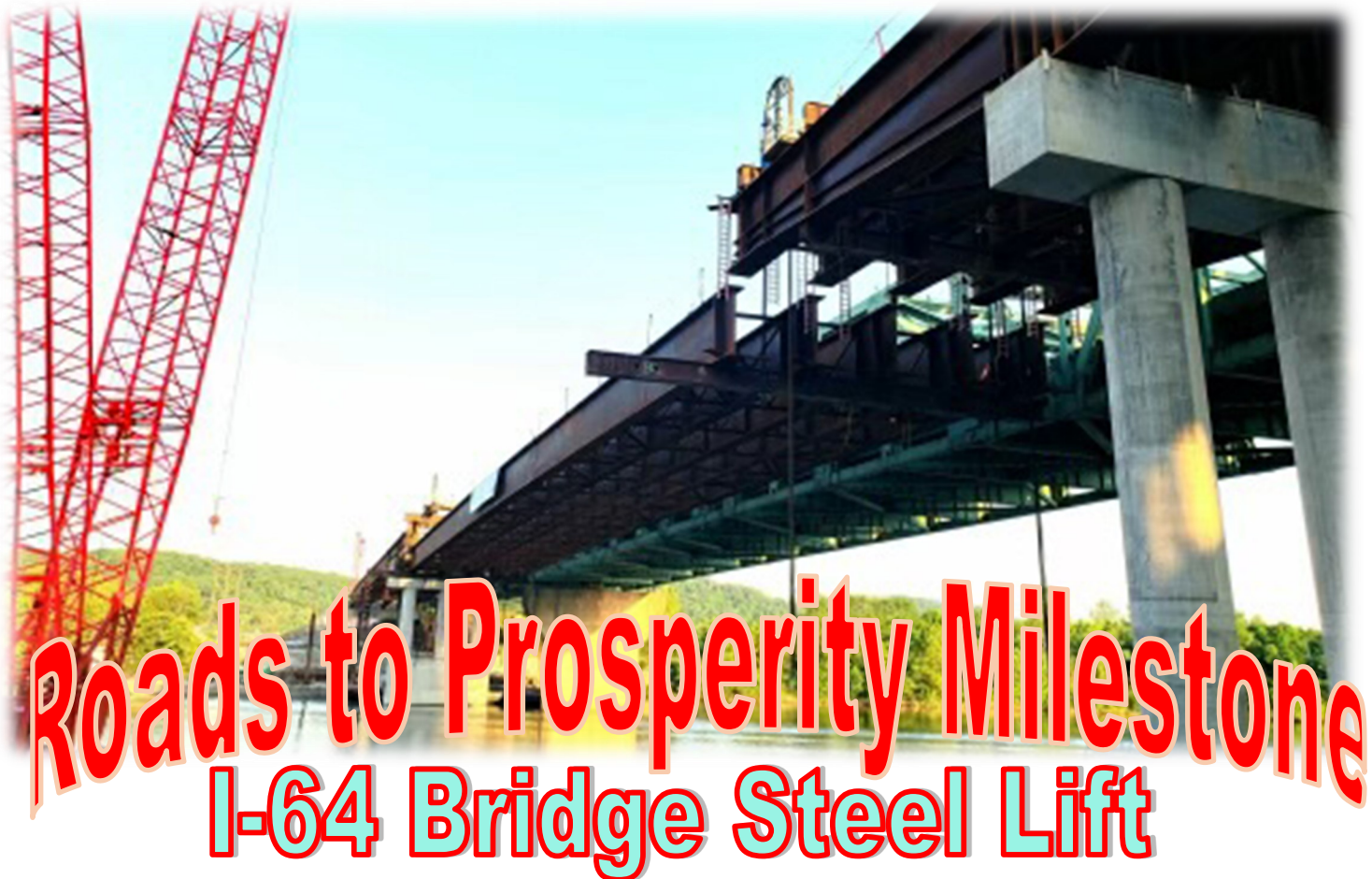


# WV DOT Today!



June 2022—Volume 4: Issue 6



## Roads to Prosperity Milestone I-64 Bridge Steel Lift

The West Virginia Division of Highways celebrated the continued success of Gov. Jim Justice's Roads to Prosperity highway and bridge construction and maintenance program on Friday, May 20, 2022, as contractors lifted the main span of the new Donald M. Legg Memorial Bridge into position in Nitro.

Contractors have been lifting steel for the new bridge over the Kanawha River for several months. The main span, five beams wide and 417 feet long, was pre-assembled and lifted into place from a barge in the middle of the Kanawha River.

Construction of the new bridge between the Nitro and St. Albans exits of Interstate 64 is part of an approximately \$225 million project to upgrade I-64 to six lanes from Nitro to the US 35 exit. The project also called for construction of five new bridges in addition to the new Donald M. Legg Memorial Bridge.

The project is paid for through Gov. Justice's \$2.8 billion Roads to Prosperity program.

