 2014.



What's New With the Kansas Road Scholar Program?

Kansas's Road Scholar Program continues to grow and as more individuals in public works and road and bridge agencies receive certificates. Road scholars complete a series of workshops in their areas of expertise — technical, supervisory, or executive. For example, each Level I road scholar attends 10 different training sessions for a total of at least 50 hours of instruction. Instruction is provided by the Kansas Association of Counties, Kansas LTAP, and the TASK Program through Kansas State University.

Counties and cities with participants currently being trained under the Program are:

Counties: Barton, Bourbon, Butler, Coffey, Grant, Harper, Kiowa, Labette, Leavenworth, Lyon, McPherson, Miami, Montgomery, Pawnee, Reno, Riley, Saline, and Stanton.

Cities: Atchison, Augusta, DeSoto, El Dorado, Haysville, Lawrence, Ottawa, Salina, Shawnee.

These are in addition to the counties and cities that do not currently have individuals training in the program but have road scholar graduates already among their staff.

This past fall, the Program awarded certificates to 19 graduates. See below. Congratulations to all! For more information on the Kansas Road Scholar Program, you can access the program's website at <http://www.ksroadscholar.org>.

Registration for the Road Scholar Program is now available online and agencies can pay for that registration by credit card if desired. We also have included an option to register for the Road Scholar Program simultaneously with workshop registration. ■



Images: Kansas LTAP

Darren Williams, Barton County (above), and Ryan Fine, Franklin County, received road scholar certificates at the Kansas County Highway Association meeting last October in Wichita, Kansas.

Fall 2013 Kansas Road Scholar Graduates

Level I Technical Skills	Level II Supervisory Skills	Level III Executive Development
Rodney Reed, City of El Dorado	Michael Hough, Allen Co.	Robert Bever, Montgomery Co.
James Lunsford, Leavenworth Co.	Darren Williams, Barton Co.	Darren Williams, Barton Co.
Doug Llamas, Leavenworth Co.	Kevin Boyce, Burlington	Darren Fishel, Saline Co.
James Meinert, Leavenworth Co.	Jason Hughey, El Dorado	
	Richard Mason, Burlington	
	Brad Meyer, City of El Dorado	
	Rodney Reed, City of El Dorado	
	Chad Bentley, City of Ottawa	
	Justin McCurdy, City of Ottawa	
	Ryan Fine, Franklin Co.	
	Jim Wright, Montgomery Co.	
	Robert Bever, Montgomery Co.	





There is No Good Way to Manage People (But We Have to Try Anyway)

By Tron Jordheim

“People are people” the old saying goes. That means everyone brings their own personal baggage with them to work. People make poor choices, act rashly and defend their own comfort zones. People have agendas all their own that often have nothing to do with the work agenda that you, as the manager, are promoting.

Sometimes the selfish and petty things people do are no surprise. Some employees repeat a behavior over and over if you let them. Infighting, jealousy, jockeying for position and defending turf are pretty normal behaviors. But sometimes the selfish and petty behavior is quite a surprise.

In contrast, every workplace has people who perform well, take care of themselves, are supportive of others on the team when needed, and keep below the radar.

The best managers try hard to motivate and guide their people to meet agreed-upon goals. Procedures, protocols and guidelines are put in place to help keep things fair and organized. Feedback, motivation and direction are given. But at the end of the day, good managers realize that there is no good way to manage people.

But since managing people is the key to any business success, you have to try anyway.

What to do?

There are many books on people management, and you may have practiced all the different styles. If you boil down all the great people management advice as much as you can, there are really only two things to do:

- Make sure your staff is getting ongoing training, feedback, correction and motivation for all their work-related behaviors.
- Leave your people alone and let them work.

The trick is to know when to do which with each person. Here are some ways you can try:

Share best practices. Try to create models of best performance and best practices for employees to learn, to copy and to aspire to. You can create goals, requirements and performance thresholds to use as measurement tools. Be fair and consistent in enforcing performance requirements and work rules and be honest with them



in your assessment of business conditions, in your communication of company policies and your feelings about their performance.

Know your people. Try to get to know each of your employees so you can find the right way to approach them, motivate and correct each of them. Spend a little time with each of your direct reports and encourage them to spend time with each of their direct reports. Spending time together

helps solidify teamwork, helps clarify any issues, and helps to make sure you and your people are being accountable to each other.

Communicate face-to-face. Stop relying on email and memos; have personal conversations with the people in your group. Allow your people to be honest with you. Spend at least a little personal time with each person every month if you can. Learn to be a good listener. You will learn a lot about how to deal with your people if you hear what they say.

