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Are We There Yet?

South Carolina Transportation Technology Transfer Service

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Routes to the Ready South Carolina's Proactive Approach to Hurricane Evacuation

South Carolina's Atlantic coastline of 187 miles is home to approximately 1.1 million people and sustains an additional 500,000 visitors per week during peak hurricane season. Most, if not all, rely on our state's roadway system to bring them to the coast and also to evacuate them should it be necessary.

With the exception of two major east-west routes built in the last forty years, the number of roads available for evacuation has not changed in almost 100 years. This limited number of roads presents evacuation managers with a challenging task when they must quickly move residents and visitors out of the path of an approaching hurricane.

The public expects state and local agencies to handle the evacuation management task with skill and success. Anything else is unacceptable and could result in lives lost and the public's reluctance to participate in future critical evacuations. For an evacuation to be successful, officials know that two major benchmarks must be met. First, acceptable evacuation travel times must be established. Second, acceptable vehicular speeds must be maintained throughout the evacuation in order to meet these acceptable evacuation travel times.

South Carolina's coast is divided into three evacuation zones. Evacuation routes for each zone were established many years ago. However, in the late 1990s evacuation managers realized that major

traffic management improvements were necessary.

A common problem was found in each of the three zones. A number of the older evacuation routes intersected one another. As a result, traffic on one route would have to stop and wait for traffic on the intersecting roadway until directed by law enforcement to proceed. This greatly impaired the efficiency of the individual routes.

To make matters worse, no formal plans existed to reverse the eastbound lanes of some multi-lane routes for westbound evacuation traffic. Such reversals can greatly increase capacity during an evacuation.

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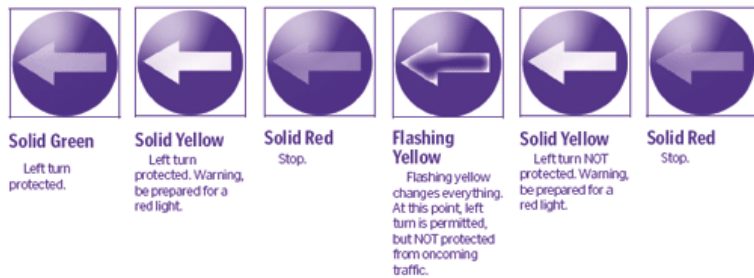


The LTAP Center for South Carolina



New-fangled Traffic Light Gets Trial Run

TRAFFIC SIGNAL AIMS TO END CONFUSION



Three years ago, Ballantyne motorists became guinea pigs for a newfangled traffic light.

Instead of seeing a traditional green arrow when making left turns from Johnston Road onto Interstate 485, they've dealt with a flashing yellow arrow.

That twist—perhaps the first major change to traffic signals in 50 years—is slowly being introduced in the Charlotte area. In a decade or two, it could be common across the nation, one expert said.

The new light was born in 1997 after engineers worried that too many motorists were confusing a green “ball” light as permission to make a protected left turn.

A solid green arrow tells motorists they can make a protected turn—that they are protected because lights for oncoming traffic are red. A solid green ball means a left turn is permitted, but the driver must yield to oncoming traffic.

The new light replaces the green ball for left turns with a flashing yellow arrow to signal that motorists must yield. Here's how the cycle of the Johnston Road and I-485 light often works in rush hour:

- Green arrow: protected left turn.
- Solid yellow arrow: Protected left turn is ending. Be prepared to stop.
- Red arrow: stop.

The red arrow then changes for the second part of the cycle:

- Flashing yellow arrow: left turn is permitted, but not protected. Drivers must yield.
- Solid yellow arrow— All left turns ending. Be prepared to stop.
- Red arrow—Stop.

The new flashing yellow arrow could startle motorists. The other part of the cycle that's potentially confusing is the steady yellow arrow, which depending on when it's used in the cycle can be interpreted two different ways.

On a traditional light, a solid yellow arrow means you have

a second or two to get through the intersection on a protected left turn.

In the new lights, when a solid yellow comes after the green arrow, it means you have another second or two to make a protected turn before the red arrow. When the solid yellow arrow comes after the flashing yellow arrow, it means you have another second or two to make a permitted—but not protected—left turn.

