

WV DOT Today!



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How to Host an **Emergency Response!**

Thursday, August 25, 2022, would turn out to be a long day for Jeff Miller, executive director of the West Virginia Parkways Authority.

"It started around midnight when the call came in," Miller recalled.

A tractor-trailer carrying hazardous materials wrecked just after midnight in the northbound lane of the West Virginia Turnpike after the driver lost control, jackknifed, and crossed the barrier wall on the Skitter Creek Bridge, not far from Pax. The crash blocked both northbound and southbound lanes.

The driver was later arrested and charged with driving under the influence of alcohol. But for first responders, Turnpike crews, cleanup teams, and Miller, it was just the start of a long day trying to get the Turnpike cleaned up and opened back up to traffic.

"They shut down traffic right away at the site," Miller said. Turnpike crews then called the Pax Fire Department, West Virginia State Police, a hazardous materials response team, and the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection.

The Parkways Authority has a plan in place for just such occurrences on the Turnpike – the 66-page "red book," officially titled "Incident Management Emergency Traffic Control Handbook." The manual spells out what to do if there's a wreck anywhere along the Turnpike.

When it became obvious that the wreck would not be cleared quickly, the Parkways Authority pulled out the plan and instituted Turnpike Detour A.

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Also in this Issue: District 1 Completes Micropile. In Three Days!



Emergency Response Done Right

The detour diverts northbound traffic to Beckley, along US 19 to Interstate 79 Exit 57, then back down to Charleston. Traffic headed south is diverted onto I-79 at Charleston, up to US 19 and across to Beckley to get back onto the Turnpike.

"If we think an event is going to last two hours or longer, we put the detours in place," Miller said.

The two-hour Detour A is designed to discourage heavy truck traffic from using backroads to try to skirt an accident. Several trucks that ignored the prescribed detour route got hung up on backroads.

Hazardous materials cleanup crews from Clean Harbors in Nitro arrived at the crash site around noon and began removing hazardous chemicals from the overturned truck trailer and cleaned up chemicals that had spilled onto the bridge and leaked into Paint Creek.

Cleanup crews were able to remove the trailer from the southbound lane and the tractor from the northbound lane on Thursday afternoon and evening. The Turnpike opened to traffic at around 7:30 p.m.

For Miller, who was personally notified about the wreck at 3:30 a.m., it was the end of an approximately 18-hour workday.



Photos by Troy Morgan



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**.

