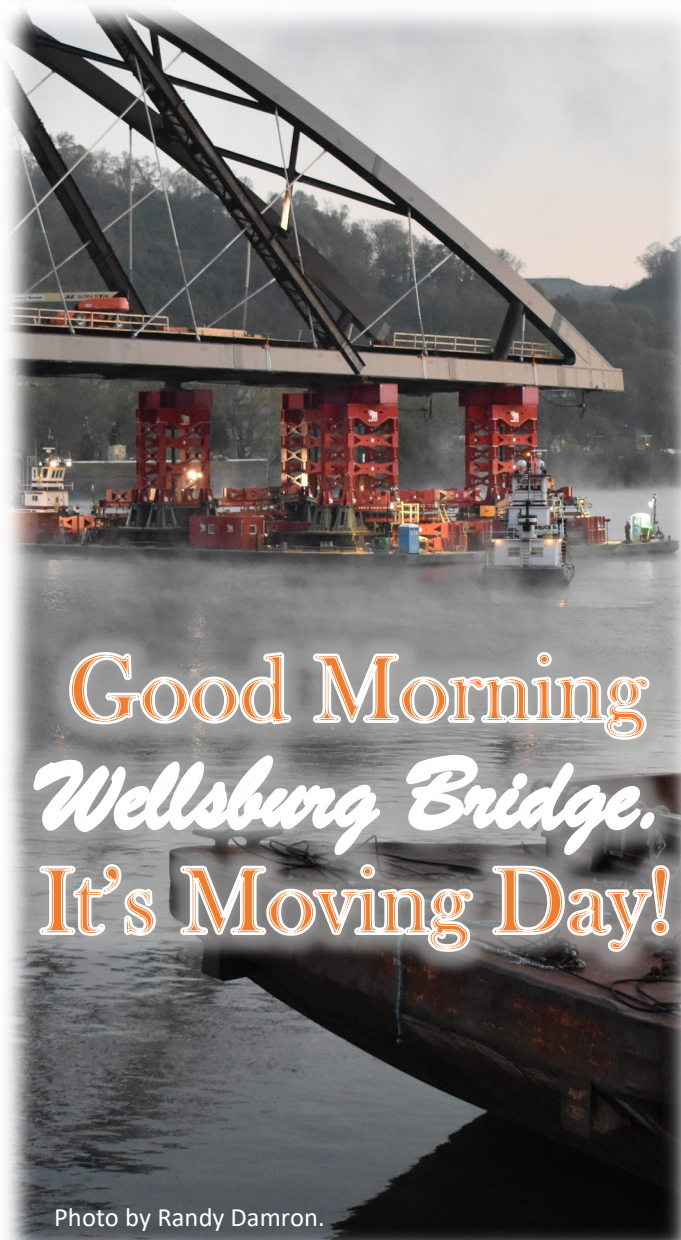


# WV DOT Today!



## Good Morning Wellsburg Bridge. It's Moving Day!

Photo by Randy Damron.

**Wellsburg, West Virginia**—Monday, April 26 was a big day for one of West Virginia Division of Highway's 7,000 bridges. It was moving day for the new Wellsburg Bridge, scheduled for completion by the fall of 2022. Built on the shore on the West Virginia side of the Ohio River, the bridge was to travel to its new home atop piers constructed a mile downstream. Its new home had a view of the town of Brilliant, Ohio; a town who has awaited its arrival for decades. With smoke rising in the distance and a few folks watching from mountaintops circling the peaceful valley, the bridge got up very early in the morning for moving day, so early that it probably didn't sleep the night before at all — just like the people who would spend its moving day on barges holding it up as it floated home.

