



# WV DOT Today!

August 2024, Volume 6: Issue 8



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Scholarship  
Winners

## Scott Miller Hill Bypass Opens!



**WVDOT's Rita Pauley Wins AASHTO Presidential Award!**



**Secretary Wriston Thanks Jeff Jenkin for his Heroism!**





# Scott Miller Hill Open to the Public

A major construction project that was decades in the making ended Thursday, July 18, 2024, when the Scott Miller Hill Bypass on US 33 near Spencer opened to traffic.

Two months ahead of schedule.

"This one's been a long time coming," said Transportation Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E. "This one's really close to the hearts of a lot of people in West Virginia."

The 4.3-mile bypass runs from Tuckers Run to Middle Fork on US 33, and will allow trucks and other vehicles to avoid several bad curves on US 33.

"Once again, another project that lingered and lingered for decades and decades, with the advent of the governor's big, bold vision and Roads to Prosperity program, here we are completing another massive project that will have a major impact on the citizens in the region," Wriston said.

"Scott Miller Hill always had a lot of accidents because of the steepness of the grade. Most of our goods and services are brought here by truck," said Spencer Mayor Terry Williams.

Williams, who has been mayor for more than four decades, said the Scott Miller Hill project has been in discussion as long as he can remember.

In 2020, Kanawha Stone, of Poca, was awarded a contract for \$40.4 million to build the bypass.

"Work on this project will be a real upgrade for the safety of our motorists," Gov. Jim Justice said at the time. "Basically, a big bend in the road going over a mountain that leads into the town of Spencer is going to be removed."



## WVDOT Today!

is a monthly newsletter published by the West Virginia Department of Transportation's Public Relations Division. The purpose of this publication is to facilitate connection across the diverse worksites and professions represented among WVDOT employees to empower us to function as **one West Virginia Department of Transportation**.

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# Crews Reach Milestone on Wheeling Streetscape Project

A major milestone in the project to beautify the downtown Wheeling streets has been reached.

Paving is taking place as part of the highly anticipated Wheeling Streetscape, which will impact Main Street and Market Street between 10th Street and 16th Street.

With Gov. Jim Justice's continued commitment to the project, the Wheeling Streetscape will add ADA-compliant curb ramps, widened sidewalks, decorative brickwork, landscaping, utility upgrades, and street furnishings along Main Street and Market Street, between 10th Street and 16th Street downtown. The project will also replace 19 existing traffic signals with decorative traffic signals. Of the 19 intersections, 14 are within the streetscape portion of the contract with the other five intersections located on adjacent city streets in close proximity to the project.

The contractor has completed the drainage work along Market Street from 16th to 10th Street. Crews have installed drainage structures from the outlet into Middle Wheeling Creek to the intersection of 16th and Main Street, through the segment of 16th Street between Main and Market and north on Market Street. This drainage work is incorporated in the project to aid in sanitary and stormwater separation efforts in the downtown area.

Recently, contractors milled and paved the right lane, and a parking lane, on Main Street and will complete the left lane the week of Monday, July 8, 2024. Crews also paved short approaches on each side street adjacent to Main Street mainline paving.

Remaining work to be performed includes sidewalk replacement along the remaining portion of Market Street, both sides of 16th Street, 10th Street, 12th Street, 14th Street, as well as a short segment of Chapline and Eoff Street; remaining streetscape activities (brick band, trees, shrubs, furnishings etc.) continue on Main Street, and will be performed on remaining streets included in the project. Work associated with replacement of existing traffic signals continues as crews install underground conduit, junction boxes, signal pole foundations and signal poles throughout the project, plus milling and paving of all streets included in the project, including 12th and 14th streets.

Crews are providing pedestrian detours along the adjacent sidewalks while maintaining access to all businesses.

(WVDOH) District 6 engineers continue to meet with Wheeling officials on the progress of the project.

The current projected completion date of the project is fall 2025.