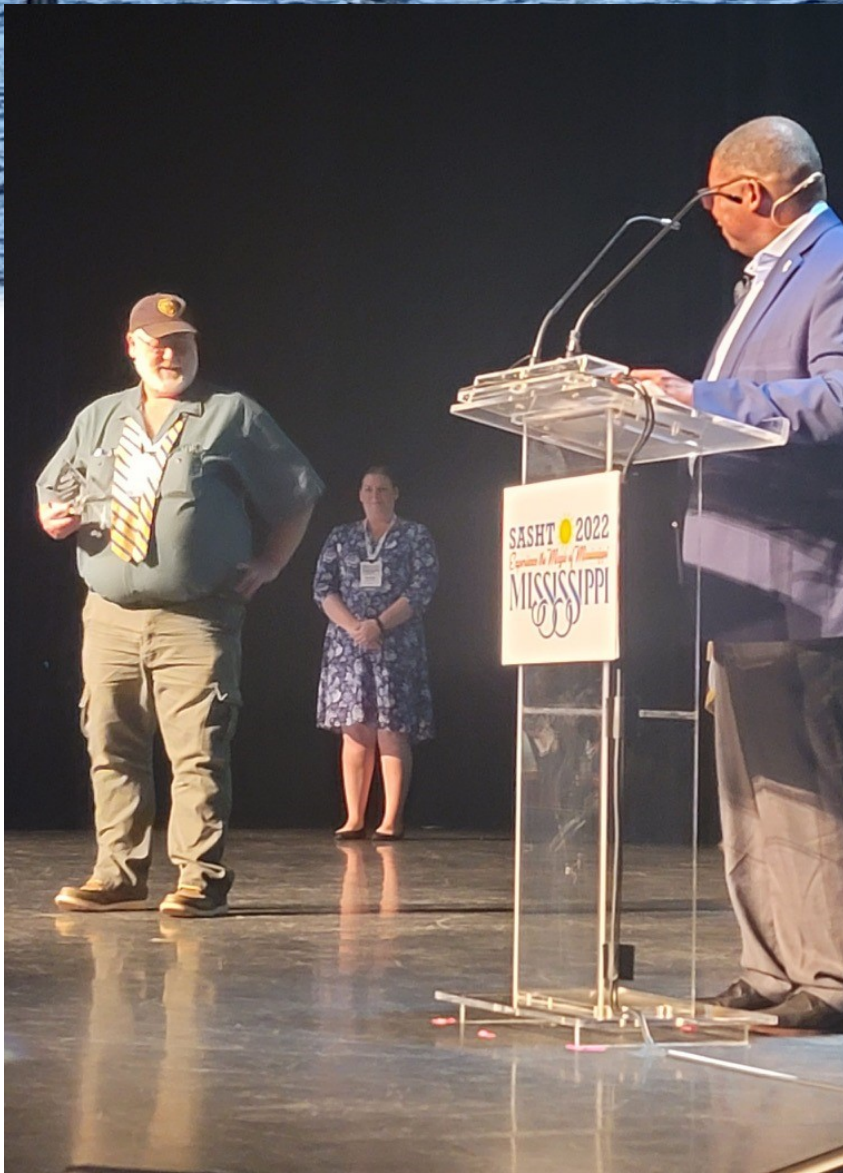
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WVDOT Wins at SASHTO



On Tuesday, August 30, 2022, Secretary of Transportation Jimmy Wriston, P.E., accepted a Regional America's Transportation Award on behalf of West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT) at the Southern Association of State Highway Officials (SASHTO) 2022 annual meeting in Biloxi, Mississippi, for the Oakwood Road RCUT project.

The project, which opened to traffic in 2021, installed the state's first Restricted Crossing U-Turn at the Oakwood Road intersection of Corridor G, reducing congestion through the area to improve safety for the public.

WVDOT's 11 delegates to the SASHTO conference met with our neighbors from Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. WVDOT appreciates the recognition from our neighbors and friends throughout the region and looks forward to the partnerships ahead.



Faulkner to Serve with Anti-Fraud Organization



Anna Faulkner, West Virginia Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) legal services attorney, was recently asked to serve as Legal Counsel to the National Odometer and Title Fraud Enforcement Association (NOTFEA).

According to their website, the purpose of NOTFEA is to deter

odometer, rebuilt/salvage, and other title fraud. The organization promotes cooperation between law enforcement and consumer protection agencies, licensing and motor vehicle departments, the automotive industry, and individuals interested in deterring fraud by developing a network of those

people and organizations.

The group also trains NOTFEA members and the public in the detection of altered and counterfeit titles; Develops and shares investigative information and techniques, prosecutorial documents and techniques, and other educational materials; monitors legislation and policies that affect fraud; and promotes public awareness of the economic impact of odometer and rebuilt/salvage fraud.

“Anna's participation on behalf of the West Virginia DMV and West Virginia Department of Transportation will greatly aid our state and citizens in our efforts to fight title and odometer fraud,” said DMV General Counsel Adam Holley.

“West Virginia DMV has many initiatives pending to use technology to improve titling and odometer processes,” Holley said. “Anna's role in NOTFEA will make sure that West Virginia's groundbreaking efforts are adopted nationwide and that our strict security requirements are followed from state to state.”