It was the first and only day the bridge ever traveled by boat, and it certainly was a perfect day for its journey. Still in partial darkness, the bridge moved away from the shore. Fog on the river was light as it traveled through the sunrise. It made a 90 degree turn at its new destination before lunchtime, but no one on the banks was eating lunch. Elementary school students watched, and you know how they are, they jump when they're happy, there was a skip in their step, they're going to tell their grandkids 70 years from now. West Virginia and Ohio Department of Transportation workers watched from the bank, not really caring which side of the river they're from. The people from Flatiron, the contractor for the bridge's construction, must have been nervous, but — it's not every day that (relatively) small humans move 830 foot bridges — so everyone was happy, and everyone was together as the infrastructure moved into place to build on the community for years to come. By the end of the day, the Wellsburg Bridge was feeling welcome in its "home sweet home."



## Go Orange-For Work Zone Safety

This month, the entire newsletter is Orange for Work Zone Safety Awareness. Slow down and be alert in every work zone.



# Governor Jim Justice: April Is Work Zone Safety Month



Governor Justice signed a proclamation early in April expanding Work Zone Safety Week to the entire month of April.

“The Governor's vision to expand our Work Zone Safety period from a week to a month is the kind of commitment we need from all West Virginians,” Deputy Secretary Wriston said. “On our end with the DOH, we’re not going to settle for just meeting our required safety standards. We’re going to go above and beyond. We’re going to be committed to our national campaign to work towards zero deaths on our highways.”



• **WVDOT Today!** is a monthly newsletter published by the West Virginia Department of Transportation. 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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# *Wellsburg Bridge: Photo Feature by Randy Damron*



# Work Zone Accidents On the Rise

Traffic accidents in highway work zones are on the rise in the Mountain State.

According to data compiled by the West Virginia Division of Highways, accidents in work zones rose every year between 2014 and 2019, and went up again in 2020. And not by just a little. Data shows that work zone accidents went up from fewer than 300 in 2014 to nearly 700 in 2019.

There were 702 crashes in West Virginia's work zones last year, and four deaths.

Work zone accidents led to more than 130 injuries in 2020.

Work zone safety isn't just a problem in West Virginia. A 2018 study by the national Center for Construction Research and Training found that 532 construction workers were killed in

highway work zones between 2011 and 2016, more than double the total for all other industries combined. The number of deaths went up each year since 2012.

Researchers found that just over half of workers killed in work zones were hit by moving vehicles or equipment. Many of the accidents could be attributed to distracted drivers.

That's why it's so important for motorists to pay attention when approaching work zones. Keep an eye out for



construction signs warning of lane closures or other work going on.

And, above all, keep your heads up and your phones down. Just. Slow. Down.

# State Force Pavers Paying Off

**BRIDGEPORT, West Virginia** – Earl Gaskins, District 4 Maintenance Assistant with the West Virginia Division of Highways, casts a critical but approving eye as a hulking white paving machine inches its way up a steep subdivision road just outside the town of Bridgeport. In its wake it leaves a smooth ribbon of asphalt, 10 feet wide and two inches thick.

"That's a good-looking seam," he says, inspecting the joint where the new asphalt butts up against another 10-foot strip of asphalt on the other half of the road.

District 4 saved both time and money by having their own paving crew and their own paving machine to do the 2 ½-day paving job themselves.

Jeff Pifer, director of the WVDOH Equipment Division in Buckhannon, said DOH bought eight brand new paving machines in 2020 at a unit cost of \$330,000 each. The paving machines allow DOH road crews to take on their own paving projects without having to call in contractors.



In District 4, which includes Doddridge, Harrison, Marion, Monongalia, Preston and Taylor counties, having their own paving machine and crew is already paying off.

"With jobs like this, it would take a long time to get a contractor in here," Gaskins said. "It could take years and years."

A little job like the 1.16-mile paving project in the Auburn Woods subdivision would ordinarily fall pretty low on the District 4 priority list. Having a paving machine and

crew in-house allowed Gaskins to prioritize the project without having to worry about a contractor's schedule or expense.

"We save about 25 percent of the contract price by doing it ourselves," Gaskins said.