Gov. Justice helped move the project forward after it became evident that significant state instead of federal funding would be necessary to bring the project to fruition. In August 2022, Gov. Justice and the West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT) awarded West Virginia based Triton Construction Inc. the contract for the project, with a low bid of \$31.9 million. In September 2022, Gov. Justice, WVDOT Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E., and city of Wheeling officials held a groundbreaking on the project.





# WVDOT: Paving Projects Funded by \$150 million Supplemental Budget Appropriation are Underway

Roadways continue to be paved this summer under a \$150 million supplemental budget appropriation.

Gov. Jim Justice discussed the projects during a recent briefing.

On Thursday, May 30, 2024, Gov. Jim Justice signed Senate Bill 1002, surrounded by Transportation Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E., and West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOT) workers, giving the WVDOT the funding to move forward with another round of paving projects all across the state.

“The WVDOT is excited for the opportunity to provide resurfacing of the roadways selected as part of the program,” said Joe Pack, P.E., Chief Engineer of Operations. “Our crews are able and willing to step in and perform the resurfacing in conjunction with the paving industry.”

In the north central portion of West Virginia, 1.73 miles of US 119 through Grafton has been paved; nearly a mile of WV 705, 201st INF/FA Memorial Highway, in Monongalia County is being paved; and 2.49 miles of US 50 in Taylor County is being paved. Those projects are among more than 75 projects in the District 4 counties of Doddridge, Harrison, Marion, Monongalia, Preston and Taylor paid for by the surplus funding.

There are 66 paving projects covered with the surplus funding in the western and northern portion of the state including Calhoun, Jackson, Pleasants, Ritchie, Roane, Wirt, and Wood, and Brooke, Hancock, Marshall, Ohio, Tyler, and Wetzel counties. Larkmead Road in Wood County is currently being paved and Jones Ridge in Roane County and Left Fork Rock Run Road in Pleasants County paving projects are completed.

In the Kanawha Valley, there are 139 paving projects covered by the funding in the counties of Boone, Clay, Kanawha, Mason, Putnam, Cabell, Lincoln, Logan, Mingo, and Wayne, including the ongoing paving of WV 10 in Logan County, from Stollings to Melville. Eighteen paving projects are completed in WVDOT District 2 including 3.24 miles of R. A. West Highway in Mingo County; 2.02 miles of WV 37, from Klashville to Cove Gap in Wayne County; and 1.61 miles of WV 34, from Big Creek to Bowles in Lincoln County.

Forty-six resurfacing projects are paid for with funding in the eastern panhandle counties of Berkeley, Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Jefferson, Mineral, and Morgan.

In the eastern portion of West Virginia, there are 102 paving projects paid for between Barbour, Braxton, Gilmer, Lewis, Upshur, Webster, Pendleton, Pocahontas, Randolph, Tucker, Fayette, Greenbrier, Monroe, Nicholas, and Summers counties. There are more than 140 paving projects scheduled in McDowell, Mercer, Raleigh, and Wyoming counties.

“Our shared goal is to accomplish as much of the work in an expedited manner so that our road users get to experience the improvements as soon as possible,” Pack said. “Resurfacing of a roadway is a vital part of the life cycle of our roadways and provides a smooth and structurally sound driving surface.”

In all, this year’s supplemental budget appropriation will pay for 499 paving projects on more than 973 miles of road that aren’t covered by federal highway funds. The special funding is on top of approximately \$190 million in federal highway funds.





# Secretary Wriston says, "Slow down!" in work zones



In the wake of the fourth worker being struck this year in the Mountain State's highway work zones, West Virginia Transportation Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E., is imploring motorists to pay attention and drive safely in work zones.

"Imagine, if you will, we're sitting here in my office working away, answering emails, taking care of documents and that kind of thing, and a semi-truck goes through this office at 70 miles an hour," Wriston said. "That's exactly what our workers are experiencing each and every day.

"When you go through these work zone, you have GOT to slow down."