DMV Rolls Out Electronic Vehicle Titling

In keeping with providing the best customer service possible, the West Virginia Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) is excited to share that on Tuesday, August 30, 2022, the first fully electronic vehicle title with a lien was processed at Headquarters. The DMV started the pilot project in January 2022 with just six automobile dealers and now is very close to having full Electronic Lien and Titling (ELT) adoption by all in-state dealers. As this system moves forward and more functionality is added, it will only make things better for the DMV and the state.

According to DMV Commissioner Everett Frazier, "ELT will be much faster than the current paper titling process, which involves mailing, sorting, checking in by our Titles and Registration section, processing by our Data Entry employees, and then scanning in our Records department. The electronic process will be much faster, convenient, and efficient, with no lost paperwork!"

Additionally, dealers will be able to see the status of titles submitted in real time in the DMV process, including the added

benefit of receiving an instant notification if the paperwork is rejected. This allows the dealership to resubmit the paperwork quickly with no more long paper trail back and forth between dealerships and DMV. Dealers will also be able to apply online for a duplicate title.

"Another exciting component to titling being online and electronic," Frazier said, "is that it will be easy to correct mistakes, including misspellings, and without the need to create a 'send back', which just adds to processing time." DMV employees will be able to instantly pull up any ELT title, even pending ones, so there will be no more waiting for a document to be checked, logged, etc.

This new process will also create a much faster lien perfection. Finally, DMV would like to thank dealers and customers for their patience in getting this program up and running. The benefits to ELT will really propel the DMV and the State of West Virginia forward in our titling and lien process.

Rains Slam Fayette, Kanawha Counties

It's been unusually rainy this summer. While this may be good for gardens, for the West Virginia Division of Highways it has meant flooding and an unusually large number of slips and slides.

On Monday, Aug. 15, 2022, Gov. Jim Justice declared a state of emergency in Fayette and Kanawha counties after unusually heavy rainfall led to localized but severe flooding in some areas.

"It's been a tough six-week period," Joe Pack, P.E., Chief Engineer of District Operations, said at the time. "We've had one area hit after another, with all the rains we've had. Some areas have been hit which don't typically see high water. For our crews, it has been continuous."

The community of Smithers was among the hardest hit areas, with several feet of soupy mud covering literally everything from



roads to surrounding areas, making the area difficult to pass through even for those involved in the cleanup.

Significant washouts occurred in Cannelton Hollow between Smithers and the Mount Olive Correctional Facility, while WV 16 from Gauley Bridge to the Nicholas County line had six major mudslides. On Carbondale Road, WVDOH crews put in a temporary causeway to free about 10 families trapped after a bridge

washed out.

In Kanawha County, Campbell's Creek, Hughes Creek and Kelley's Creek were among the hardest hit areas. WVDOH crews cleaned out ditches, drains and pipes in these areas and clearing downed trees.

It took about three days, but all roads damaged by flooding eventually reopened.

Did You Know?

- This is a reminder that in December all the required vehicle forms (DOT-129 and DOT-55P) for those employees that drive state vehicles home need to be sent to Payroll for next calendar year 2023 vehicle fringe to be applied.
- Just a reminder since we are approaching the final quarter of calendar year 2022 that employees should get with their HR / payroll person at their location to ensure their address in HRM is correct so when W-2's are processed in January their address is correct on them.
- Word of the month: professionalism! Sometimes we love the people we work with and sometimes we don't even like them. This month we are joining together statewide to say it doesn't matter! We're at work to serve our state, which is a beautiful place (as the photo by Troy Morgan conveys) so let's make this one thing easy for each other. Let's work together to show each other the courtesy that our profession demands. There is zero room for drama or whispering birds when we're all diligently trying to work.



Work on MacCorkle Continues in the Wee Hours of the Night

Motorists travelling on MacCorkle Avenue in Kanawha City may think that work to revamp the section of highway has slowed down. However, work rebuilding MacCorkle Avenue from 33rd Street to 40th Street is going on every night.