“We want to take this slow,” said Liz Babson, a traffic engineer with the Charlotte Department of Transportation. “We don't want to mess around with this too much.”

The city, in collaboration with UNC Charlotte, is collecting data on accident rates at the affected intersections.

The first flashing yellow arrow light in the state was at I-485 and Johnston Road, and went into use in September 2004. The city said there was a reduction in crashes soon after the light was installed, but didn't have any specifics.

The reduction in crashes also could be attributed to more people getting used to the intersection, officials said.

Last fall, the Charlotte Department of Transportation installed one at the intersection of Fifth and Seventh streets. It recently added the new-style lights at Mallard Creek Church Road and I-85, Sunset Road and I-77, and Reames and Sunset roads.

Trimmers Barber Shop on Sunset Road is about 100 yards from one of the new flashing yellow lights. Barbers have noticed the new signal, but weren't sure what it meant.

“At first it confused me,” said Jerome Jolly. “I was wondering why they did it—it just went from a straight green to a flashing yellow light. It didn't change much.”

Said barber Jason Thompson: “At first I thought the light was malfunctioning.”

The next Charlotte intersections to get the lights are Charlottetowne and Kings Drive and the intersection of Ballantyne Commons Parkway, John Delaney Drive and Durant Boulevard.

The city may install the new lights on new intersections; most existing lights will wait until replacement is needed. A typical traffic light costs about \$1,500 to install. A new-style signal costs about \$2,100, the city said.

There are 300 intersections nationwide that have the flashing yellow light, according to the Transportation Research Board, a division of the National Research

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Fasten Those Seat Belts, Change is on the Way

What may lie ahead for America's travelers in 2008 and beyond?

Looking back to 1958 is not only nostalgic, it gives a glimpse of life-changing road signs just starting to emerge.

In 1958 you could purchase a brand-new Edsel for \$2,200, and fill up the tank with gas costing 30 cents a gallon. Sounds like a bargain, but then the average worker only made \$5,500 a year, and anyone earning the minimum wage got paid a buck an hour.

Foreign cars began to appear on the scene with the arrival of Toyotas and Datsuns. Intel developed the first Microchip. (And Elvis was inducted into the Army.)

As the Interstate Highway System construction was beginning, the nation's population was about 180 million. Some 80 million vehicles traveled 800 billion miles, for the most part on two-lane roads. And the United States had its sights firmly fixed on the sky, with the creation of NASA and a national commitment to launching man into space and safely returning him home.

Today, we have our own road signs to the future. We've experienced since the 60's a ten-fold increase in fuel costs, and there is no expectation that fuel prices will decline. Our population is 300 million, and the vehicle fleet is 237 million. Annual travel in 2006 was three trillion miles. More people, more travel, and still more to come.

In the years ahead, Americans will be making some pocket-book decisions on how they travel, and what kind of fuel economy they will seek in buying a new car. The newly passed energy bill will alter the kind of choices we may have.

High fuel prices also have implications for the highways we drive on. Construction costs have soared along with fuel costs, forcing states to delay projects and rethink how to pay for needed improvements. Federal coffers, supported by a user fee of 18.3 cents a gallon not changed since

1993, are inadequate and the Highway Trust Fund may run into bankruptcy in 2009, forcing a 40 percent cut in federal highway spending.

2008 will be a pivotal year for defining the future of transportation and new thinking is required. In many states, blue-ribbon commissions are searching for ways to meet transportation funding shortfalls and provide improvements to relieve congestion, accommodate growth and support businesses and industries that provide jobs.

At the national level, the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission will assess America's transportation investment needs and in January recommend program reforms. Reforms in response to the "Bridge to Nowhere" may well become the bridge to a new way of doing business in transportation, as Congress develops future highway and transit legislation.

Congress will be on the hot seat to find solutions before the current federal highway and transit programs run out of money in October, 2008. Continued concern over global climate change will prompt efforts to reduce emissions without stifling economic growth by artificial limits on travel.

The Interstate System, built in the 60's and 70's, is overdue for a makeover that can reduce urban congestion, connect new population centers, accommodate a coming tsunami of freight, repair and improve what we have built, and reduce the death toll on our highways. The kind of technological advances that enable us to carry the world in our pocket, can be integrated into the highway system to eliminate collisions, warn drivers of traffic jams and offer alternative routes.