Since getting the paving machine last year, Gaskins' paving crew has laid down about 21,000 tons of asphalt, at a cost of about \$1 million. He expects to do another \$1 million worth of work this spring.



## Meet Your State Highway Engineer: Alan Reed

Alan Reed is State Highway Engineer for the West Virginia Division of Highways. If WVDOH is doing something, chances are Reed has something to do with it.

"I think this job could be described as the chief operating officer for the Division of Highways," Reed said. "I have involvement in almost every part of WVDOH."

"One minute I can be solving a problem for an employee on the ground and the next I can be talking about getting out the projects for a program running hundreds of millions of dollars," said the 25-year employee.

Reed has an Associate's Degree in Business Administration from Beckley College, and went back to school in his 30s to obtain a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering from West Virginia Tech. He started his career with WVDOH as an engineering trainee.

Reed, 61, still lives on a portion of his family farm near Beckley with his wife of 42 years, Susan. When not working he likes to fish, hunt, ride motorcycles and work on his 1971 Camaro.

"I'm a Chevy guy," he says proudly.

**\*Check back each month as Rusty Marks presents a profile of another member of WVDOH's management team.**



## McDowell Bridge Replacement Nearly Complete

**GARY, West Virginia** – Work is nearly complete on a new bridge in the friendly city of Gary in McDowell County.

Joe Pack, District Engineer for the West Virginia Division of Highways' District 10, said the new bridge is scheduled to open on May 28, 2021. Pack said the bridge, near the intersection of WV 103 and County Route 13, is the only way in and out for residents of the McDowell County communities of Elbert and Filbert, and provides access to a local coal mine and ATV trails.

Local officials said about 150 coal trucks carry about 4,000 tons of coal over the bridge every day.

Pack said the bridge was shut down in 2017 due to excessive wear and tear.

"It was an older bridge," he said. "It had served its life, and it needed replaced."



Pack said WVDOH built a temporary new deck on top of the existing bridge to allow traffic to continue using the bridge while they worked out a replacement plan. A temporary bridge was then built next to the existing structure.

Rock Forge Bridge Company LLC won the \$1,527,500 contract to replace the span. Traffic was rerouted to the temporary bridge to allow the original structure to be demolished. Rock Forge then

began construction of a new bridge on the original site.

Pack said that work is nearly complete. He said the new bridge will be more than adequate to handle local traffic, coal trucks and tourists.



## Fun Facts About Asphalt



According to WVDOH State Highways Administrator Arlie Matney:

The weather needs to be between 45 and 50 degrees Fahrenheit for the most effective use of hot asphalt.

Hot asphalt goes on the truck at around 300—325 degrees Fahrenheit.

“It’s got to be movable and workable.” Cold asphalt doesn’t spread or stick as well.

All asphalt plants in the state are now open.

Some asphalt plants opened early in March, allowing highways’ crews to get an early start on patching.

## District 1 Cleans Up Local Eyesore

**NITRO, West Virginia** – Cleanup crews from the West Virginia Division of Highways recently cleaned up a section of right-of-way that truck drivers were using as a personal dumping ground.

“It was a full-blown beautification effort,” said State Highways Administrator Arlie Matney.

On Thursday, March 25, work crews from District 1 -- which includes Boone, Clay, Kanawha, Mason and Putnam counties -- went to work cleaning up a section of WV 25 immediately across the road from the Pilot Travel Center. The Travel Center is just off the Nitro exit of Interstate 64.

District 1 District Engineer Travis Knighton said truck drivers

have been pulling off the road along the stretch of highway and using the area as their personal garbage dump.



“It’s been going on for a couple of years now,” Knighton said. “It was horrible looking. It has created an eyesore and a health issue.”

Matney said cleanup crews picked up about 20 bags of garbage along a 1,000-foot section of WV 25. “We even found a mattress out of the sleeper of one of the tractor-trailers,” he said.