On Wednesday, July 10, 2024, a West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) mower operator and the driver of a pickup truck were seriously injured when the truck collided with the mower in the Interstate 79 median near Stonewood.

On Thursday, April 4, 2024, a woman working flag operations at a work zone on Route 340 South in Jefferson County was killed after another woman allegedly drove around a vehicle that had stopped in the work zone and ran over her.

"She hit me, and evidently I had at least a 60-foot flight path, according to different people," Swiger said following the incident. In addition to multiple broken bones and injuries, Swiger's skull was fractured in three places, leading to a three-week hospital stay.

Another WVDOH worker was treated and released from the hospital after being hit by a car while patching potholes on Interstate 79 in Braxton County on Friday, March 29, 2024. The WVDOH District 7 worker was patching potholes on I-79 when a driver ran through the work zone, drove through the pothole that was being patched and struck the worker on the arm.

"We have some of our lowest-paid individuals holding those flags and directing traffic, and they're responsible for every life, every soul, in that work zone," Wriston said. "It's serious, serious business.

"How could you possibly think it's okay to stick a key in the ignition, start your vehicle up, and drive through this office?" Wriston asked. "That's exactly what you're doing when you go through a work zone. You can't tell me you don't see those work zones, because they're EVERYWHERE."

Wriston said nearly all work zone crashes are due to driver error – speeding, distracted driving, or cell phone use. "This has got to be something that we address at our values level, our West Virginia values level," Wriston said. "We've got to show that we care about our fellow citizens."

Wriston said the WVDOH is actively trying to build safety into the design of every single highway project. "But the really critical part here, and this is critical, is the driver behavior."

Wriston said the WVDOH plans to partner with the state education system to emphasize safe driving.

"We're going to start training our citizens how to drive at a real early age. So that when you get to be of age to go get that driver's license it's ingrained in you. When you operate a vehicle, you've got to make good decisions."





# WVDOH Awards Contract to Correct Drainage Problems in Town of Rand

On Thursday, August 1, 2024, Gov. Jim Justice and the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) announced the award of a nearly \$5.5 million project to rebuild storm sewers and correct decades-old drainage problems in the Kanawha County town of Rand.

AMPECO Inc. was the low bidder on the drainage correction project, with a bid of \$5,459,299. The bid came in at about half what WVDOH engineers originally thought the project would cost.

The bid award was from a bid letting conducted by the WVDOH on Tuesday, July 16, 2024.

The project will be paid for with federal Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) grant funds.

“This is the first of several projects that will deal with some major drainage issues in the town of Rand,” said Transportation Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E. “Once this is complete it should alleviate a lot of concerns for the citizens of Rand.”

In October 2022, WVDOT engineers agreed to step in to help residents of the unincorporated town correct massive drainage problems that had developed over the years. Doug Kirk, P.E., WVDOT Chief Engineer of Environmental Compliance, said that when the community of Rand was first developed more than 100 years ago, storm sewers and sanitary sewers ran together. At some point the sanitary sewers were separated, but no one really kept track of the storm sewers, which fell into disrepair.



The WVDOT plans to use its resources to rebuild Rand’s storm sewer system and run new storm sewer lines to the Kanawha River, alleviating the town’s flooding problems. Flooding in the town impacts transportation infrastructure along with everything else.

“Where Rand isn’t incorporated, there’s no municipal entity to step in and perform the work now,” said Jason Foster, WVDOT Chief Engineer of Development. “The community of Rand needs assistance. We have avenues for funding, so we’re trying to use that in the best interests of the citizens of Rand.”

Fixing the storm sewers also helps the WVDOT and the driving public. The streets that commonly flood in Rand are owned and maintained by the WVDOT, so fixing the storm sewers will mean less road and street maintenance in the long run.





# Milestone Met

On Thursday, July 11, 2024, the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) reached a milestone with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) that has not occurred since 2015. The FHWA Inactive Obligations Percentage calculation was reported at 0.60 percent for the month of July. This success for the inactive percentage reflects the incredible teamwork throughout the agency.