Plans call for building the new bridge just north of the existing Donald M. Legg Memorial Bridge to carry westbound traffic. Once completed, the existing bridge will be rebuilt using a portion of the existing piers to carry traffic east. Each bridge will be four lanes wide, to allow drivers traveling between the Nitro and St. Albans exits to drive without having to merge into through traffic.

Since Gov. Justice rolled out Roads to Prosperity in 2017, more than 1,000 projects have been completed through the program, everything from repairing small slips on rural roads to multi-million dollar four-lane highway construction projects like rebuilding I-64 from the ground up between Milton and US 35.

**Also in the Issue: Secretary Wriston on WV DOT Pay Raise**



# Turnpike Widening Nears Completion

Final paving and striping began on a six-lane upgrade of the West Virginia Turnpike in Beckley beginning Sunday, May 15, 2022.

Upgrading the Turnpike to six lanes between mile markers 40 and 48 in the Beckley area was completed in the fall of 2021. However, laying the final finishing layer of pavement and completion of all road striping was put off until this spring to allow full access to the heavily traveled section of highway during the holiday season.

The \$140 million widening project was one of the first highway improvement projects rolled out under Gov. Jim Justice's \$2.8 billion Roads to Prosperity highway construction and maintenance program.

Jeff Miller, executive director of the West Virginia Parkways Authority, said final paving and striping of the six-lane section of Turnpike will take place from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. beginning Sunday, May 15, 2022. Construction is expected to take about eight weeks.



Miller said work is being done at night to minimize the impact on the public. However, travelers can expect delays in the area until paving and striping are complete.

The speed limit in the work zone will be 55 mph.

"The speed limit will be strictly enforced," Miller said. "It's a very, very busy area, and we

just don't want anything bad to happen to anybody."

In cooperation with state law enforcement agencies, the West Virginia Department of Transportation and police are cracking down on speeding and other infractions in West Virginia's work zones. Police are running radar and writing tickets on the Turnpike, interstates, and secondary roads all over the Mountain State.

Last year, there were 889 crashes in West Virginia work zones, killing five people and injuring more than 300. State Transportation Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E., has committed to zero work zone deaths on West Virginia highways this construction season.



WVDOH maintenance crews perform patching on Interstate 81 while outfitted with brand new hard hats and state-of-the-art Halo lighting.

**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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Jennifer.J.Dooley@wv.gov.



## Public Relations Division Welcomes Lindsey Hanks: R and J's Right Arm



Public Relations Division welcomes Lindsey Hanks to our team. A Logan native who moved to St. Albans at age 5, Hanks is a graduate of St. Albans High School and Bridge Valley Community & Technical College with a degree in Applied Sciences. Also, she is phenomenal.

Overseeing administrative functions for Public Relations Division and communicating with leadership in all WVDOT agencies, Hanks will be integral in keeping Public Relations Division aware of happenings statewide. If she reaches out to you for information, please know that Randy and Jennifer consider her their right arm — please respond as swiftly as you would to either of them. There's probably a reporter with a deadline or an event in the midst of planning on the other side.

## Roads to Prosperity: I-64 Culloden Interchange Project Announced

The Interstate 64 Culloden interchange project, a \$32 million project made possible by Gov. Jim Justice's Roads to Prosperity program, was awarded by the West Virginia Division of Highways on Tuesday, May 31, 2022.

The contract was awarded from a bid letting held Tuesday, May 17, 2022. Triton Construction Inc. was winning bidder, with a bid of \$32,346,000. The new interchange will connect US 60 in Culloden with I-64 between Hurricane and Milton, opening up economic development in the area, improving safety and eliminating a lengthy commute to I-64 for area residents.

When the WVDOH awards a construction contract, behind the scenes work such as right of way acquisition, utility relocations and permitting typically begins. These steps are not visible to the public, but they are necessary to keep the project moving smoothly and to minimize any impact to traffic once work zones are in place.

Rights-of-way have already been obtained for the interchange project, but a total of eight utilities, including power lines, telephone lines, cable, oil, gas, water, and sewer lines, will need to be relocated for the project. Utility companies are scheduled to relocate their lines between June and December 2022. As construction begins in the area, WVDOH will keep the public updated on when they public can expect to see work zones. A formal groundbreaking event will be held in the coming weeks.

"This project should relieve some of the congestion at the Hurricane exit and create better access to the businesses in the Culloden area," said Todd Rumbaugh, P.E., WVDOH Chief Engineer of Construction.

The new road between US 60 and I-64 will be about 2/3 of a mile long and link up with the interstate just west of the Putnam/Cabell County line. The project will also require construction of a new bridge. The anticipated completion date of the project is fall of 2026.

## Turnpike Holiday Traffic Nears 900,000

During the week leading up to Memorial Day, more than 884,000 vehicles passed through toll booths on the West Virginia Turnpike.