Whether at the state or national level, the road signs to the future all state the same thing: "Work Zone Ahead, Proceed with Vision."

John Horsley, Executive Director

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

(cont. from page 2)

Council.

Crash data showed "safety improved with the flashing yellow," said Ray Derr of the Transportation Research Board.

Solid Green
Left turn protected.

Solid Red
Stop.

Solid Yellow
Left turn protected. Warning, be prepared for a red light.

Solid Red
Stop.

Flashing Yellow
Flashing yellow changes everything. At this point, left turn is permitted, but NOT protected from oncoming traffic.

Solid Yellow
Left turn NOT protected. Warning, be prepared for a red light. Traffic signal aims to end confusion.

STEVE HARRISON

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(cont. from page 1)

Finally, motorists all along the coast were left to their own wishes with regards to which route they would use when instructed to evacuate. This resulted in some routes being over capacity and others being severely underutilized.

To address these concerns, the South Carolina Emergency Management Division (SCEMD), which coordinates all emergency management functions statewide, requested that the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) and the South Carolina Highway Patrol (SCHP) work cooperatively to improve the routing and management of hurricane evacuation traffic along the state's coast. This was a logical approach in addressing the problem and has produced a much improved operational plan.

A route evaluation team consisting of an SCDOT traffic engineer and an SCHP captain inventoried all routes leaving the coast to determine the most direct paths away from the storm's danger. The evaluation team was especially interested in isolating routes that paralleled each other and did not intersect. This new approach to selecting evacuation routes eventually resulted in significant changes to the old routing system.

Additionally, the team examined all new routes to ensure that they could carry motorists at least 100 miles from the coast. The older routes often failed to meet this requirement.

At the same time, the route evaluation team paid special attention to traffic operational issues and determined points where law enforcement presence would be needed. They also established locations for evacuation trailblazing signing.

Throughout the study, the route evaluation team met with county and municipal officials and law enforcement to obtain their input on the new routes. These meetings were essential to the project's success since local law enforcement is heavily involved in manning numerous traffic control points along evacuation routes.

As the entire coastal evacuation route identification process was occurring, a parallel effort was underway to assign specific routes to the three coastal areas. These route assignments provide specific geographic areas with predetermined paths away from the coast. Evacuees now have specific route instructions on how best to depart from their home or vacation location and head inland. No longer is an evacuee's route selection left to chance. These route assignments are designed to ensure that all evacuation route roadway capacity is utilized to the fullest—an essential traffic management ingredient for successful evacuations.

Coincidental with the establishment of the new coastal evacuation routes was the birth of the SCDOT's Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS). The development of ITS began somewhat differently in South Carolina than in most states. Funding for ITS on selected routes in South Carolina was almost nonexistent and had to come from the SCDOT's existing budget or from new highway construction project funds. We also did not have the funds to construct a state of the art Traffic Management Center (TMC). With all of this in mind we began using a rather unique approach.

We were extremely interested in applying ITS devices to monitor roads that were evacuation routes, but we wanted to do this in a manner that would also allow us to use the technology to serve our everyday traffic management needs. We began by placing video cameras and portable changeable message signs (CMS) at critical locations based upon evacuation and coastal traffic needs. This plan worked well, as in every case these locations had high tourist traffic and were prime evacuation monitoring points.

We carved out a 25' x 25' room in the basement of the SCDOT Headquarters building in Columbia to serve as our state TMC. Working within a tight budget, much of the work was done in-house by Traffic Engineering and Information Technology Services staff. For example, the video wall was built by our employees. We still operate out of this center today with hopes of a replacement in the near future. Our hours of operation were weekdays in the beginning, but today we are staffed 24/7. The point is this: we put our funds into ITS devices on the street rather than into a new TMC. We really had no choice, as we had to be able to manage traffic in realtime for the next hurricane season.

In the Northern coastal area, which includes the famous Myrtle Beach Grand Strand, we have 25 highway video cameras, 8 portable CMS, 6 permanent overhead CMS, and 6 Highway Advisory Radios (HAR). We use the HAR to convey more detailed traffic messages than can be displayed on the CMS. All of the CMS and HAR have specific programmed messages that are used when an evacuation occurs. We have the capability to alter these messages when necessary. All video is transmitted to the SCDOT Headquarters TMC through leased commercial communication networks.