Most of the work has been going on underground as contractors install drainpipes, storm drains and gutters. Work is mostly being conducted from 9p.m. until 6a.m. to minimize disruptions to the traveling public. "It hasn't been visible to the public, but we've been trucking along," said project supervisor Andy Womack.

In October 2021, Mountaineer Contractors Inc. was awarded a contract for \$10,036,333.91 to completely rebuild MacCorkle Avenue curb to curb between 33rd and 40th streets. The project will also ensure proper drainage, and is intended to keep MacCorkle Avenue safe and smooth for years to come.



Womack said contractors have been digging and installing drains while most people sleep. When they are finished for the night, they cover the work area with steel plates until paving can take place. The steel plates are one of the clues that work continues. Contractors are preparing to put in new curbs and gutters along MacCorkle Avenue. "In a few weeks we'll be drilling for new lighting and pouring new sidewalks," Womack said.

During the fall of 2021, contractors SQP Construction Group completed a \$570,000 project to install 105 ADA-compliant curb cuts on MacCorkle Avenue intersections between 35th Street and 58th Street. Completion of the curb cuts was necessary before work could begin on the roadway.

Another contract is expected to go out for bid in the coming months. This final project will completely repave MacCorkle Avenue from 40th Street to 56th Street.

WV DOT Recognized for Good Work

I just wanted to write a quick email to praise Hannah in the West Virginia Turnpike customer service center for her friendly demeanor and assistance. I recently traveled the Turnpike and had an issue with a toll I paid not registering. I called the number thinking I would be out of luck, but Hannah was immediately warm and understanding and guided me in the right direction to sort out my situation. She even called me afterwards to let me know that everything was fixed. I truly appreciate her efforts and wanted to pass it along. My husband and I really enjoy driving the turnpike and I think I'll only appreciate the scenery more knowing there are kind-hearted folks working both the toll booths and behind the scenes.

Thank you for your service to our nation's infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Heidi Hanks

I just wanted to share this cute story with you all. I live in Wood County, and we have a new Rest Stop/ Visitor Center on I-77 off the Williamstown, WV exit. Like most people I could not understand why we needed such an expensive thing when the old one in Mineral Wells on I-77 was just fine. Well, I found out why. I stopped at the new one on the way to work. An elderly couple from Maryland was parked near me. They stopped me and said that it was one of the best rest stops they had been to. They kept saying it was so nice! I found myself saying, "Thank You!" Like I built the thing but then I thought in a way I did because my tax money went into it. So I thought I would contact the people who did build it and tell you all it is appreciated. If we cannot beat our neighbor states at football we can have the best rest stops!

Bryinna Peck of Wood County.



District 1 Builds Micropile in Three Days

A series of tractor-trailer accidents on Martins Branch Road in Kanawha County resulted in District 1 maintenance crews putting in a pile wall to help correct a troublesome turn.

In three days.

A tractor-trailer recently lost its trailer in a sharp turn on the road, ripping out guardrail and compromising the road shoulder. Martins Branch Road is prominently marked as not suitable for the passage of large trucks, and drivers are strongly urged to follow these guidelines.

“While we can’t tell truck drivers that they can’t use the road, those yellow caution signs are there for a reason,” said WVDOH District 1 Manager Arlie Matney. “We are asking drivers to take note of those signs and use caution in the area. Slow down a little in that turn, it’s not worth the risk.”

Matney said cars and school buses negotiate the turn with ease, but tractor trailers can easily get their trailers too far out onto the shoulder,



tearing out the guardrail and possibly even going over the hill. Yellow caution signs are used in situations such as this, to convey to drivers who may not be familiar with a road important information specific to driving in the area.

Matney and a District 1 crew went to the site of the accidents and determined the best solution would be to put in a micropile retaining wall. The wall, consisting of concrete slabs held up by steel pilings sunk about 15 feet into the ground, will allow the WVDOH to widen the shoulder and install backfill to allow installation of new guardrail.



