

# WVDOH Today!

“You know, everybody says watch how your employer treats the employee during a time of crisis,” said Jay Thompson, Highways Storekeeper in District 1. “They’re treating us good. They’re letting us do what we can to stay safe. We’re trying to provide our crews the things they need to stay safe.”



## “Watch how your employer treats the employee DURING A TIME OF CRISIS.”

“When we were given the memo from Secretary Byrd White, to get these packages together for the crews that are out on the roads we got the Comptroller’s section together and we all came in and filled bags,” said Thompson. “We were given this memo on Thursday, and we had the bags ready to go out the door Friday morning.”

West Virginia Division of Highways has kept all employees working, with no one laid off and no jobs lost, with a training program available to employees who are teleworking. Transportation workers have been divided into two groups, with each group working as usual for two weeks while the other group completes trainings from home. At the end of two weeks, the groups switch. This pattern is set to begin its second cycle, with new training material available for the stay-at-home

group. This allows crews to socially distance themselves from each other and travel in separate vehicles; while keeping employees available to take care of road maintenance.

“We want to make sure employees know, when you’re being paid to stay home and train, stay home,” said Deputy Secretary of Transportation, Jimmy Wriston, P.E. “We need you to stay safe and healthy. We’ve got to work together, all of us.”

Storekeepers put together bags with hand sanitizer, cleaning supplies and other materials necessary to keep employees healthy on their roadwork shifts. Similar supplies were also made available to essential employees working from office settings. For all workers, teleworking arrangements have been unprecedented ground WVDOH has covered together. It has not been easy, but teamwork makes it go.

### Also in this Issue:

**Heads Up! Phones Down!**

**A Good Public Servant**

**Masks for Work Family**

**TW3’s Deliver Beds**



# Kathy Rushworth, P.E.; On Being a Good Public Servant

"I see that the hardworking people are paying taxes, and I'm a steward of that tax money," said Kathy Rushworth, P.E., Assistant District Engineer for District 1. "I treat it as if it was my own money and I want it spent in the best way possible. That's what it means to be a good public servant."

In order to keep employees and the public safe from the COVID-19 virus, WVDOH crews are still divided; with half the transportation workers on the job while the other half receives training. Crews are still tending to CORE maintenance during these difficult times.

"To the extent that they can do CORE maintenance, they are doing CORE maintenance," said Rushworth. "That's patching paved roads, grading and stabilizing gravel roads, ditching and mowing. Those four activities help us maintain our

state roads in a cost effective and safe manner for our public."

"In addition to these four traditional CORE activities that we plan and schedule for every road in every county, this year we focused on tree trimming to open up the shaded areas. The problem with shady spots on the road is they stay moist longer and the moisture allows potholes to form. We aren't going to be able to focus on that as strongly every year if we have a normal or harsh winter, but this year the crews weren't plowing snow all the time and we were able to get a lot done. A lot of counties also continued to ditch throughout the winter this year, and began pothole

patching in mid-March."

"I value every dollar we have and we do our best every day to try to spend it in the most efficient manner," said Rushworth.



**WVDOH Today!** is a monthly newsletter published by the West Virginia Division of Highways and distributed statewide via email to a network of the best employees on earth. All content is developed by the editor, unless otherwise credited. The purpose of this publication is to facilitate connection across the diverse worksites and professions represented among WVDOH employees to empower us to function as **one West Virginia Division of Highways**, and with our sister agencies, **one West Virginia Department of Transportation**. We encourage employees to write in and share thoughts.

Editor: Jennifer Jo Dooley, M.A.  
West Virginia Division of Highways  
Attn: WVDOT Information Corps  
1900 Kanawha Boulevard East  
Building 5, Room A-137  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305  
Email: DOHnewsletter@wv.gov

**We are recognizing our people.  
We are going above and beyond to keep them safe.**



# Shawna Goodwin: Masks for Our DOH Family

Shawna Goodwin, Executive Secretary for the State Highway Engineer's Office, encourages everyone considering applying for a secretarial position with the West Virginia Division of Highways to apply. "Every piece of a puzzle is a piece of the puzzle," said Goodwin. "It's not complete without every piece, and as a Secretary or Administrative Assistant, you are that piece. This is a great family to join, you'll have a true passion for what you do."

Goodwin was recently promoted from an Administrative Secretary position in District 1. She is pleased with her promotion, although it came at an unusual time. "While it may seem like a ghost town here in Building 5, the work is not going undone," said Goodwin. "We're taking advantage of technology and keeping our meetings moving forward. We're still in great communication. Paperwork is still flowing with DocuSign."

