

Mike Perkins is Our Newest Local Field Liaison

By Toni Dixon, Kansas LTAP



Kansas LTAP welcomed Michael Perkins to its field team earlier this year! Mike brings 40 years of field and management experience in highway, road, and bridge construction, maintenance, and public works response to emergency events.

Mike joins Clark Rusco as Kansas LTAP expands the services of our Local Field Liaisons (LFL) across the state, working with cities and counties. Mike assists public works agencies with road safety improvements and implementation, operational issues, department leadership turnover, and more.

Mike's career began with KDOT in the Kansas City Metro area, working up to Area Superintendent responsible for the highway system in Johnson County. He then moved to local government; he became Operations Division Manager for Douglas

[Kansas LTAP Newsletter](#)

County Public Works, then Street Division Manager for the City of Lawrence. Mike has worked with local public officials responding to emergency management events, including Hurricane Katrina, and the Greensburg and Chapman tornado cleanups.

This past January Mike was serving on an emergency advisory visit to the Philippines, consulting on preparations the country might take regarding potential earthquakes. Just a day into his trip, the Taal volcano erupted on the island of Luzon. The volcano is in a heavily populated area just 45 miles from the capital city of Manila. Taal's eruption, spewing lava and ash, caused the evacuation of about 8,000 people, while scientists recorded more than 600 volcanic earthquakes. During his trip, Mike said ash was falling from the skies, something he had never experienced before.

Mike and his team completed their advisory visit, despite Taal's rumblings, and returned with more stories to tell than just the travails of a 14-hour plane flight.

Asked about his observations as he began the LFL position, Mike said, "The local cities and counties I have had a chance to visit with have a common theme: over half have an idea about training available from Kansas LTAP, but considerably fewer understand the Road Scholar Program concept."

Based on feedback LTAP and Mike have heard for a long time, LTAP classes have not been offered close-by, so it has been hard to send people to attend them, and most people don't realize all the resources and materials LTAP offers in addition to training.

"That being said, all have a high opinion of LTAP," Mike said, "but, ironically, few really understand our role."

As a result of that feedback, LTAP is making a big effort to bring the training closer to our customers (once the COVID-19 is over and we can all go to work and travel again) and work to provide more online training. LTAP is also working to spread the news, through our website, social media and more, of the additional resources, equipment, online training and materials that are available.

As he takes on the role of Local Field Liaison, Mike said, “I would like to be a resource that the road supervisor or director can bounce ideas off of. I’d like to be the person who can act as a bridge between the operations/road and bridge folks and the engineering folks. For too long it seems like it has been ‘us and them.’ I think the LFL can be that bridge and help all parties see common solutions.”

“In the end, I want to help our LTAP grow into one that can bring training and resources to our people, the men and women who every day are working to provide a transportation system that serves all Kansans, no matter if it is in the rural areas of the state or the major metropolitan areas.”

To reach Mike to learn more about LTAP’s free Local Field Liaison services, contact him at ksltapmike@gmail.com.