Many travelers took advantage of West Virginia's tourism opportunities on their trip, visiting destinations like the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, or taking a scenic drive along the newly christened Seneca Skyway, which takes US 219 and WV 92 through the Potomac Highlands.

The Turnpike experienced heavier than expected traffic on

Tuesday, May 24, 2022, and Wednesday, May 25, 2022. From Monday, May 23, 2022, through Monday, May 30, 2022, 884,104 vehicles went through the toll booths.

"Thursday and Friday were still our big days," said Jeff Miller, executive director of the West Virginia Parkways Authority. On those two travel days, 268,237 vehicles used the Turnpike.

Miller thinks heavy rains forecast for Thursday, May 26, 2022, may have encouraged some holiday travelers to plan their trips earlier in the week, spreading out the usual holiday rush.



# GHSP Shares Safety Info for Motorcyclists

Summer is here and that means more motorcycles will be on the roads. Motorcycling is a unique experience, especially in West Virginia. The rider is an active participant in negotiating curves, following along with the curves of the road, shifting, accelerating, and braking with precision. It's no wonder why motorcyclists love traveling on West Virginia's roads. Whether you ride to and from work, prefer the camaraderie of a group ride on the weekend, or enjoy finding the perfect scenic overlook on a solo ride, motorcycling engages all your senses and creates an exciting sense of freedom.



"First of all, the best advice I can give motorcyclists, whether new or experienced, would be to take a safety course," said Mary Jarrell, GHSP Motorcycle Safety Training Coordinator.

Jarrell shared the following tips to help motorcyclists be safe on our roads:

- Take a safety course

Along with that freedom comes responsibility. All states require some form of license to ride on the street to demonstrate a minimum level of knowledge and riding skill. In West Virginia, that is the F Class Endorsement. To obtain the F Class Endorsement, riders can either successfully complete a skills performance test at their local DMV, or they can complete a rider safety course. In West Virginia, that course is offered through the Governor's Highway Safety Program's Motorcycle Safety Program.

In 2020, there were 5,579 motorcyclists killed in traffic crashes nationwide, an 11% increase from 2019 (5,044). Motorcyclist deaths accounted for 14% of the total highway fatalities that year.

In West Virginia, there were 38 motorcyclist fatalities in 2020, up from 28 in 2019.

Research shows that motorcyclists are significantly overrepresented in traffic crashes and fatalities each year. In fact, in 2020, per vehicle mile traveled, motorcyclists were about 28 times more likely than passenger vehicle occupants to die in a motor vehicle crash and were 4 times more likely to be injured.

One of the primary contributing factors to motorcyclist fatalities is speeding. According to National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, 34% of all motorcycle riders involved in fatal crashes in 2020 were speeding, compared to 22% for passenger car drivers, 16% for light-truck drivers, and 7% for large-truck drivers. Motorcycle riders 25 to 29 years old involved in fatal crashes had the highest speeding involvement at 45%.

- Ride sober
- Get to know your motorcycle
- Wear proper motorcycle gear – including a DOT-approved helmet with a "FMVSS No. 218 Certified" label
- Inspect your motorcycle before each ride
- Obey traffic laws, use signals, and obey the speed limit
- Check the weather before leaving
- Be visible
- Be observant and watch for road hazards
- Stay a safe distance behind other vehicles

## How to Spot an Unsafe Helmet

Check for weight, helmet liner thickness, sturdy chinstraps, as well as the DOT certification label to assess if the helmet meets the Federal safety standard. Familiarize yourself with brand names and helmet designs that comply with DOT requirements. For example, a full-face design is a good indicator of a safe helmet. For more information on FMVSS No. 218 and novelty helmets, visit [www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.dot.gov/files/documents/14283-identify\\_unsafe\\_motorcycle\\_helmets\\_070919\\_v4\\_tag.pdf](http://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.dot.gov/files/documents/14283-identify_unsafe_motorcycle_helmets_070919_v4_tag.pdf).

To find a rider class near you, go to [wv-msp.org](http://wv-msp.org).

Visit <https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/motorcycle-safety> to learn more about motorcycle safety.

A little background the GHSP: each state is required by federal statute to have a highway safety program. West Virginia's program falls under the Division of Motor Vehicles. Our ultimate goal is to reduce crashes, injuries and fatalities on West Virginia's roadways.



## Governor Announces Major Project on Coalfields Expressway

Gov. Jim Justice recently hosted an event near the site where the state's newest major highway through his Roads To Prosperity program will connect the Town of Welch with the Coalfields Expressway.

"This announcement today means we are one step closer to bringing this area of West Virginia to the world once and for all," said Gov. Justice. "We have waited and waited in southern West Virginia for way too long. From what I understand, this section right here is a linchpin section and then the sections beyond that will move even faster."

The Governor joined officials with the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) to announce that he has approved the bid award for this \$147.6 million project to Bizzack Construction of Lexington, Kentucky.