The Central coastal area where Charleston is located features 58 highway video cameras, 25 portable CMS, 13 permanent overhead CMS, and 11 HAR. In this area, I-26 is a major evacuation route that can be reversed from Charleston to Columbia—a distance of 100 miles. We took advantage of an I-26 widening project to install ITS devices along a portion of this interstate. ITS equipment was also

installed during the construction of the new Ravenel Bridge over the Cooper River in Charleston. Not only are these ITS installations vital to evaluating evacuation traffic, but they provide critical around-the-clock information for the daily traffic management of these facilities.

In the Southern coastal area, where Hilton Head and Beaufort are located, SCDOT partnered with Beaufort County in the creation of an ITS. Beaufort County Emergency Management Division has been proactive in its desire to employ ITS to manage everyday traffic and evacuation traffic. As a result, 34 highway video cameras, 5 portable CMS, 1 permanent CMS, 5 HAR, have been installed. These devices are operated and maintained by Beaufort County, but video is fed to the SCDOT Headquarters TMC for our daily information and use during evacuations.

In each of the above areas, a local TMC exists that manages the day-to-day duties associated with ITS. However, during an evacuation, the State TMC at SCDOT Headquarters can take control of all devices. SCDOT also has 175 video cameras, 52 portable CMS, 26 permanent CMS, and 12 HAR in the five remaining inland metropolitan areas of the state that are served by interstates that carry evacuation traffic. These devices can be controlled both by local TMCs and the State TMC.

Furthermore, we have employed a rather unique satellite communication system to communicate with our portable and permanent CMS statewide. This system allows us to replace the cell phone communications in our portable signs and supplement landline communication in our permanent signs. The end result is much faster CMS activation. This system not only benefits our evacuation efforts but speeds the display of AMBER ALERT messages throughout the year.

In addition to the above ITS equipment, the SCDOT operates its incident management teams, known as the State Highway Emergency Program (SHEP), in all coastal evacuation areas and on interstates in major urban areas statewide. There are a total of 68 SHEP responders. During everyday operations, SHEP assists emergency responders when incidents occur on our major roadways and offers services to motorists with disabled vehicles. During a hurricane evacuation, these valuable units are stationed along evacuation routes to ensure these roadways remain free of traffic flow restrictions. To increase efficiency, SHEP units are equipped with radios that allow communications with the Highway Patrol.

SCDOT uses permanent traffic count stations on evacuation routes to ascertain traffic volumes and speed of travel. To determine how well traffic is flowing, the SCDOT, SCHP, and SCEMD compare evacuation count information to “normal” everyday traffic volumes and speeds. We also

receive count data from Georgia and Florida regarding northbound motorists on I-95. This information assists us in judging I-95 traffic volume capabilities through South Carolina when hurricanes strike to our south.

SCEMD, SCDOT, and SCHP have vigorously embraced roadway lane reversals on major roads leading from each of the coastal areas. The obvious reason for lane reversals is to increase roadway capacity, thereby improving evacuation travel times. As noted in our discussion of the Central coastal area, we early on established lane reversals for I-26 between Charleston and Columbia. Presently, SCDOT, SCHP, and local law enforcement are prepared to affect a total of six separate lane reversal plans away from South Carolina’s coast. The total distance of these lane reversals is 170 miles.

In South Carolina, the Governor makes the decision to evacuate. He receives information from SCEMD regarding traffic, the progress of the storm, and coastal population demographics to assist him in making the decision. ITS plays a vital role in gathering the necessary information that is processed by the SCDOT and SCHP in the State Emergency Operations Center. The Governor also receives input from each of the effected coastal counties to help him with his decision. Communication among all of those involved in the evacuation process is the key to a successful event.

All of the ITS information that is gathered by the SCDOT can be transmitted to the Governor for his review. This information is vital to him as he makes his decision for an evacuation. Our Governor is very much aware of SCDOT’s ITS capabilities and supports our efforts of refinement and expansion.

Each June, SCEMD, SCDOT, and SCHP conduct a field exercise to test our evacuation readiness. Personnel and traffic control equipment are deployed at locations along key reversal routes to check timing and correctness of method. Realistic problems are simulated, and both law enforcement and SCDOT crews must demonstrate how they would react to unexpected challenges that might occur during an actual hurricane evacuation.