Fortunately, Matney said, District 1 crews have become experts at installing piling walls. By using our own drills and crews, District 1 was able to install a micropile in three days. In the process, they were able to widen the shoulder by about three feet and create a solid foundation to replace the guardrail.

The extra three feet of shoulder should also help keep trailers from slipping over the bank.



Roads to Prosperity: Capehart Bridge

A contract to replace the Capehart Bridge was recently awarded to R.K. Construction Inc., with a low bid of \$1,732,069. The project will be paid for with funding from Governor Jim Justice's Roads to Prosperity Program. Replacement of the weight-restricted bridge in Mason County is among 15 construction contracts awarded by the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) on Tuesday, August 23, 2022, and Friday, August 26, 2022. The contract to replace the bridge is from a bid letting held Tuesday, August 9, 2022.



Capehart. The structure has been under weight restrictions since 2016. The bridge carries about 300 vehicles a day.

"Due to its condition, we were inspecting it every year instead of every two years to ensure the safety of

the people using the bridge," said WVDOH State Bridge Engineer Tracy Brown, P.E.

"Roads to Prosperity funding will allow us to replace the bridge many years sooner than if we had to keep maintaining structure," Brown said. Traffic will continue to use the existing bridge until the new span is built.

The existing bridge was built in 1972 and carries Tribble Road across 13-Mile Creek near the Mason County community of

Why Not to Drive Through High Water

On Wednesday, August 10, 2022, West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) crews from North Charleston got a call about high water on Kelly's Creek Road near Sissonville. On the scene within the hour, they worked through the night to reopen the road, which had been washed out by flooding.



Runoff from the heavy rains washed fence posts, concrete, car tires, and other debris into the mouth of a culvert under the road, blocking the culvert. Instead of flowing through the culvert, the water flowed around and under the road, washing away backfill and leaving a large sinkhole.

North Charleston crews quickly removed debris so water could again flow through the culvert. Though the culvert was undamaged, the road had been washed out. "The North Charleston crew did an excellent job of evaluating the situation and performing the necessary work to re-open the road as quickly as possible," said District 1 Maintenance Engineer Kathy Rushworth, P.E. "They worked through the night so citizens

could safely travel the road the next morning."

Crews removed the loose material from beneath the road and added eight truckloads of stone to replace the fill that had been washed away. North Charleston crews had the road back open to traffic in just 6 1/2 hours.

The washout is a reminder to drivers to beware of high waters on roads. Good things take time; bad things can happen fast. In West Virginia's mountainous terrain significant damage can occur quickly in a single evening of heavy rain.

"When you see high water overtaking the roadway, turn around," said Joe Pack P.E., WVDOH Chief Engineer of District Operations. "It's not worth the risk to try to drive through. These photos show what words cannot. In high water, what's underneath may not be the road as you know it. Stay safe, be patient, and our crews will have the roads reopened as soon as they've accessed and repaired the damage."





After 38 years of service, Mark Carr, Shop Supervisor, retired from the South Branch Valley Railroad (SBVR) on August 25, 2022. He joined the South Branch Valley Railroad November 1, 1983. He has worked several positions at the railroad with currently being the shop supervisor. On Monday, August 22, 2022 he was surprised by his coworkers and his wife, Tammy, with a cake and ice cream. Cindy Butler, Commissioner of WV Division of Multimodal Transportation Facilities, presented Mark with an engraved watch in appreciation of and noting years of service to the SBVR. In his spare time, he is a member of the Moorefield Volunteer Fire Department, he flies drones, and he also plays the trumpet. He resides in Moorefield with his wife Tammy.

We wish you all the best Mark, but know that you will be missed!



VISION AWARDS

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

Marjorie Waybright—District 4

Dipak Patel—DMV

Natalie Holcomb—DMV

Perry Keller—Planning Division

Rusty Marks—Public Relations

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.