Roadwork will involve building a 5.12-mile section of highway from Welch to WV 16, connecting the southern West Virginia town with the Coalfields Expressway.

The project includes the construction of two ramps, two bridges, and will require more than 16 million yards of excavation.

More than 10,000 feet of large diameter drainage pipe will also be put in place for the project.

"A lot of people start things, the Governor is a guy that finishes things. This is another step along the way to the finish," said Jimmy Wriston, P.E., WVDOH Commissioner and State Transportation Secretary. "This has been a long time coming. This is the beginning of the end of getting this done."



The project is expected to be complete in the summer of 2026.

"I am absolutely committed beyond belief to get this project finished because it opens up the whole world to southern West Virginia," said Gov. Justice. "It took decades for us to get in this mess. This is a dogs' mess that we're crawling out of but we're getting there."

Plans are also in the works to build a five-mile stretch of the Coalfields Expressway from Mullens to Twin Falls State Park, and a three-mile link from Twin Falls toward Pineville.

Once all planned sections of the Expressway are completed, it will connect the West Virginia Turnpike at Beckley with US 23 at Slate, Virginia, opening the southern coalfields to never-before-seen economic development opportunities.

"We're doing everything we can to execute the Governor's vision," said Secretary Wriston. "I drove around McDowell County today. The roads in McDowell County are as good as anywhere in the state now and they're getting better every day."

In 2017, Gov. Justice committed to extending the Coalfields Expressway as part of his Roads To Prosperity program if the citizens of West Virginia passed his road bond referendum. Within one year of the bond passing with 73% of the vote, a contract for the extension project was awarded to Kokosing Construction Company. That section was opened in October 2020, marking the first ever four-lane highway in Wyoming County.

## People Notice When We Do Good Work

We recently received the following email from a woman who lives in Kanawha County. District 1 work crews have been actively milling and filling potholes and paving since asphalt plants began to open in late February. It's a reminder that people really do notice when the West Virginia Division of Highways does a good job:

"I'm a resident of Beechcrest Drive, Cross Lanes, WV and I just wanted to thank you for paving our Street. It was done in a professional way; the employees were great getting the road paved quickly.

Thank you again.

Sandra"



## May Rains Ratchet Up Repair Efforts for Putnam County Slip

The West Virginia Division of Highways is expediting construction of a piling wall to permanently repair a slip on WV 34 near the Putnam County community of Liberty following heavy rains in May.

The slipping section of roadway, already on WVDOH's radar for repair this construction season, was heavily damaged during storms during the first part of the month. WVDOH went to work back-filling with gravel so the public can travel through the area while repairs are being completed.

"We are rearranging our drilling schedule based on the heavy rains that further damaged this stretch of roadway," said WVDOH District 1 Maintenance Engineer Kathy Rushworth, P.E. "We're trying to see how quickly we can get a drill in there to build a pile wall."

The WVDOH owns four machines needed to drill the holes to sink the massive pilings into the ground to hold up a piling wall. They will be used to get WV 34 repaired as quickly as possible.

Purchase of the drills, pavers and other equipment is part of an initiative to expand the capabilities of WVDOH's own workforce - not to replace the work of contractors but to complete more work, more quickly, in keeping with Governor Justice's vision for West Virginia's roads.

The slip, on WV 34, was among dozens of projects scheduled for piling wall repairs this construction season in District 1, including



construction of a piling wall on Leon-Baden Road in Mason County, Spruce Laurel Road in Boone County, and two scheduled for construction on Riverbend Road in Kanawha County. However, heavy rainfall on Friday, May 6, 2022, caused the hillside beneath the road to start giving way. Gov. Jim Justice declared a state of emergency in Cabell, Putnam,

and Roane counties following the drenching rains.

A piling wall is constructed from a series of interlocking vertical concrete slabs. The slabs are held in place by steel pilings sunk deep into the ground to create a permanent retaining wall.

To properly fix a slip or slide, the WVDOH must evaluate each area for the most cost-effective solution which will function long term, providing the best value to taxpayers while keeping them safe on the roads.

No two mountains are the same, and no road curves, rises and falls exactly like any other road. Soil nails, piling walls, micro pilings, how tall, how wide, how deep, into what type of soil, for how many drivers per day, how many passenger vehicles, how many heavy trucks --- site specific considerations are many. While the information is being evaluated and each individual project is being developed, vehicles -- from passenger cars to ambulances -- still need to get through, so cones and signs are placed to alert drivers that work has started on each project.

## Contractors Report Rise in Accidents

In a yearly survey conducted by the Associated General Contractors of America, 64 percent of highway contractors reported motor vehicles crashing into their work zones over the past year.

The study was recently reported in the AASHTO Journal, <https://aashtojournal.org>.

"According to the survey, motorists are in even greater danger from work zone crashes versus construction workers," AASHTO

reported. "While 18 percent of the highway contractors participating in the survey experienced crashes that resulted in injury to their workers, more than twice as many firms -- 41 percent -- reported experiencing a crash in which vehicle drivers or passengers were injured."