ITS is an essential part of South Carolina’s Hurricane Evacuation plan. Everyone involved in hurricane evacuation management is grateful for the real-time added insight that ITS provides. Just as important, however, are the strong relationships that are built among transportation engineers, law enforcement officers, emergency management officials, and local governments as we put into place our evacuation plans. These two elements combined with constant preparation characterize South Carolina’s evacuation readiness for a hurricane that is certain to come. ▼

Is Your Construction Project a Victim of Crime?

“Red flag” indicators offer insights to help contracting officers, project managers, and others detect fraud schemes.

by Jim H. Crumpacker

The consequences of fraud within the transportation community can be staggering—with millions of dollars potentially siphoned off from agency budgets each year. Such fraud also can result in opportunity costs, loss of public trust in transportation officials and programs, project delays, increased costs, deployment of inferior transportation products or systems, funding shortfalls, and unmet program goals. All of these results adversely affect the entire transportation network. In recent years, the U.S. Department of Transportation’s (USDOT) Office of Inspector General (OIG) has noted that transportation officials and project managers are devoting more attention to mechanisms that detect and prevent fraud.

Special agents in OIG are responsible for investigating fraud schemes that involve Federal funds and programs. Brief descriptions of these schemes, along with sample “red flag” indicators for each scheme, are offered here as a tool for transportation professionals to help them detect fraud when doing business on behalf of the American public. It is important to note that the presence of one or more indicators does not necessarily prove fraud, nor are the indicators shown all-inclusive for each of the schemes described.

Bid Rigging and Collusion

In bid rigging and collusion, contractors misrepresent that they are competing against each other when, in fact, they agree to cooperate on the winning bid to increase job



Photo: USDOT

(Above) OIG special agents occasionally use concealed recording devices during investigations involving allegations of fraud and corruption.

profit. Watch for:

- Unusual bid patterns: too close, too high, round numbers, or identical winning margins or percentages
- Different contractors making identical errors in contract bids
- Bid prices dropping when a new bidder enters the competition
- Rotation of winning bidders by job, type of work, or geographical area
- Losing bidders hired as subcontractors
- Apparent connections between bidders: common addresses, personnel, or telephone numbers
- Losing bidders submitting identical line item bid amounts on nonstandard items

Materials Overcharging

Under this fraud scheme, a contractor misrepresents how much construction material was used on the job and then is paid for excess material to increase job profit. Watch for:

- Discrepancies between contractor- provided quantity documentation and observed data, including yield calculations
- Refusal or inability to provide supporting documentation
- Contractor consistently loading job materials into equipment away from inspector oversight
- Truck weight tickets or plant production records with altered or missing information
- Photocopies of quantity documentation where originals are expected
- Irregularities in color or content of weight slips or other contractor documents used to calculate pay quantities

Time Overcharging

In a time overcharging scheme, a consultant or contractor misrepresents the distribution of employee labor on jobs in order to charge for more work hours, or a higher overhead rate, to increase profit. Watch for:

- Unauthorized alterations to time—cards and other source records
- Billed hours and dollars consistently at or near budgeted amounts
- Timecards filled out by supervisors, not by employees
- Photocopies of timecards where originals are expected
- Inconsistencies between consultant’s labor distribution records and employee timecards

Product Substitution

In a scheme involving product substitution, a contractor misrepresents the product used in order to reduce costs

for construction materials. Watch for:

- Any mismarking or mislabeling of products and materials
- Contractor restricting or avoiding inspection of goods or services upon delivery
- Contractor refusing to provide supporting documentation regarding production or manufacturing
- Photocopies of necessary certification, delivery, and production records where originals are expected
- Irregularities in signatures, dates, or quantities on delivery documents
- High rate of rejections, returns, or failures
- Test record reflecting no failures or a high failure rate but contract is on time and profitable
- Unsigned certifications

Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) Business Fraud

Under this fraud scheme, a contractor misrepresents who performed the contract work in order to increase job profit while appearing to be in compliance with contract goals for involvement of minority- or women-owned businesses. Watch for:

- Minority owner lacking background, expertise, or equipment to perform subcontract work
- Employees shuttling back and forth between prime contractor and minority-owned business payrolls
- Business names on equipment and vehicles covered with paint or magnetic signs
- Orders and payment for necessary supplies made by individuals not employed by minority-owned business
- Prime contractor facilitated purchase of minority-owned business
- Minority-owned business owner never present at job site
- Prime contractor always uses the same minority-owned business

Quality-Control Testing Fraud

In this scheme, a contractor misrepresents the results of quality control (QC) tests to earn contract incentives falsely or to avoid production shutdown in order to increase profits or limit costs. Watch for:

- Contractor employees regularly taking or labeling QC samples away from inspector oversight
- Contractor insisting on transporting QC samples from the construction site to the lab
- Contractor not maintaining QC samples for later quality assurance (QA) testing
- Contractor challenging results or attempting to intimidate QA inspectors who obtain conflicting results
- Photocopies of QC test results where originals are expected
- Alterations or missing signatures on QC test results

Bribery

Bribery occurs when a contractor misrepresents the cost of performing work by compensating a government official for permitting contract overcharges to increase contractor profit. Watch for:

- Other government inspectors at the job site noticing a pattern of preferential contractor treatment
- Government official having a lifestyle exceeding his or her salary
- Contract change orders lacking sufficient justification
- Oversight officials socializing with, or having business relationships with, contractors or their families

Kickbacks

In kickback schemes, a contractor or subcontractor misrepresents the cost of performing work by secretly paying a fee for being awarded the contract and therefore inflating the job cost to the government. Watch for:

- Unexplained or unreasonable limitations on the number of potential subcontractors contracted for bid or offer
- Continuing awards to subcontractors with poor performance records
- Nonaward of subcontract to lowest bidder
- “No-value-added” technical specifications that dictate contract awards to particular companies

Conflicts of Interest

In fraud involving conflict of interest, a contracting or oversight official misrepresents that he or she is impartial in business decisions when he or she has an undisclosed financial interest in a contractor or consultant who inflates the job cost to the government. Watch for:

- Unexplained or unusual favoritism shown to a particular contractor or consultant
- Government official disclosing confidential bid information to a contractor or assisting the contractor in preparing the bid
- Employee having discussions about employment with a current or prospective contractor or consultant
- Close socialization with and acceptance of inappropriate gifts, travel, or entertainment from a contractor
- Vendor or consultant address being incomplete or matching employee’s address
- Government official leasing or renting equipment to a contractor for performing contract work

False Statements and Claims

False statements or claims made “knowingly and willfully” constitute fraud. Knowledge is defined as (1) actual knowledge of falsity, (2) deliberate ignorance of truth or falsity, or (3) reckless disregard of truth or falsity. Watch for:

- Discrepancies between reported facts and observed data and supporting documentation

(cont. on page 10)

Safety Zone



South Carolina Sees Reduction in Workzone Accidents during Increased Construction Phase

In 1999, the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) ambitiously contracted to complete 27 years of highway construction in a seven-year period, quadrupling construction with an anticipated resulting increase in work zone crashes, injuries and fatalities.

Statistically, the impact of the accelerated construction schedule realized a 30 % increase in work zone crashes between 2001 and 2002. Injuries increased by 23.7%, clearly demonstrating a need for a focused, ongoing approach to reducing work zone incidents.

In response, SCDOT implemented an extensive Work Zone Safety program from 2002 through 2005 that included statewide public information and education campaigns, retreats, teleconferences, a statewide tour of the National Work Zone Memorial, worker training, presentations and an aggressive High Visibility Enforcement Program. SCDOT partnered with FHWA, the State's Department of Public Safety, local law enforcement agencies, highway contractors, and other governmental organizations using Federal funding to implement massive informational campaigns conveying a zero tolerance message for speeding in work zones.

Extensive training was also provided for highway workers to improve consistency in work zone operations. While the goal was to reduce work zone crashes and fatalities by a minimum of 7%, the program far exceeded expectations, with reductions in crashes dropping 39.2% over one control period, injuries reduced by 44.1% and fatalities reduced by 50%.

For more information, contact: Terecia Wilson South Carolina Department of Transportation Safety Office. Telephone: 803-737-1161 Email: wilsontw@scdot.org.