Matney said crews cleaned out a ditch line in the area and cut brush to make the section of highway look better.

Knighton said DOH intends to cut another ditch across the area to “discourage” truck drivers from pulling off the road.

## Patching Potholes 101

Now that West Virginia Deputy State Highways Commissioner Jimmy Wriston has banned the practice of “throw and go” patching for potholes in favor of “mill and fill,” all 10 highways’ districts are using the same method. The people on the ground know, but for those working in other professions within the Division, some may be asking “what’s the difference?”

Mill out the old pothole to a depth of two inches and make a square or



rectangular hole 28 inches wide.

Sweep out all the old debris, leaving a nice clean square or rectangular hole where the pothole used to be.

Coat the bottom and sides of the hole with an asphalt adhesive.

Fill the hole with hot asphalt, rake it level and roll it smooth with a roller.

Three cheers for our folks taking the time to do it right; taking pride in their work all around the state.



## *Turns Out We Should Have Just Hired Tony!*



## *Deputy Secretary Receives Letter Praising Employee*

Hi Mr. Wriston—I just had a SUPER experience with **Sharonnia Osayaba**, who makes you and your office come across as highly professional. I rarely take the time to communicate this type of praise, but she really reflects well on you and your office's training.

I live on Rockwell Street in Berkeley Springs. Half of the road is beautifully maintained by the city, and the other half--meaning the half of the road that my home is located on (which connects with Peerless Lane)--is one of the worst roads in the area. This road hasn't been properly maintained for years. I tried to file a report with WVDOT by following "expected" procedure; I tried to file a request for maintenance online, but my entire effort was STOPPED COLD by a "required" field that needed a "Route Number" for Rockwell Street. But even after a diligent 45-minute search online and on the WVDOT website, I still couldn't find any "Route Number" for Rockwell Street. I then put in calls to my district that ultimately didn't get returned.

I finally called the main number and spoke with Jesse who directed me to Sharonnia. She IMMEDIATELY grasped what I was trying to achieve. She was patient and pleasant and professional and knowledgeable and took down my information and advised me that she would be creating a ticket by alerting the correct repair department about my request. As if that weren't already demonstrating enough extreme competence, without my even prompting her, she volunteered that she would also contact the Web people to let them know of my frustration at having my entire submission blocked just because of my inability to ferret-out one minor detail of information that probably isn't even needed for my reporting.

Thank you for having Sharonnia on your team! I hope that half of Rockwell Street and its connecting street, Peer Lane, can be repaired not simply for the local residents, but also for the USPS Mail trucks, the Emergency Services and Police who also use these roads.

Respectfully, Jerry Glasser

**Tune in to your local radio or t.v. station every morning to hear highlights of your area pothole milling & filling program.**



## *West Virginia Governor's Highway Safety Program Coordinates Statewide Click It Or Ticket Effort in Nationwide Campaign*

If you are one of the 90.17% of West Virginians who buckle up on a regular basis, THANK YOU! Thank YOU for making the choice to keep yourself and your family safe! Despite the fact that the seat belt use rate in West Virginia is above the national average, too many people continue to die on our roadways because they choose not to buckle up.

Wearing a seat belt is one of the simplest actions you can take to keep yourself safe while traveling in a vehicle. While there are always exceptions to every rule, the likelihood of you surviving a crash is far greater if you are wearing your seat belt correctly.

The West Virginia Governor's Highway Safety Program (GHSP) partners with law enforcement agencies across the state for statewide *Click It or Ticket (CIOT)* high visibility enforcement efforts throughout the year – one national effort in May and three statewide efforts in October, March and August. The statewide May CIOT effort begins May 14 and continues through the end of the month. The WV GHSP encourages everyone to protect yourself and the people you care about by buckling up, every trip, every time. Remember: *Click It or Ticket*.