Leave well enough alone. Sometimes managers feel that people can perform better and can produce more, but if employees have found a comfortable and satisfactory balance, it is best not to disturb. Resist the temptation to over-mange them.

Some days you will work hard to mold people's behavior and performance when what they really needed was to be left alone to do their jobs. Some days you will leave people alone when what they really needed was to be working with someone. Try to ask yourself each day: Who needs time from me today? Who needs to be left alone?

Conclusion

You can do your organization a lot of good by at trying to be a better manager every day. Work on best practices, get to know your people, communicate personally, and above all, leave well enough alone. If you try too hard to manage people or if you go too far in attempting to manage behavior, you'll end up throwing your hands up in the air and declaring there is no good way to manage people!

Tron Jordheim is the CMO of StorageMart, one of the world's largest privately held self-storage companies with locations across the U.S. and Canada. For more information visit <http://www.tronjordheim.com> ■

Source:

• Reprinted with permission from *Government Executive* newsletter, November 2013. <http://www.govexec.com/excellence/promising-practices/2013/11/there-no-good-way-manage-people-we-have-try-anyway/73466/?oref=river>. Thanks to Mike Bowan, FHWA Kansas Division Administrator, for suggesting this article.





A Leg Up

Alteration or Maintenance? Guidance on the Requirement to Add Curb Ramps



The requirement to provide curb ramps varies depending on whether the road work is considered alteration or maintenance.



Over the past few years, state and local governments have sought further guidance on the scope of the alterations requirement with respect to the provision of curb ramps when streets, roads or highways are being resurfaced. These questions have arisen largely due to the development of a variety of road surface treatments other than traditional road resurfacing, which generally involved the addition of a new layer of asphalt. Public entities have asked the Department of Transportation and the Department of Justice to clarify whether particular road surface treatments fall within the ADA definition of alterations, or whether they should be considered maintenance that would not trigger the obligation to provide curb ramps. The two Departments issued a joint technical assistance document to address some of those questions. This article is adapted from that document.

Where must curb ramps be provided?

Generally, curb ramps are needed wherever a sidewalk or other pedestrian walkway crosses a curb. Curb ramps must be located to ensure a person with a mobility disability can travel from a sidewalk on one side of the street, over or through any curbs or traffic islands, to the sidewalk on the other side of the street. However, the ADA does not require installation of ramps or curb ramps in the absence of a pedestrian walkway with a prepared surface for pedestrian use. Nor are curb ramps required in the absence of a curb, elevation, or other barrier between the street and the walkway.

When is resurfacing considered to be an alteration?

Resurfacing is an alteration that triggers the requirement

to add curb ramps if it involves work on a street or roadway spanning from one intersection to another, and includes overlays of additional material to the road surface, with or without milling.

Examples include, but are not limited to the following treatments or their equivalents:

- addition of a new layer of asphalt,
- reconstruction,
- concrete pavement rehabilitation and reconstruction,
- open-graded surface course,
- micro-surfacing and thin lift overlays,
- cape seals, and
- in-place asphalt recycling.

What kinds of treatments constitute maintenance?

Treatments that serve solely to seal and protect the road surface, improve friction, and control splash and spray are considered to be maintenance because they do not significantly affect the public's access to or usability of the road.

Some examples of the types of treatments that would normally be considered maintenance are:

- painting or striping lanes,
- crack filling and sealing,
- surface sealing,
- chip seals,
- slurry seals,
- fog seals,
- scrub sealing,
- joint crack seals,
- joint repairs,
- dowel bar retrofit,
- spot high-friction treatments,
- diamond grinding, and
- pavement patching.

In some cases, the combination of several maintenance treatments occurring at or near the same time may qualify as an alteration and would trigger the obligation to provide curb ramps.

What if a locality is not resurfacing an entire block, but is resurfacing a crosswalk by itself?

Crosswalks constitute distinct elements of the right-of-way intended to facilitate pedestrian traffic. Regardless of whether there is curb-to-curb resurfacing of the street or roadway in general, resurfacing of a crosswalk also requires the provision of curb ramps at that crosswalk.

Continued on next page



Curb ramp requirement: alteration or maintenance? *Continued from page 11*

For more information

To learn more about the requirement for curb ramps, read the Source for this article, below, and also consult Chapter 6 in the *ADA Best Practices Tool Kit for State and Local Governments* at <http://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/chap6toolkit.htm> ■



Source:

- Department of Justice/Department of Transportation Joint Technical Assistance on the Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act Requirements to Provide Curb Ramps when Streets, Roads, or Highways are Altered through Resurfacing. July 8, 2013. <http://www.ada.gov/doj-fhwa-ta.htm>

Getting a First-Hand Experience of Accessibility Issues



Participants in the ADA workshop received first-hand knowledge of wheelchair accessibility challenges.