2008 National Work Zone Awareness Week

April 7-11, 2008
"Slow for the Cone Zone"



Each year in April, National Work Zone Awareness Week (NWZAW) is held to bring national attention to motorist and worker safety and mobility issues in work zones. Beginning in late 1999, FHWA has worked with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA) to coordinate

and sponsor the event. Since then other transportation partners have joined the effort to support NWZAW. In addition to a National event conducted with the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia Departments of Transportation, many States host their own NWZAW events.

The ninth annual National Work Zone Awareness Week will be held April 7-11, 2008. The theme for this year is "Slow for the Cone Zone." The national kickoff for this event will be held on April 8 at 11:00 am in Sacramento, California. This marks the first time that the kickoff will be held outside the Washington, DC area.

Please visit www.workzonesafety.org for more detailed information.



SC APWA Summer Conference

Preparations are underway for the 2008 SC APWA summer meeting in Myrtle Beach. The conference combines technical presentations with product exhibits to provide a forum for exchange of ideas within the public works community. We are excited about the new venue, the ocean front Myrtle Beach Hilton Conference Center at Kingston Plantation. Kingston Plantation is located near Barefoot Landing and Tanger Outlet Center. It is just minutes away from amusement parks, water parks, live dinner shows, and concerts.

Two great events at the summer meeting are the annual golf tournament and the backhoe rodeo. The golf tournament will be Wednesday July 9th, at Arcadian Shores, adjacent to Kingston Plantation. The backhoe rodeo is being sponsored by Blanchard Machinery Company. The final rodeo will be Wednesday evening and will be at the Hilton on the lawn by the beach, followed by the family picnic. Regional backhoe rodeos will be held in the following locations:

May 19, 2008	Spartanburg
May 20, 2008	Lancaster/Aiken
May 21, 2008	Beaufort
May 22, 2008	Georgetown
May 23, 2008	Sumter/Columbia

Technical sessions will begin on Thursday with the opportunity to meet exhibitors during breakfast, lunch and breaks. Sessions will continue on Friday morning and Friday evening will be the annual banquet. Some of the topics that will be covered during the technical sessions are:

- Parks and Grounds - Urban Forestry Management: Mitigating Damage Through Proper Planning and Maintenance
- Roads - Asphalt Pavement: In Place Recycling/Repaving
- Safety - OSHA Regulations and Compliance
- Stormwater - Satisfying Phase II Regulations -

Public Education and Involvement: Coastal Waccamaw Stormwater Education Consortium

- Emergency Operations - Debris Management Plans
- Local Road Funding

The conference will close on Saturday morning with a technical session and annual business meeting. For more information go to the SC APWA Website at <http://southcarolina.apwa.net/index.asp>. Registration is available online at www.clemson.edu/t3s. We look forward to seeing you there.



Blanchard



(cont. from page 7)

- Discrepancies between reported facts and test and inspection results
- Refusal or inability to provide supporting documentation
- Inadequate or apparently altered supporting documentation
- Repeated “errors” that benefit the contractor
- Unreasonable claims or statements compared to prior performance or industry standards
- High rate of rejections, returns, or failures
- Site inspection reports indicating less progress than reported
- Complaints from users

Reporting Concerns About Fraud, Waste, Abuse, or Mismanagement

OIG maintains a hotline (see “Methods for Reporting Fraud” above) to report allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, or mismanagement in USDOT programs or operations. Allegations may be reported by USDOT employees, contractors, or the public. The OIG Hotline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Issues that should be reported include the following:

- Contract, procurement, and grant fraud
- Environment, health, and safety violations
- Computer crimes
- Product substitution and suspect/counterfeit parts
- Bribery, kickbacks, and gratuities
- False statements and false claims
- Conflicts of interest and ethics violations
- Travel fraud, theft, and/or abuse of government property
- Other violations of Federal laws and regulations

Methods for Reporting Fraud

Report suspicions and allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, or mismanagement to OIG by using one of the following methods:

- Online complaint form: www.oig.dot.gov/hotlineform.jsp
- Telephone: 800-424-9071
- Fax: 540-373-2090
- E-mail: hotline@oig.dot.gov
- Mail: USDOT Inspector General, P.O. Box 708, Fredericksburg, VA 22404-0708

Note: The OIG Hotline is obligated to expeditiously forward all safety-related complaints to USDOT’s safety regulatory agencies for action, as appropriate.