*Click It or Ticket* is a high visibility public awareness and enforcement campaign designed to increase seat belt use among West Virginia motorists. The sole goal of this important highway safety initiative is to save lives by increasing the number of people who

wear their seat belts in accordance with West Virginia law.

The primary seat belt law went into effect on July 9, 2013. Since the passage of the seat belt law, West Virginia's seat belt usage range climbed from 49.5% in 2000 to 90.17% in 2019.

West Virginia's law requires everyone in the front seat (driver and passenger) and passengers under 18 in the back seat to wear a seat belt or be buckled in a child car seat appropriate for the child's height, weight, and age.

The fine for violations is \$25, with no points or associated court fees.

A little background on us: 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 WV's roadways. We do this through concerted media and enforcement efforts in an attempt to change driving behaviors. We want YOU to be safe on the roadways so that we ALL are safe on the roadways.

For more information, please visit the [dmv.wv.gov/ghsp](http://dmv.wv.gov/ghsp) or visit the GHSP's social media channels at [facebook.com/wvghsp](https://facebook.com/wvghsp) or [twitter.com/WVhighwaysafety](https://twitter.com/WVhighwaysafety).

## *Slow Down Folks! Says Carla. WVDOT Agrees.*

I live off the Merrit Creek exit, so I travel through the construction in Barboursville on 64 between the mall and Merrit Creek exit almost every day. I think the signage is enough, but people need to slow down. If people would slow down to 55 and pay attention, there wouldn't be any issues. The construction isn't the problem, it's the fact that people are going way over the speed limit. I've been passed like I'm sitting still before.

-Carla, Huntington

*\*Note for Carla; we appreciate you following the posted speed limit, although we won't give up on making this work zone, and all the work zones, safer!*

Just.  
Slow.  
Down.







# VISION AWARDS

Congratulations to the following individuals being recognized this month by Secretary Byrd White and Deputy Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E., for their dedication to The Vision.

**Jennifer Meeks—Legal**

**Robert Blaylock—District 1**

**Missy Bentley—Traffic**

**Bobby Martin—Office Services**

**Sharonnia Osayaba—Executive Information**

**Josh Brown—District 4**

**Leslie Atkins—Personnel**

**Mike Withrow—District 6**

*We're Winning  
The War  
On Potholes —  
But They'll  
Beat Us  
If We  
Let Up!*



The Vision is simple; to be the best DOH 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 DOH 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

Available on the Soundcloud App.

New Shows: Thursday 4:00 p.m.

Or listen on our webpage: [transportation.wv.gov](http://transportation.wv.gov)

[Transportation.wv.gov](http://Transportation.wv.gov)

Click on the Podcast link.



# *A Clean Sheet of Paper: Starting Again*

**By Secretary Byrd White.**

Many of you who have worked closely with me have heard me refer to “A clean sheet of paper”.

In previous articles I discussed knowing where you are going. Once you have your objective in mind, before just starting the job, take a minute to think. You know how the job has been done in the past but is that the best way? Is there a better, cheaper, quicker way to accomplish the same goal? Do not fall into the “we have always done it this way” trap.

All of us do things everyday without thinking about them. We do them as we were taught or maybe as we saw others do or how we thought they should be done. The way things have always been done. Instead of mindlessly doing a task, what if you stopped and thought about the way it should be done? Something as simple as your drive home. Most of us go the same way every day without asking ourselves if it is the simplest or most enjoyable way.

Before you start a task, before you start doing something the way it has always been done, stop and think, is there a better way?



## *Keeping the Fleet Moving; Ernie Peake*



"I am usually complaining about the trucks being dirty or not greased, but Ernie seems to always have the equipment at Crawley ready to tackle whatever may come up," said Scottie Miller. "I appreciate his efforts more than he will ever know. There's a 13 year old truck, with almost 400,000 miles and 23510 hours, but Ernie Peake has gone above and beyond to maintain it. "

The feeling is mutual among those who know Ernie.