National Child Passenger Safety Week

Child Passenger Safety is a top priority for the West Virginia Governor's Highway Safety Program (GHSP). The GHSP relies upon research by and data from the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to help guide parents on what the best practices are to keep kids safe while traveling in vehicles.

Did you know that nearly half of child safety seats are not installed correctly? Do you know if your child's car seat is correctly installed in your vehicle? Do you know that in addition to finding the right seat for a child's weight and height, it's equally important that it fits your vehicle properly as well? The GHSP works to answer these questions and more so parents and caregivers know the best practices for keeping their children as safe as possible when traveling in a motor vehicle.

Child Passenger Safety Week is recognized annually to bring awareness to the importance of choosing the right seat and making sure child safety seats are installed correctly. This year, National Child Passenger Safety Week will be observed Sept. 18-24, 2022. The GHSP encourages parents and caregivers to take a few minutes out of their busy day to have a Child Passenger Safety Technician take a second look at their children's car seat(s) and booster seat(s), to ensure that they fit their children appropriately and that they are correctly installed in their vehicle.

National Seat Check Saturday is Sept. 24, 2022. Find certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians in your community and call ahead to schedule an appointment. These specially trained technicians will explain and demonstrate how to use car seats, booster seats, and seat belts correctly. Technicians will help educate caregivers on choosing the correct car seat, installing that seat correctly in their vehicle, and using that seat correctly every time, free of charge.

Check out these statistics that show why it is so important to make sure the car seat you use is appropriate for the child's size and is installed correctly:

- Car crashes are a leading cause of death for children.
- On average, two children under 13 were killed, and an estimated 278 were injured every day in 2020 while riding in cars, SUVs, pickups, and vans.
- In 2020, 604 child passenger vehicle occupants died in traffic crashes, compared to 617 in 2019.
- In 2020, more than a third (38%) of children who died while riding in passenger vehicles were unrestrained.
- From 2016 to 2020, there were 3,267 children under 13 killed while riding in passenger vehicles. Child crash fatalities decreased every year from 2016 to 2020.
- From 2016 to 2020, there were 1,721 "tweens" (8 to 14 years old) killed in passenger vehicles. In 2020 alone, the 8- to 12-year-old age group had the highest number of fatalities (216) among children in passenger vehicles, followed by the 4-to-7-year-old age group (207).
- In 2020, an estimated 101,656 children riding in passenger vehicles were injured in traffic crashes.
- Of the children under 13 involved in crashes in 2020, an estimated 14% were injured.
- Children from some minority groups are at greater risk of being unrestrained when killed in traffic crashes: According to 2019 data from NHTSA, 54% of Black children killed in car crashes were unrestrained, followed by Hispanic children (41%), and American Indian children (31%). By comparison, White children killed were unrestrained 26% of the time.
- In 2020, over half (53%) of the children killed while riding in light trucks were unrestrained, followed closely by SUVs (46%), passenger cars (34%), and vans (34%). Children are safest when secured in the proper car seats or booster seats for their height, weights, and maturity level.

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Crash Safety for Bridge Crews

The West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) Equipment Division recently bought the state's first purpose-built Attenuator Truck to provide extra protection for WVDOH interstate bridge crews.

An Attenuator Truck acts as a protective cushion device intended to absorb high-energy kinetic impact. The back of the truck features a fold-down barricade. Just park the truck, lower the barricade and lock the brakes.

"If something hits the back of it, the barricade collapses," said Equipment Division Director Jeff Pifer, P.E. "It protects the person who crashed into it and your work crew."



Buckhannon Paint Shop Paying Off

In its first year or so of operation, the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) vehicle maintenance facility at the Equipment Division in Buckhannon has more than paid off in savings to the WVDOH and to taxpayers.

With a state-of-the-art paint booth able to accommodate 50-foot trailers and most pieces

of large equipment, repair facilities and even the ability to fabricate cabs and other parts, crews at the Equipment Division are getting very good at repairing and repainting equipment.