According to the AASHTO article, 97 percent of contractors said highway work zones are as dangerous or more dangerous than they were a year ago.





Tamarack Marketplace is hosting their annual Summerfest celebration from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, June 11, 2022 at Exit 45 of the West Virginia Turnpike. The indoor-outdoor festival features live music on two stages, local food trucks, local beers, arts and crafts, and activities for the kids. The event is open to everyone and pet-friendly.



Music acts include the Carpenter Ants, Alabaster Boxer, Andrew Adkins & 1863, Matt Mullins & the Bringdowns, Aristotle Jones Band, the Parachute Brigade, Untrained Professionals, Jonah Carden, Briana Atwell, Longpoint String Band, Heavy Set Paw Paws, and Lords of Lester.

Food trucks will be on hand from WV Ears, Auror's Ice, Hilltop Coffee, Tasty Mountain Mamas, Wild & Wonderful BBQ, Francie's Donuts, and Shak's Country Kitchen.

Artist demonstrations will include Ken Epperly with clay jewelry, Mike Bowen with ceramics, Nan Perry with plein air oil painting, Bobby Gunnoe and Doug Gerwitz with woodworking, Debbie and Jamie Lester with watercolor painting and sculpting, and Robert Villamagna with mixed media and metal.

For more information, call 304-256-6843 or visit [www.tamarackwv.com](http://www.tamarackwv.com).

# VISION AWARDS

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

**Tabitha Holliday—DMV**

**Sharon Petry—DMV**

**Lisa McCleary—District 3**

**Billy Vincent—District 4**

**Debrina Woods—District 10**

**Leslie Adkins—Human Resources**

**Michael T. Bradley—Human Resources**

**Katie Roberts—Technical Support**

**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.**

**WV on the DOT — New Shows Each Thursday at 4:00**



**New guests every week!**  
[transportation.wv.gov](http://transportation.wv.gov) \*click on Podcast



# Monroe County looking After Their Own

Sometimes stories leave lasting impressions. Here at the West Virginia Division of Highways, in District 9, we have stories of countless occurrences that impact the community and DOH organizations. This is what we learned about our Monroe County Maintenance Organization and the employees that serve their community and each other.



Maintenance Organization showed up to his home and got busy cutting and stacking firewood for his family. They stacked a years' worth of firewood that day. When arrangements were being made after his passing, an abundance of meals were ordered. Every deli and grocery in the local community was contacted by many of our employees who wanted to provide and assist his family.

When the team suffered the loss of one their own, they demonstrated exceptional servitude towards the family and each other. It is the way they are, the way they work, and the way that they serve that is truly inspiring. They all rallied together and did what their fallen comrade would have done for any one of them.

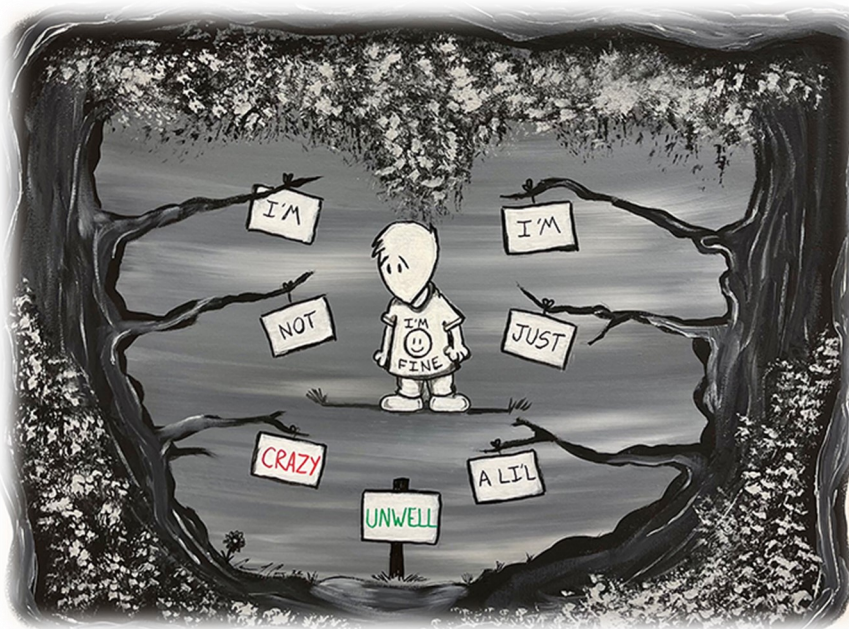
Prior to his passing, on a chilly 22-degree Saturday morning during the winter, 25 of the 35 employees at the Monroe County

These are just a few of many other instances, in which these employees answered the call to go above and beyond. They demonstrate their pride as employees of the West Virginia Division of Highways, as well as representing their district and county. It is clear about what kind of atmosphere exists at that county. Each employee, as individuals, bringing their skills and work ethic to their crews; and together, taking care of business, the community, and one another.