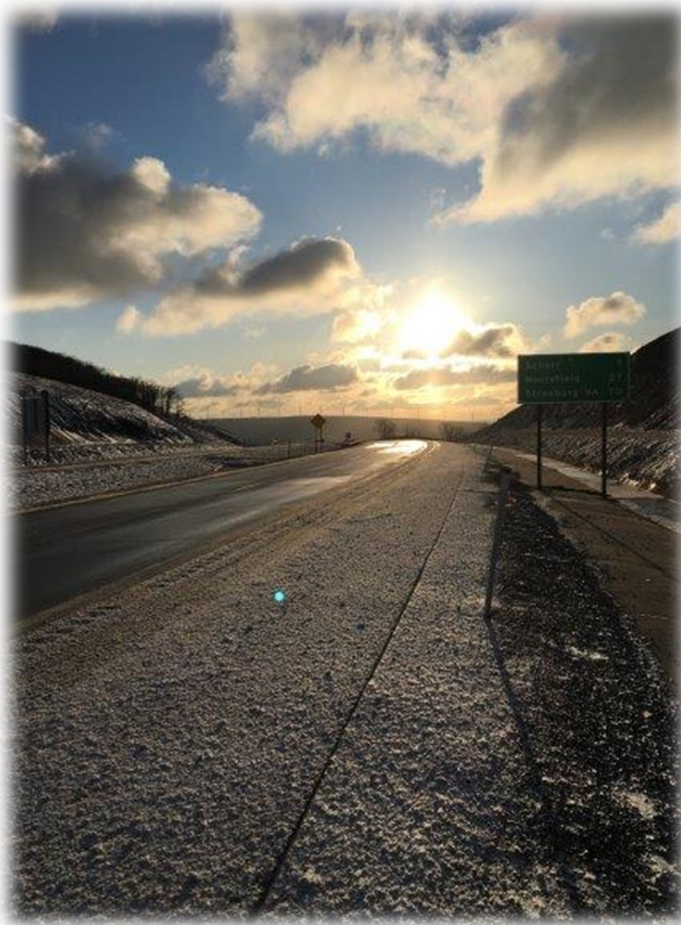
"Ernie cares about the fleet," said Shaun Viers. "He goes above and beyond his call of duty, and has done so throughout his years of service."

When Secretary of Transportation, Byrd White, and Deputy Secretary, Jimmy Wriston, heard about the dedication Ernie has shown to proper care and maintenance of the fleet, they were equally impressed.

"I've been impressed by the quality of people I've met throughout our organization," said White.

"These guys, they'll do," said Wriston. "They're the best there is."

## *WVDOH Thanks Sunshine For Help Clearing Snow on Corridor HI*



# WV DOT Takes Major Step Toward ERP Implementation

The West Virginia Department of Transportation has cleared a major hurdle in bringing all state agencies under one massive administrative umbrella.

Recently, the Federal Highway Administration approved changes to DOT purchasing and financial procedures and practices that were necessary for DOT to comply with the state-mandated Enterprise Resource Planning system, or ERP.

The West Virginia Legislature created the ERP system to standardize the way all state agencies do business.

"It's one ring to rule them all," said Tressie Lopez, borrowing an analogy from J.R.R. Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" trilogy. Lopez has overseen ERP for DOT – Transportation's ERP rollout – for more than two years.

ERP is designed to bring all agencies' financial management, procurement, asset management, personnel administration, payroll, time reporting and benefits administration functions under a common set of administrative tools. Prior to ERP, state agencies had dozens of different business applications and software systems running.

When fully implemented, ERP will make sure all state agencies are speaking the same language and conducting business under the same rules.

Because DOT's administrative functions are so complicated, state officials allowed the department to come online with ERP later than other state agencies. DOT purchasing and

contracting procedures differ significantly from some other state agencies.



And since roughly 80 percent of all DOT construction funding comes from federal sources, implementing ERP without running afoul of federal highway regulations was vital. Lopez said the Federal Highway Administration must sign off on every change DOT makes to contracting and purchasing procedures.