Mark Chapin, of the FHWA, called the feat, "VERY IMPRESSIVE." (Emphasis in original.)

The Federal Aid section of the Finance and Administration Division organizes and distributes the inactive list monthly to each division and district for review and/or action for their inactive projects. A project is determined to be inactive after 12 months or more without any actions like expenditures, review charges, or closure requests. It is essential to ensure federal obligations are billed promptly and accurately.

The inactive percentage calculation is determined by the unobligated balance divided by the yearly apportionment for federal projects. The WVDOH must maintain a 2.0 percent to prevent the FHWA from de-obligating federal funds from projects. It is important to focus efforts on establishing and executing sustainable and proactive procedures for timely funds management of all FHWA authorized projects.

The Programming Division provided a contact list of the responsible districts and divisions which Federal Aid utilizes to communicate with the responsible parties regarding the inactive projects. In addition, Programming and Federal Aid have worked closely on updates in the HUB to make the process more efficient and allow districts and divisions access to much needed information. This includes the development of an inactive list report in the HUB. Soon there will be instructions released for everyone to monitor their own inactive lists.

The goal moving forward is to be proactive by focusing on the projects that become inactive starting at nine months, resulting in the 12 months or greater list remaining at a consistently low percentage. This is just the beginning of this milestone at WVDOH.

The response and hard work of each district and division has led to this success. The role that each of us play at the WVDOH is important. Teamwork is the only way to success. We are One DOT!

The Federal Aid Section is Managed by Denise Palaimo-Miller, and her staff includes Angela Fields, Jordan Shull, Tiffany Adkins, Jessica Hancock, Alexander Lewis, Liz Isabella, Betty Caruthers and Kelsey Cline. Michelle Petry is the Finance Division Assistant Director overseeing Federal Aid.

## District 9 Celebrates Their Co-ops and Summer Worker



District 9 took a short break from their demanding schedule to celebrate their Co-ops and Summer Workers with a taco luncheon, games and ice cream.

District 9 also used this opportunity to recognize their office and supervisory staff who are working successfully to implement the new wvOasis systems. We recognize it is challenging but everyone is doing their best so the systems continue to improve.



# The Transition of New Softwares and Functionality to Replace REMIS System Remain Ongoing

The West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) implementation of new softwares and functionality to replace the REMIS system that has served highways for several decades is ongoing.

The change occurred at the beginning of Fiscal Year 2025, Monday, July 1, 2024 as REMIS was replaced with modern software, as part of the WVDOH's overall Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) initiative. The transition has been eased due to a lot of work employees from the Operations, Finance, and Procurement Divisions traveling around the state to train employees prior to launch.

Joe Pack, P.E., Chief Engineer of Operations said, "With new software comes growing pains and the software must be traveled to become proficient and effective. We are confident in our employees to become as efficient as possible in the new systems and it grows older."

WVDOH is also expanding the use of wvOASIS for financial and procurement functionality and a consumable inventory module. Project tracking and authorizations have already transitioned with the Hub, and time entry is a cornerstone of the wvOASIS system.

dTIMs, the new software from Deighton, is being used for Maintenance Management, and FleetFocus, provided by AssetWorks, will be implemented for Fleet Management. And a new Encroachment ePermits Portal will serve citizens and businesses. The multiple new softwares and functionality are the most the WVDOH has ever implemented at one time to the system.

Additional phases of a new right-of-way software are expected to be implemented in the coming months with a full implementation of a Highway Safety Software product.

"Change can be a challenge as there comes unpredictability with change. But we are fully confident this change will benefit WVDOH," said Pack.

REMIS was built more than three decades ago and has been in place with the WVDOH ever since. It will now only be available for data review, reports, and queries. No transactional updates will be done in REMIS from now on. Users' security access in REMIS has changed to only accommodate data review.