"We've got two of the best body men that I've worked with," said Jeff Pifer, P.E., Equipment Division Director. "I would put our equipment refinishing up against anybody in the state. Their work speaks for itself.

"We've been painting a lot of equipment."

The hi-tech paint booth, at a cost of about \$300,000, was assembled and outfitted almost exclusively by the Equipment Division's own work crews. The facility offers a



climate-controlled, environmentally safe and dust-free booth to paint even the biggest equipment.

"We were paying a great deal of money to have equipment done in the private sector," Pifer said. "But most of your paint operators are set up to do cars and pickup trucks. They're not set up to do graders and loaders and

over-the-road Class A truck tractors.

"This gives us the ability to do that work."

Pifer said the paint booth has saved the WVDOH and taxpayers a substantial amount of money. But the biggest payoff is in time and efficiency.

"We have control over when we do it now," Pifer said. "We're not at somebody else's mercy. When we're ready to paint, our painters are ready to go. We're not waiting on a contractor to tell us they can or can't do it."

The same crews who built the paint shop also built a modern conference facility.



Stop. Because Trains Can't

There's something nostalgic, exciting, and romantic about trains. No wonder trains have been the backdrop of countless movies throughout the years. From 1926's "The General" to the "Snow" scene in Irving Berlin's "White Christmas" to when a young Harry Potter travels on the Hogwarts Express, film has captured the grandeur, power and speed of locomotives. In West Virginia, trains are not just part of the scenery. Trains provide an essential mode of exporting coal from our mines to processing and power plants.



To keep vehicle drivers and pedestrians safe on and around train tracks, the West Virginia Governor's Highway Safety Program joins the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and other state highway safety offices for the Stop. Trains Can't. safety campaign. The agencies want to educate all vehicle drivers about the importance of rail crossing safety to help reduce collisions, injuries, and deaths at freight and commuter train and rail transit train crossings. The campaign will run from September 12 through December 14, 2022, and will coincide with Rail Safety Week, which takes place September 19-25, 2022.

It's important to remember that trains always have the right of way. Because of their size, trains can take more than a mile to stop while traveling at a speed of 55 miles per hour — the length of 18 football fields. According to data from FRA, the number of drivers going around gates at rail crossings has spiked in recent years. Between 2017 and 2021, there were 7,919 collisions between freight and commuter trains and motor vehicles, resulting in 620 fatalities and 2,965 people injured at public highway-rail grade crossings. During that time, 1,679 collisions

occurred when drivers went around or through a lowered gate, accounting for 21% of all collisions. Tragically, these rail crossing deaths were caused by risky driving behaviors and poor decision-making which means they could have been prevented.

A train cannot swerve, stop quickly, or change direction to avert a collision. Avoiding a

collision with a train is always the responsibility of the vehicle driver. There are 125,500 public rail crossings in the United States, and roughly 56% are "active" crossings that include warning devices such as gates, bells, or flashing lights to alert drivers of an approaching train. Approximately 70% of all collisions at rail crossings occur where active warning devices are present. For these reasons, it's imperative to understand the dangers associated with a rail crossing. Never race a train. It is easy to misjudge a train's speed and distance from the crossing.

Always practice safe habits when crossing rail tracks. When approaching a rail crossing, slow down and look out for a train on the tracks, especially at "passive" crossings, where no warning devices are present. Like crossing the street, always look both ways before crossing the rail track. Be aware that you may need to cross multiple sets of tracks at some rail crossings, so ensure there is plenty of room on either side of the tracks so your vehicle can cross safely. Most importantly: never stop on the train tracks. If your vehicle stalls on the tracks, quickly move away from the track and your vehicle at a 45-degree angle and call the number on the Emergency Notification System sign or dial 911.

Remember: the right choice at railroad crossings could save your life. Stop. Trains Can't.

For more information, visit nhtsa.gov/campaign/railroad-crossing.