The good news is they just did. "They've signed off on everything now," Lopez said. "It's not the last piece we need

to finish ERP, but it's a HUGE piece."

Integrating DOT policies and procedures so they'll comply with ERP hasn't been easy. Lopez and a team of about 50 people have been working on the project for going on three years.

"This project is huge," she said. "It includes every aspect of what we do."

Those working on ERP for DOT are essentially volunteers.

"Nobody gets paid extra to do this," Lopez said. "The people who are working on this are doing so because they believe in it."

Lopez said DOT should fully implement the ERP system within the next year or so. It's taken a lot of work.

"I'm really proud of the fact that we've built it from scratch," she said.

## Thank you, WVDOH.

Road crews in District 8 received the following *Thank You* from a couple living in the area of Isner Creek Road near Elkins. It's always nice when the public notices the good job done by WVDOH:

Good morning. We just want to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the fast response to addressing this issue in front of our house. The crew that came out was very thorough in addressing and giving attention to each and every issue that was happening. Including removing the culvert across the road

that was causing part of the flooding issue in our driveway and yard. They also took great care in repairing the front yard with the stump removal and culvert clearing.

We greatly appreciate you and the crew that handled this situation.

Sincerely,  
Mr. and Mrs. Ray



# *West Virginia Proud: Our Life in Photos*



Asphalt into a milled and tacked space;  
A couple of Jim's in the midst of a productive day;  
Pride in improving the grounds in Jefferson County;  
Fresh snow in lovely contrast to fresh progress.  
This is who we are and what we do.



# Preston County Crews Reclaim Crumbling Roads

**Preston County, West Virginia** – Since starting work in 2019, West Virginia Division of Highways road crews have reclaimed 77 miles of crumbling Preston County roads.

“These roads were in terrible shape,” said District 4 Maintenance Engineer Aaron Stevens.

“They were in such bad condition we couldn’t continue to maintain them in their current condition.”

When a smaller gravel, tar and chip or paved road becomes so worn out that it can no longer be effectively repaired, all is not lost. Stevens said those roads can still be reclaimed.

It’s kind of like taking the existing road back down to its original roadbed and starting over.

“We grind them up, mix the material in and compact them

down again,” Stevens said. “That gives us a good base to work with.”



While cars can drive on the reclaimed roads just like they are, reclamation allows WVDOH to decide whether to return the road to its original surface or upgrade it.

The good news for Preston County is that road crews are upgrading five rural roads to paved surfaces this spring and summer. Preston

County reclaimed roads scheduled for paving include:

Ken Snyder Road, Cherry Grove – Mountindale Road, Stones Lane, Burnside Camp Road and Whetsell #1, Upper.

# WVDOH, Law Enforcement and Media Working Together

**Charleston, West Virginia**—The goal is to Just. Slow. Down. in work zones. To spend every minute you spend behind the wheel of a 4,000 pound vehicle as if you are behind the wheel of a 4,000 pound vehicle. To hold your life, your passenger’s lives, the lives of people you share the roads with — the mothers and fathers and three year old daughters you’ll never meet, as if you hold your life, your passenger’s lives, the lives of the mothers and fathers and three year old daughters in your

actual hands. To keep “Heads Up; Phones Down!” and have that mean that your head is up, and your phone is in the pocket below the dashboard, or an old faded duffle bag in the back seat. To drive when you drive and do other stuff when you’re doing other stuff.

It’s a simple message, but an important one. On this; everyone from road workers, to law enforcement, to drivers—everyone, needs to work together.

Visit the WVDOT Online  
Newsroom at:

[Transportation.wv.gov/communications/pressrelease](https://transportation.wv.gov/communications/pressrelease)

- \*Vaccinations.
- \*Testing.
- \*Distancing.
- \*Masks.

It’s not about ourselves;  
It’s about each other.