# Employee Speaks Up for Mental Health

May was Mental Health Awareness Month. Cameron Carr, a DMV Technician with the Division of Motor Vehicles headquarters in Kanawha City, made the accompanying piece of artwork about dealing with a loved one with mental health issues. Here is his statement about the work:

"When thinking of doing a painting for Mental Health Awareness Month, this song, "Unwell," by Matchbox 20, kept ringing in my head. The song touches on the thoughts of one with mental health issues, the insecurities, the fears vulnerability of mind challenged. Growing up with a mother who was bi-polar, suffered from depression, I have always been aware of the struggles that are presented to the



individuals who fight that battle every day, the toll it takes on them, their happiness, their overall health, and also the toll it takes on those who love them, try to provide them with the unconditional love they need, and what a balancing act it can be. For too many decades, mental health was an issue to be swept under the rug, hidden in a backroom, a family secret, and the damage it has done is only now starting to be approached openly, honestly, and with the care and attention it demands and deserves.

Take care of yourself, both mentally and physically, and help, in ways you are able, with those who struggle. Your heart will thank you later." —Cameron M. Carr







## **SPECIAL FEATURE:**

### **Secretary Wriston on WVDOT Pay Raise**

**Editor's note: At the beginning of the 2022 session of the West Virginia Legislature, Gov. Jim Justice requested legislation for a 5 percent across-the-board pay raise for all state employees. The resulting legislation did not include funding for more than 6,000 employees of the West Virginia Department of Transportation.**

**Working with Gov. Justice, State Transportation Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E., instructed staff to come up with a way to ensure that transportation workers did not miss out. A raise for all Department of Transportation employees goes into effect July 1, 2022.**

**Below are Wriston's remarks on what led up to the raises:**

From the very beginning of his administration, Gov. Justice has emphasized the importance of maintaining our roads and bridges. He brought forth a big, bold vision, the Roads to Prosperity program. As a businessman, he understood that our sixth largest highway system in the country had been underinvested in for decades. And it showed in the condition of our highways and byways.

So he came up with a plan. A nearly \$3 billion bond program: to create jobs, to get lagging projects moving, and to begin catching up in making our roadways what they should be.

But he didn't stop there. He called for investment in the DOH

equipment inventory. He knew for our dedicated men and women had to have the proper tools and equipment to move us forward. He didn't stop there, either. He directed the Division to list what they needed and the roads that needed work. He demanded transparency and accountability in roadway maintenance work.

The annual plans can be seen on our website and the citizen can see how we're doing following that plan.

Still, he didn't stop. He proposed pay raises for state workers, and the Legislature agreed by passing an across-the-board raise for all agencies funded by General Fund revenues.

Once again, he didn't stop. The Department of Transportation workers aren't funded by General Revenue, so there was no legislative money appropriated for transportation workers ... but they will get a raise too.

In consultation with the governor's office, it was determined that we could indeed afford this investment in our workers. The raise for all the Department of Transportation will be 5 percent of the average DOT salary. It comes to \$2,250, plus or minus rounding.

Once again, this governor's vision of investing in our infrastructure is making life better for all West Virginians.

Investing in our people may very well be the best investment of them all.



## **WVDOH Continues Recruitment Drive with Multiple Hiring Events**

The West Virginia Department of Transportation continues active recruiting of new employees with special hiring events scheduled throughout the year. Localized hiring events in communities where there are specific employment needs are one way the WVDOT is able to fill vacancies and hire new workers quickly.

Gov. Jim Justice's \$2.8 billion Roads To Prosperity program created the immediate need for thousands of transportation workers, engineers, equipment operators, bridge inspectors, administrators, and others who would be needed to bring the Governor's vision to fruition. Knowing that, the WVDOT worked closely with Gov. Jim Justice and the West Virginia Legislature to pass a new law allowing the agency to greatly speed up the hiring

process. At hiring events throughout the state, prospective employees can now be interviewed on the spot and hired almost immediately.

The WVDOT is currently looking for Transportation Workers at various locations throughout the state. Hiring events were scheduled for June 1, 2022, in Berkeley County; June 2, 2022, in Jefferson County; June 14, 2022, in Hancock County; and June 15, 2022, in Moundsville. To apply for WVDOT jobs, visit [www.transportation.wv.gov](http://www.transportation.wv.gov) and click on WVDOT Careers.

In 2021, the WVDOT hired 638 new employees. Since January 2022, the WVDOT has hired more than 350.



## Change in Status Submissions: Why Prompt Attention Matters

Changes happen in life, and with those changes often comes a to-do list that can seem overwhelming. On that list are often changes to consider regarding your various insurance policies—Health, Dependent Life, Dental, Vision, Beneficiary Designations.

The primary responsibility lies with each policyholder to take the proper steps to report their changes.