"Sorry if I'm overwhelming everybody with meeting invites right now," laughed Goodwin, "But it's how we're communicating. It gives us the opportunity to continue making a positive impact on what we're doing. It's busier here, it's a little bit crazier, our Deputy's are teleworking as well and we're rotating who's here.

I can't say that it's been much of a difficulty because everyone has been so good about reaching out, communicating, working various shifts even beyond our 7:00—5:00. We're making the best of it."

"On the side, I have the opportunity to purchase pallets," said Goodwin. "Part of what was within a pallet was some masks. I began to think about a lot of our hospitals, first responders. I realized that our men and women are also out there. There's still bridge inspections, we still have essential travel taking place. In a way to provide my support to our team, I brought in these masks for our men and women. It was my opportunity to donate and give."

All across the state, WVDOH employees are stepping up to offer different

kinds of support to their co-workers. Wherever team spirit is present, it grows.

"I have a lot of experience in various state agencies but the Division of Highways family has so grown on me," said Goodwin. "There's always the opportunity to continue to learn, and to make a difference. No matter what we do, we should always strive to be a better person than we were yesterday and do something more than we did yesterday."



# WVDOH Family Coloring Contest

## Heads Up! Phones Down! Drive Safely in Work Zones.

Alexis Phillips, a 9th grader at Clay County High School, and Charlie Phillips, a 7th grader at Clay County Middle School colored these pictures to remind us that April is Work Zone Safety Awareness month. We have active work zones all around the state; so remember to Just. Slow. Down.



## Food Trucks at Rest Areas

West Virginia Division of Highways has set temporary guidelines for food trucks at rest areas to ease the burden on truck drivers passing through our state.

“Truck drivers are keeping our stores supplied with the things we need, but they are having a hard time finding a place to eat along the way,” said Jake Bumgarner, P.E., Director of the Operations Division. “Allowing food trucks at our rest areas keeps them from having to leave the interstate to look for food.”

Each rest area can have up to two food trucks present at a time. Applications are submitted to the District Engineer/Manager in each District, and the spots are available on a first-come, first-served basis for applicants who meet all the requirements. Vending machine foods offered by the

Randolph Sheppard Program are still available, and the food trucks will not be selling any of the items available in vending machines.

Vendors will need to comply with safety regulations for food handling and rest area safety, as well as COVID-19 guidance provided by the FDA, CDC, WV DHHR, and County Health Departments. They must have a valid food permit and be registered with the WV Secretary of State in good standing. Vendors have already begun submitting applications.



More information, along with the application to operate a food truck, is available on WVDOT’s web page at: <https://transportation.wv.gov/Pages/covid-19.aspx>. Many thanks to all the truck drivers passing through our state; stay safe!

# Equipment Operators: Helping Where We Can

Helping where we can, Jacob Johnson and Rusty Farrar, TW3 Equipment Operators, drove hospital beds from Fairmont to St. Francis Hospital in Charleston. The Equipment Division's Dusty Loudin managed logistics, and District 4 contributed forklifts to load the beds. The beds will help prepare St. Francis Hospital to serve as a surge hospital if needed in the fight against COVID-19. WVDOH employees were honored to serve.



Photos courtesy of West Virginia National Guard.



## ADA Transition Plan Approved

West Virginia Division of Highways recently received a letter from Brian Hogge, Division Administrator for the West Virginia Division of the Federal Highway Administration announcing that the West Virginia Department of Transportation American's With Disabilities Act Transition Plan has been approved.

"The approval of this plan and all the work behind it is a great accomplishment and milestone for WVDOT," said Greg Bailey, P.E., Deputy State Highway Engineer of Operations. "It is also a tremendous testimony to Ray Patrick's personal dedication, persistence, and competence. The DOH has a lot of good things that it has accomplished, but this approval and more importantly, the access that the work behind it provides to those who need it most is one of the best things we do."

West Virginia Division of Highways has already made great gains on ADA compliance for its sidewalks, working with efficiency to bring sidewalks into compliance ahead of paving projects. As we move forward to continue implementing the plan, we will work together to provide access to our transportation systems for all our citizens.

## Wellness: Wall-Sit Challenge

Ten teams recently competed in WVDOH's "Wall Sit Challenge" to share motivation for improving their lives through wellness. The teams, their divisions, and the number of participants are listed below.

*Congratulations to everyone who participated!*

Wall Sit Wonders	Engineering Division	17 people
Wall Tumbler	MCS&T Division	1 person
The WallBergs	Operations Division	4 people
Wacky Wall Walkers	Executive Division	5 people
I Don't Give a Sit	Office Services Division	3 people
Wall Flowers	Human Resources Division	7 people
R2D2	District 2	12 people
District Force	District 4	15 people
Wall Huggars	District 5	12 people
The Quadzillas	District 9	10 people

# James Ransbottom: On Work Zone Safety Awareness

"We were working up in Braxton County, up in Flatwoods," said James Ransbottom, who does building maintenance work in Central Office, but at the time worked as a Transportation Worker on a road crew.