A consulting firm in Mississippi turned a problem into an opportunity to provide enlightening training about ADA requirements. The firm had a contractor that was struggling to meet current standards with sidewalk and ramp construction on a local roadway project. The firm decided that its inspectors and engineers would benefit from a training course on Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) to help them address some of the challenges faced by working with existing roadways. They opened their training to engineers in the Mississippi DOT and local road agencies.

Jonathan Kiser, who developed and teaches the course, consulted the state DOTs for Mississippi and Louisiana in how they were training their employees on changes between ADAAG and PROWAG. Both agencies were using a training series hosted by the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) in association with the U.S. Access Board. Kiser used this series as the basis of his course, with input from his local ADA Citizens Advisory Committee. Members of the committee also participated in teaching the course, which included an exercise where class participants used wheelchairs to traverse sidewalks that have excessive cross slopes, significant changes in level, and intersecting grades that exceed the maximum allowed with current standards.

The wheelchair exercise was eye-opening for participants. As one attendee put it: "Knowing that it takes 50-percent more effort to use a wheelchair on a sidewalk with a 3-percent cross slope than on a 2-percent cross slope was very different than having to actually use a wheelchair on those slopes In the future, I will definitely remember the amount of effort it takes to use sidewalk ramps, traverse uneven seams and cracks in sidewalk panels, and to navigate around benches, newspaper stands, and garbage cans."

For more information on the accessibility training offered by APBP, go to <http://www.apbp.org/>

Source: Kiser, Jonathan. Putting Themselves in Their Wheels. ITE Journal. November 2013. Photo courtesy of the Jackson Mississippi Clarion-Ledger, Joe Ellis photographer.

Photo courtesy of The Clarion-Ledger / Joe Ellis

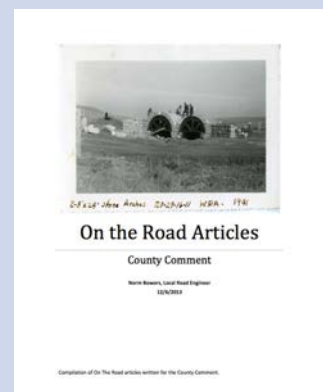
County Road Engineer Columns Now in Book Form

By Lisa Harris

If you are like me, sometimes you remember reading something you'd like to read again in a newsletter or magazine, but you can't remember which issue it was in. For the "On the Road" columns in the *County Comment*, a newsletter of the Kansas Association of Counties, this task has gotten easier. Norm Bowers, author of the column, has created a book of all of the columns published from the column's inception in August 2007 to December 2013.

You'll find a wealth of useful information here on county road maintenance and administration—257 pages worth—including a table of contents to help you find that column you are seeking. Check out this new resource at the Kansas County Highway Association document center at:

<http://www.kansascountyhighway.org/DocumentCenter/View/258>





New Playbook Can Help You Sell Pavement Preservation By Lisa Harris



Using the Playbook will help you “move the ball down the field” for a topic that rarely gets center stage.



Does the thought of building public support for infrastructure maintenance make you want to cheer “Game on!” or run for the locker room? Not everyone has the skill set for presenting information in a persuasive way. A new national report, titled *Communicating the Value of Preservation: A Playbook*, provides guidance for communicating the value of highway system maintenance and preservation. It includes many examples of communications strategies, along with photographs of communications materials, that agencies can use to present to city/county managers, elected officials, and the public to make the case for allocating resources to preserve and maintain the public’s investment in infrastructure.

The Playbook is co-authored by fellow Kansan Kyle Schneweis, formerly of KDOT and now with the High Street Consulting Group. It is written with state DOTs in mind, but the advice can easily carry over to local agencies. It is designed to be used by engineers, planners, public affairs officials, and anyone else who seeks guidance on how to close the gap between understanding the importance of highway preservation and being able to successfully communicate it.

There is something for every agency

in the Playbook. You will find basic strategies, like keeping your message succinct, to more complex strategies involving market research to target specific audience segments.

The Playbook teaches how to sharpen communication skills by getting organized around four simple and connected building blocks:

1) audience identification, 2) message design, 3) message delivery and 4) market research. And it provides creative ideas for setting up your own preservation campaign based on the unique factors in your community that should shape your communications—such as infrastructure conditions, funding levels, and political considerations.