A Final Word

Not all businesses are on a mission to defraud Federal, State, or local governments or the American people. In fact, most businesses are composed of responsible and conscientious professionals who want to do a good job and provide superior products and services. However, the



USDOT

As part of a surveillance operation, an OIG special agent installs an overt camera to help substantiate allegations received via the OIG Hotline. Agents sometimes also use covertly installed cameras to obtain evidence of crimes.

Latin warning caveat emptor, which means “Let the buyer beware,” applies.

Agency transportation professionals at all levels of government are responsible and accountable for the stewardship and oversight of taxpayer money entrusted to them. Proactively recognizing the signs of potential fraud at each stage of a construction project and taking action, as appropriate, will go a long way in helping to detect and stop fraud.

American taxpayers rely on professionals like us—project managers, contracting professionals, engineers, inspectors, auditors, and compliance officers—to serve as their eyes and ears, and the success of the transportation system and the trust of the American people rely on our success. In the words of Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States, “If once you forfeit the confidence of your fellow citizens, you can never regain their respect and esteem.”

Jim H. Crumpacker has served with the USDOT OIG since 2003. He also is a colonel in the U.S. Air Force Reserve and a federally credentialed special agent with the U.S. Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI), whose mission is to identify, investigate, and neutralize criminal, terrorist, and espionage threats to Air Force and U.S. Department of Defense personnel and resources. In this capacity, he currently serves as the individual mobilization augmentee to AFOSI’s executive director at Andrews Air Force Base, MD.

For more information, see www.oig.dot.gov or contact Jim H. Crumpacker at 202-366-1420 or jim.crumpacker@oig.dot.gov.

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The videos and publications are free to individuals employed by any city, county or state government agency in South Carolina. You can obtain a free single copy of most publications, or borrow a copy of one of our “for loan” publications and videos.

Transportation Technology Transfer Service

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Videos & DVDs

- DVD—*Highway Safety and Trees: The Delicate Balance*, FHWA—Explores the issue of the safe placement of trees along our county’s roadsides. The video stresses that the design of highway projects should be cooperative effort involving the highway agency, concerned communities, organization, and individual citizens. It provides an opportunity for all parties to recognize the benefits and risks association with trees.
- DVD—*Confined Space Entry, Permit Required*, Coastal—Protect your employees from the dangers of working in confined spaces and be sure you’re in compliance with OSHA 1910.146 with this popular program. It reviews the details on how to prepare a confined space entry permit and the best way to train a confined space entry team.
- DVD—*Confined Space Ventilation*, Coastal—Special safety precautions required for confined space ventilation are reviewed in this important program, along with how and when to ventilate, how to ventilate effectively, and safety precautions.
- DVD—*Media Relations, What to do When the News Is You*, Coastal—Newsworthy incidents can happen anytime, anywhere. Prepare to be pro-active. This program demonstrates how to talk to the press honestly, how to prepare a press kit, develop a relationship with the media that promotes open lines of communication as well as trust. Even if you don’t have all the answers at the moment of an incident you can focus the media on allowing you to handle the situation at hand to protect other employees, and plan to update them with scheduled updates for the press.

Publications

- Erosion Control Treatment Selection Guide*, USDA Forest Service
- Toolbox of Countermeasures and Their Potential Effectiveness for Pedestrian Crashes*, FHWA
- Toolbox of Countermeasures and Their Potential Effectiveness for Roadway Departure Crashes*, FHWA
- Tool box of Countermeasures and Their Potential Effectiveness for Intersection Crashes*, FHWA
- Traffic Signals, ITE*— Provides an overview of traffic signals (purpose, warrants for signal installation, advantages, disadvantages, and factors to consider) followed by an introduction to the contents of this issue brief (crash reduction factors, presentation of the crash reduction factors and using the Tables).
- Chip Seals*, FHWA and Texas Engineering Extension Service—Contains the reference manual 2-4, Chip Seals, of the National Highway Institute Course No 131103 titled Pavement Preservation: Design and Construction of Quality Preventive Maintenance Treatments. Describes recommended design steps and construction procedures associated with the constructing of good quality chip seals treatments on existing hot-mix (HMA) pavements.

SPEED BUMP

Dave Coverly



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