Do not let the insurance changes overwhelm you, though! Your Benefit Coordinators and Specialists can help you with those changes.

In this article, we are going to focus on the Qualifying Event of Divorce, and the steps required to promptly make changes specific to divorce.

### Timing is Key

It is important that all Qualifying Events are reported promptly, however, it is vital that we all understand that the Qualifying Event of Divorce is of utmost importance and is to be reported immediately.

Page 30 of the 2022 PEIA Summary Plan Description provides a clear explanation of the timeframe for reporting, as well as a detailed table of various Qualifying Events, and outlines the required documentation for each. The timing in which the life event of divorce should be reported is explained as follows:

“Qualifying events which end eligibility (such as divorce) must be reported immediately. For purposes of eligibility, the term “immediately” shall mean as soon as practically possible and, in no case, greater than thirty (30) days from the date of the event, e.g., divorce.”

As indicated in the Summary Plan Description, it is of utmost importance that the Qualifying Event of Divorce be reported immediately.

### Why the big deal about the timing?

Why, you may ask, is the timeframe such a big deal?

Well, not only do you likely not want to continue to be responsible for the higher premium cost that you pay to maintain an ex-spouse on your coverage for various reasons; the Agency cannot continue to pay the higher employer share of the premiums. PEIA also cannot continue to pay claims for ineligible dependents.

Beyond the dollar signs, though, it is also important to be aware that to not remove an ineligible dependent from coverage immediately is legally considered to be insurance fraud, and could result in a collections process to obtain reimbursement from the policyholder for the overpayments made by the Agency, as well recovery of the cost of claims which may have been incurred by ineligible dependents.

If you have questions, or you need assistance through the process of removing an ineligible ex-spouse; the Human Resource Division’s Benefits Section is available to assist you, as well as the assigned Benefit Coordinators within your District or Division office. Help is only a call or email away.

Below is a general list of Qualifying Events, and the documentation required for each event:

- Divorce: Copy of the divorce decree showing the divorce is final.
- Marriage: Copy of valid marriage license or certificate. A dependent child’s marriage qualifies to remove the dependent from coverage if the policyholder desires.
- Birth of a child: Copy of child’s birth certificate.
- Adoption: Copy of adoption papers.
- Adding coverage for dependent child: Copy of child’s birth certificate.
- Adding coverage for another child who lives with policyholder: Copy of court-ordered guardianship papers.
- Open enrollment under spouse’s or dependents’ plan: Copy of material showing open enrollment dates and employer’s name.
- Death of spouse or dependent: Copy of death certificate.
- End of spouse’s or dependent’s employment: Letter from employer stating termination or retirement date, what coverage was lost, and covered dependents.
- Significant change in health coverage: Letter from insurance carrier explaining change.
- Unpaid leave of absence by employee, spouse, or dependent: Letter stating the date the covered person went on unpaid leave or returned from unpaid leave.



# Discover Your Career Opportunity with the West Virginia Division of Motor Vehicles!

DMV is hiring, and the service-oriented agency now offers many opportunities for career advancement. Some of the positions that are most frequently available due to the size of the agency and the focus on providing excellent and efficient customer service include:

- DMV Agents, who work in the Regional Offices across the state and interact daily with the public while providing services including: processing titles and registrations, issuing driver's licenses and ID cards, giving knowledge and skills tests, and directing customers at the information desks.
- DMV Specialists and Technicians, who are located in DMV Headquarters in Kanawha City. These positions are found in data entry and processing, title and registration work, driver's licensing processing, including areas such as citations and commercial driver's licensing, online processing, and DMV's centralized Call Center.

While DMV does have and occasionally offers other positions, these are the most frequently posted ones and are vital to the agency to provide the most effective customer service. And, with a new career and compensation plan that started at the beginning of 2022, DMV is excited to offer prospective employees more opportunities than ever before to find a job and advance in the agency.

Prospective employees should be diligent in checking the DOTCareers page at <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/wvdot/> as postings are routinely released (most often on a daily basis). DMV also encourages applicants to provide accurate, up-to-date information in the application process, and to follow the guidelines provided.



# Department of Transportation Announces Employees of the Year

The West Virginia Department of Transportation recently announced Employees of the Year for each division within the organization. With more than 5,000 employees, it was hard to pick, which may be why Transportation Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E., nominated his entire department. Below are the Employees of the Year:

SECRETARY'S OFFICE: Lorrie Hodges, Joyce Dunbar, Alanna Keller, Dave Cramer, Nate Tawney, Rita Pauley, Lori Suite, Scott Eplin, Marvin Murphy