"We set out our signs every tenth of a mile, made sure we had a clear view of the signs to let people know when to slow down. Normally you would work one side of the road or the other, at that time I was covering both sides of it."

"I did have my headphones in and was listening to music," said Ransbottom.

"You tend to get bored, but I can honestly tell you, anybody who does that is an idiot. A lady came through the stop sign. She drove right by the guy who flagged her, hit my sign, put me in a ditch, and that was within the first week of me working here."

"Five inches to her right and she would have killed me," said Ransbottom. "There was no way I would have survived the impact. And she was eating a sandwich."

"Everyone's been great to me," said Ransbottom. "My bosses are wonderful. Everybody who works here is just unbelievably friendly. It's a different experience coming from the private sector, where your bosses yell and scream at you. It's a whole different world to work here, it truly is."

Looking back on his time as a transportation worker, Ransbottom reminisces, "They are workers up there, there's no doubt about that. There's zero tolerance, I mean, if you need to get it done you get it done."

"I loved being a TW2," said Ransbottom. "If you like variety it's a great thing. You never know what you're

## Heads up!

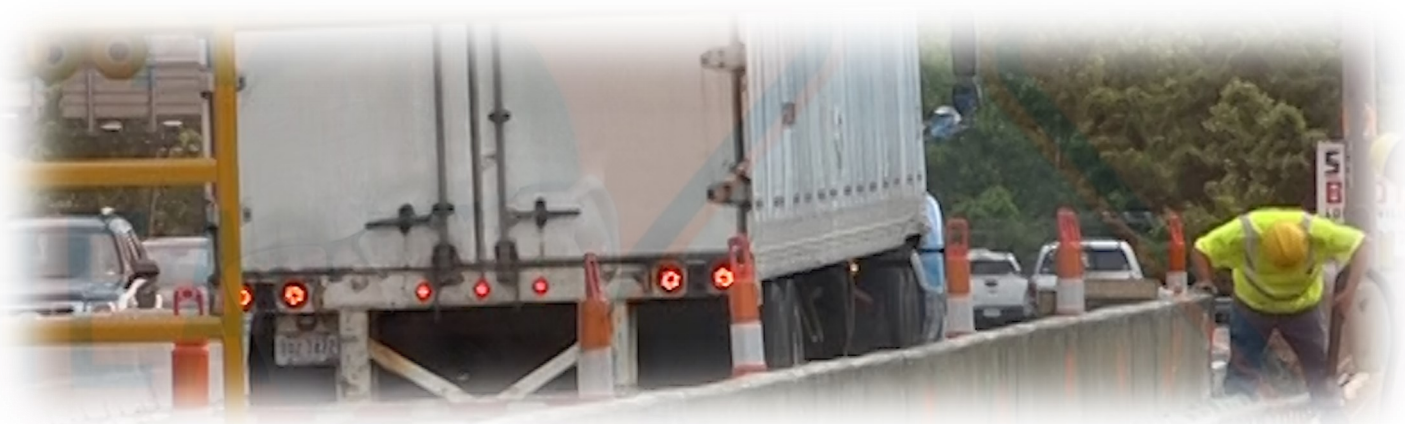
going to be doing. When I worked

road crew I got to do black top, I got to go out and cut trees, clear things, help people. It's a good feeling. You get to go fix roads when they wash out, and culverts. It's a great experience really. I mean, even if it's not for you, it's a good experience. It's

a wonderful job. The benefits are out of this world. I'd recommend it for anybody."

Roadwork continues all over the state, with WVDOH crews and Contractors adapting to keep employees safe from COVID-19, while making progress on much needed projects. Decreased traffic does not mean it's any safer to speed through work zones (or to drive or work while distracted.) April is Work Zone Safety Awareness month, but even with the orange signs and blue flashing lights of police cars, drivers continue to speed through work zones. To keep each other safe in work zones, Just. Slow. Down., turn off your phone and enjoy the most beautiful place in the world — our West Virginia.

## Phones down!



# Photo Feature: Adapting, and Being Who We Are



Nicholas County. Photo courtesy of District 9.



Marshall County. Photo courtesy of District 6.



Masks donated by Peg Griffith, Mother of District 3's Susan Fought.

*We do what we can  
With what we have  
Where we are  
Because that's who we are.*



Secretary White, Deputy Secretary Wriston and State Highway Engineer Reed Meet Virtually With Districts and Divisions.



WVDOH Continues to Receive the Equipment it Needs To Put West Virginia First, Never Again Last.