The Playbook notes that sometimes road officials grumble that lack of public or political support for preservation contradicts the powerful evidence for its importance. But, the report also states that, at least at the state level, the case for preservation is usually not forcefully pressed. The researchers surveyed state DOTs on their communications practices and found that most agencies, if they are communicating about this topic at all, tend to rely on “infrequent and haphazard distribution of overly technical messages.” They rarely use all message delivery channels (particularly new media options) in a coordinated “surround sound” fashion, and their communication tends to be sporadic rather than a constant drum beat.

The researchers said tremendous opportunities exists for DOTs to update their communication habits. This is true for local agencies as well.

For example, a communications campaign for preservation might contain:



- Presentations
- Logos, slogans, and billboards
- Fact sheets and brochures
- Op-eds and press releases
- Blast emails
- Website
- Social media

Do you think you are already doing a good job with communicating about preservation, but you want a second opinion? Take the *Communication Strategy Self-Assessment* in the Playbook.

Do you think that face-to-face conversations about preservation with key stakeholders would be a good strategy for your community? Read the *Stakeholder Interview Guide* in the Playbook for ideas about how to approach those conversations and questions to be sure to ask the people with whom you meet.

The Playbook makes a strong case for rethinking preservation communication practices, and provides the tools needed to make changes. You can download a copy of the Playbook from the link in the Source below. ■



Above, this simple slogan, shown in the Playbook, tells the preservation message.



The Playbook strongly advises agencies to align communication practices with agency-wide priorities. For example, saying that preservation is a top priority, but burying information about highway conditions in a hard-to-find part of your agency’s website (if anywhere) is incongruent. The stated priority is not supported by the communication approach.

Source:

- Crossett, Joe, and Schneweis, Kyle. *Communicating the Value of Preservation: A Playbook*. 2012. National Cooperative Highway Research Program Report 72. http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp_rpt_742.pdf



MORE

By Lisa Harris

See download / ordering information on next page.

Stressing Our Roads – Revised

This brochure describes how changes in agricultural operations over the past 30 years are having a dramatic impact on Kansas's road system and our ability to maintain it. It describes what farmers can do and what road agencies can do to address the problem. 2 pages. Kansas LTAP. March 2014.

Low Cost Solutions and Ideas

A summary of some National ALTAP "Build a Better Mousetrap" entries, including similar information for an LTAP Region 7 "You Show Us" competition and the district winners from the 2012 Missouri DOT Innovation Challenge. Iowa County Engineers Research Focus Group. 137 pages. February 2013.

Best Practices for Road Weather Management

This report contains 27 case studies of systems in 22 states that improve roadway operations under inclement weather conditions. Each case study includes a general description of the system, system components, operational procedures, outcomes, implementation issues, as well as contact information and references. 92 pages. FHWA. June 2012.

CALENDAR

Visit our website for even more training calendar listings and to register for workshops. Go to <http://www.ksltap.org> and click on "View the LTAP Calendar."

2014 April-September

■ TRAINING:

Gravel Road Maintenance – ▲L1

April 9 in Cimarron
April 10 in Hoxie
April 16 in Marysville
April 17 in Junction City
April 18 in Lawrence

Traffic Impact Studies – ▲L3e

April 29 in Wichita

The Supervisor's Role in Enhancing Cooperative Work Relationships – ▲L2

May 13 in Topeka
May 15 in Salina

HSM Lite

May 13 in Olathe
November 4 in Wichita

MUTCD for Technicians – ▲L1

May 20 in Hays

Fundamentals of Leadership – ▲L3r

June 11, Abilene

Legal Aspects of Supervision – ▲L2r

June 24, Iola
June 26, Manhattan

Management of Intergovernmental Relations – ▲L3

July 17 in Topeka

Supervisory Techniques for Problem Solving – ▲L2r

August 5, Ottawa
August 7, Hutchinson

County/City Government 101 – ▲L1r

August 28, Emporia

Service Excellence in Local Government – ▲L1r

August 28, Emporia

Low Cost Safety Improvements

September 16 in Dodge City

Road Safety Assessment – ▲L3e

September 30 in Pittsburg

■ UPCOMING MEETINGS:

Kansas County Highway Association Spring Meeting

May 5-7 in Dodge City
Call Michel O'Hare, (785) 524-4656

APWA Mid-Am Meeting

May 21-23 in Overland Park
<http://kansas.apwa.net/>

APWA-KS Roundtable

September 11 in Junction City
Call Ray Ibarra, (785) 238-7142

MINK Local Roads Regional Meeting

September 24-25 in St. Joseph, MO
Call Lisa Harris, (785) 864-2590

For information on calendar items or to suggest a topic for an LTAP workshop, contact: Kristin Kelly, LTAP Training Coordinator, 785/864-2594, kbkelly@ku.edu.