## VISION AWARDS

*Congratulations to the following individuals being recognized this month by Secretary Wriston for their dedication to The Vision.*

*Rita Pauley - Assistant Commissioner Highways*

*Jeff Jenkin - District 7*

*Joseph Grispio - Human Resources*

*Shawn O'Connor - Human Resources*

*Suzanne Washington-Smith - Human Resources*

*Paul Anderson - Finance and Administration*

*Bobby Brown - Finance Division*

*Kathy Whiting - Finance Division*

*Christopher Moynahan - Public Relations Division*

*Allison Shepherd - District 10*

*Jeff Moats - District 6*

*Annette McCourt - Flatwoods DMV Regional Office*

*Cecil Loyd - Executive Regional DMV Regional Office and Call Center Services*

*Henri Pauley - Multimodal Transportation*

*The Vision is simple; to be the best DOT in the country, for the purpose of giving our West Virginia the chance it should have - a place of prosperity and joy, where citizens have the best chance to build the lives they hope for. To be the best DOT in the country based on the quality of our work and motivation. To be the safest place for our employees to work. To be the best trained, and most educated. To go Above and Beyond, every day.*



WEST VIRGINIA

OFFICE  
OF  
TECHNOLOGY





# Secretary Wriston Commends Jeff Jenkin for Calm, Quick-Thinking

Secretary of Transportation, Jimmy Wriston, recently commended Jeff Jenkin for calm, quick thinking under pressure in a situation involving a resident which placed his paving crew in danger.

Keeping a level head, Jenkin deescalated the situation in a manner in which the crew and the resident were safe.

“That could have gone wrong 1,000 different ways,” Wriston said. “You were the right guy in the right place at the right time, doing the right thing.”

Jenkin discussed the incident recently with Transportation Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E.; Deputy Secretary Alanna Keller, P.E.; and other central office staff; where he was recognized for his bravery.

Jenkin credited de-escalating the situation to a higher power.

“The Lord was in charge,” he said.

Jenkin declined counseling following the incident and in fact helped buoy his fellow workers in the aftermath of what could have been a very serious incident.

“They asked me, ‘How did you sleep that night?’” Jenkin recalled.

“With both eyes shut.”

“We have the best employees in the nation when it comes to incident management,” said Secretary Wriston. “Mr. Jenkin is a shining example.”



# Congratulations to Rita Pauley Winner of the AASHTO Presidential Award!



West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOT) Assistant Commissioner Rita Pauley recently won the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Presidential Award for Research because of her dedication to transportation-related legislative research.

The AASHTO President’s Transportation Award honors individuals or teams at state departments of transportation that have performed exemplary service during the year, furthering the transportation activities of member departments and the work that has made their communities better.

Pauley’s career in public service began after graduating from West Virginia University School of Law in 1988 and being admitted to the West Virginia Bar in 1989. In 1992, Pauley was certified as an Attorney and Counsellor of the United States Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit (northern and southern regions).

Her career spans from the United States District Court to the Department of Corrections and the West Virginia Senate, where she served as Chief Counsel for many years. Pauley has always had a passion for advancing the greater good of society and enabling mobility for every citizen of West Virginia. This dedication led her to the WVDOT where she worked as an attorney in the central Right of Way Division. Because of her expansive knowledge of the legislative process, Pauley was appointed Assistant Commissioner of Highways.





# Jill's Dunn!

Jill Dunn, the (WVDOT) Director of Legal Division, retired as of July. We wish her the best in her retirement and would like to thank her for all her years of dedicated service to this department and the state of West Virginia.

*We will miss you Jill!*



## 2024 New WVDOT Scholarship Winners

*Sean Hunter Armstrong*

*Nathaniel David Carlton*

*Addison Michael Deviese*

*Dylan S. Hart*

*Elliot Dennis King*

*Brady S. Layman*

*Nikolas Edward Sindledecker*

***Congratulation to all the winners!***



GLENVILLE  
STATE UNIVERSITY



## New Guests Each Week!



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