STATE HIGHWAY ENGINEER: Shawna Goodwin

AUDITING DIVISION: Tricia Griffith

CIVIL RIGHTS: Alexander Hunt

LEGAL DIVISION: Erika Schrader

PUBLIC RELATIONS—selected by Randy Damron: Jennifer Dooley

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT: Joshua Sizemore

BUDGET PROCUREMENT DIVISION: Kristy James

FINANCE ADMINISTRATION DIVISION: Doreen Lanyi

OFFICE SERVICES: James Harmon

HUMAN RESOURCES: Angia Hughes

ENGINEERING DIVISION: Erika Carroll

RIGHT OF WAY DIVISION: Alicia Treadway

TECHNICAL SUPPORT: Traci Cummings

CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION DIVISION: Sasha Danberry

MCS&T DIVISION: Leonard Parks

EQUIPMENT DIVISION: Sandy Walters

OPERATIONS DIVISION: Dave Brabham

TRAFFIC ENGINEERING DIVISION: Cindy Cramer

PROGRAMMING DIVISION: Tressie Lopez

PLANNING DIVISION: Tim Sudosky

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT DIVISION: Jessica Taylor

DISTRICT 1: William "Bill" Harold

DISTRICT 2: John Ramey

DISTRICT 3: Kathy J. White

DISTRICT 4: Charles "JR" Crouse

DISTRICT 5: Zyndall Thorne

DISTRICT 6: Gary Matthews

DISTRICT 7: Rodney Pettit

DISTRICT 8: Lora Freeman

DISTRICT 9: Scottie Miller

DISTRICT 10: Debrina Woods

DMV: Linda Ellis

PUBLIC TRANSIT: Mike Glover

PARKWAYS AUTHORITY: Andy Hambrick

STATE RAIL AUTHORITY: Tammy Cooper



## GHSP Urges Parents and Caregivers: Look Before You Lock

Pediatric vehicular heatstroke (PVH) is the leading cause of non-crash, vehicle-related death for children in the United States, resulting in 906 fatalities among children 14 and younger since 1998. Summer is here and that means hot temperatures. The GHSP is reminding everyone about the dangers of PVH and how easily it could happen to anyone to help reduce the number of heatstroke deaths. Make sure it doesn't happen to your family: before walking away from your vehicle, Look Before You Lock. Never leave a child unattended in a vehicle, even for a few minutes.

In 2021, there were 23 preventable deaths of children in vehicles. In 2020, there were 25 deaths. These numbers were down considerably from 53 deaths per year in 2018 and 2019. Families staying home during 2020 and 2021 may have contributed to this decline.

The 'forgotten' circumstance sadly accounts for about half of all child heatstroke fatalities. In approximately half of these situations, the child was being taken to either childcare or preschool. The children are usually younger than one—possibly asleep or just quiet in the back seat. A change in routine is also a common factor in many of these preventable tragedies. For this reason, make it a habit to Look Before You Lock, every time you leave your vehicle. It takes just a moment to check the back seat—a simple step that will save lives.

Toddlers and mobile young children are also at risk of heatstroke, if they gain access into a parked vehicle. Some children get into an unlocked vehicle without the knowledge of an adult and may be unable to get out of the car, especially if the vehicle's child locks are activated.

A child's body temperature can rise up to five times faster than an adult's, and heatstroke can occur in outside temperatures as low as 57 degrees. On an 80-degree day, a car can reach deadly levels in just 10 minutes.

The GHSP urges all parents and caregivers to do these three things to help prevent child heatstroke:

- Make it a habit to look in the back seat EVERY time you exit the car.
- NEVER leave a child in a vehicle unattended, even for a short time or with the windows cracked.
- ALWAYS lock the car and put the keys out of reach.

If you are a bystander and see a child in a hot vehicle:

- Make sure the child is okay and responsive. If not, call 911 immediately.
- If the child appears to be okay, attempt to locate the parents or have the facility's security or management page the car owner over the PA system. If there is someone with you, one person should actively search for the parent while the other waits at the car.
- If the child is not responsive or appears to be in distress, attempt to get into the car to assist the child — even if that means breaking a window. Many states have "Good Samaritan" laws that protect people from lawsuits for getting involved to help a person in an emergency.

Know the warning signs of heatstroke, which include red, hot, and moist or dry skin; no sweating; a strong rapid pulse or a slow weak pulse; nausea; confusion; or acting strangely. If a child exhibits any of these signs after being in a hot vehicle, quickly spray the child with cool water or with a garden hose — NEVER put a child in an ice bath. Call 911 or your local emergency number immediately.

For more information on vehicular heatstroke, visit [www.nhtsa.gov/campaign/heatstroke](http://www.nhtsa.gov/campaign/heatstroke).

## Impaired Driving Enforcement

This West Virginia Day let's celebrate our state's creation and freedom by being responsible drivers. The GHSP is conducting a statewide impaired driving prevention enforcement period surrounding the West Virginia Day Holiday. Just one alcoholic beverage could be one too many for some drivers. If you plan to

drive, plan to refrain from alcohol or drugs during your West Virginia Day festivities.

If you do plan to enjoy alcohol beverages, be sure to arrange a sober ride home in advance. Mountaineers are always free. Stay free by driving sober.