▲L1 = KS Road Scholar Program Level 1 — Technical skills required course.

▲L2 = KS Road Scholar Program Level 2 — Supervisory skills courses are provided by the Kansas Association of Counties. Go to <http://www.kansascounties.org> and click on "Education Program."

▲L3-r = KS Road Scholar Program Level 3 — Master Road Scholar required course.

▲L3-e = KS Road Scholar Program Level 3 — Master Road Scholar elective course.



KS LTAP

GRAVEL ROADS WORKSHOP — REGISTER NOW — SPACE IS LIMITED

This training has been designed especially for individuals who operate motor graders. County, city, state, and township motor grader operators and others who maintain non-paved roads are invited to attend. The morning session will cover topics as gravel road maintenance and design, correct roadway shape, shaping the roadway, good surface gravel and dust control, aggregate, dust abatement, traffic control, and best practices for granular-surfaced roads including equipment and operations. The afternoon session will include an equipment demonstration at an outdoor site. Thank you host agencies!



FREE ROAD & BRIDGE RESOURCES

Check off your selections, fill in the bottom portion, and return this form to:
Kansas LTAP Materials Request, 1536 W. 15th St., M2SEC Building, Room G520, Lawrence, Kansas 66045 or fax to 785/864-3199



TRAINING GUIDES & REPORTS

You are free to keep these unless otherwise noted.
Or you can download at the links provided.

Stressing Our Roads – Revised

See description on page 14. Kansas LTAP. Brochure.
Free download at <http://www2.ku.edu/~kutc/pdffiles/stressingourroads2014.pdf>
or request hard copy. Use form below.

Low Cost Solutions and Ideas

See description on page 14. Iowa County Engineers
Research Focus Group. 137 pages. February 2013.
<http://www.iowaltap.iastate.edu/documents/resources/MousetrapsLowCostBooklet.pdf>

Best Practices for Road Weather Management

See description on page 14. 92 pages. FHWA. June 2012.
<http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop12046/fhwahop12046.pdf>



EQUIPMENT LOANS

We offer the following items for loan to local highway agencies.
Contact mgivechi@ku.edu for counter boards and weaver@ku.edu for the Safety Edge shoe. There could be a waiting list for these items.

Safety Edge Paving Shoe. This Advant-Edge shoe attaches to a paver with a universal bracket, provided with the shoe.

Turning Movement Counter Board DB-400, Jamar Technologies, Inc. A basic model for recording turning movements at intersections. The board is lightweight and comes with its own case.

Turning Movement Counter Board TDC-8, Jamar Technologies, Inc. Can be used to do turning movement counts, classification counts, gap studies, stop-delay studies, speed studies, and travel time studies. The board is lightweight and comes with its own case.

Our library of free reports and training videos is searchable online. Visit <http://www.ksltap.org>. Click on the "Lending Library" to search the catalog and place your order.



REQUEST FORM

- send materials indicated address correction add to LTAP Newsletter mail list send Road Scholar Program brochure
 add to KS LTAP email discussion list

Name _____ Phone number _____

Position _____ E-mail address _____

Agency _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip+4 _____

*For requests outside the United States: After receiving your request, we will notify you of the postage cost and will send materials after receiving payment for postage.

The University of Kansas
Kansas LTAP Newsletter
KU Transportation Center
1536 W. 15th Street
M2SEC Building, Room G520
Lawrence, Kansas 66045-7609

Return Service Requested

SAVE A TREE!

If you would rather link to our newsletter electronically instead of receiving a hard copy, send your email address to LHarris@ku.edu and we'll send a notice to you when each issue is published.

Is your mailing information correct?

Please fax changes to (785) 864-3199 or email Lisa Harris at LHarris@ku.edu.

 **KANSAS LTAP**

Let us help you find the answers to your transportation-related questions.

Kansas LTAP, 1536 W. 15th St., M2SEC Bldg. Room G520, Lawrence, KS, 66045 Call 785.864.5658 Fax 785.864.3199 <http://www.ksltap.org>

The Kansas Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) is an educational, technology transfer and service program of the Kansas University Transportation Center (KUTC), under the umbrella of the KU Transportation Research Institute. Its purpose is to provide information to local government highway departments and their personnel and contractors by translating into understandable terms the latest technologies in the areas of roads, highways and bridges.

The *Kansas LTAP Newsletter* is published quarterly and is free to counties, cities, townships, tribal governments, road districts and others with transportation responsibilities. Editorial decisions are made by Kansas LTAP. Engineering practices and procedures set forth in this newsletter shall be implemented by or under the supervision of a licensed professional engineer in accordance with Kansas state statutes dealing with the technical professions.

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