

WV DOT



Today!

September 2023—Volume 5: Issue 9



This is us.

This is what we do.



WVDOH to Provide Additional Data for Parsons to Davis Portion of Corridor H

The West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) is providing additional data for an alternate northern route for a section of Corridor H to be built between Parsons and Davis, in order to expedite the design process.

WVDOH is preparing a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to submit to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) that includes a Blackwater Avoidance

Alternative route that runs north of the towns of Davis and Thomas. The route is in addition to the WVDOH's Revised Original Preferred Alternative (ROPA) which would connect just east of Parsons, crossing over Backbone Mountain, to connect with the existing portion of Corridor H at Davis.

Providing additional evaluation of alternate routes is not uncommon on large projects and can in many cases provide efficiency to the process.

When Gov. Jim Justice took office in 2017, he made completion of Corridor H a main priority of his administration. The four-lane highway, now about 90 percent complete, begins at Weston and travels across central West Virginia, to eventually link up with



Interstate 81 in Strasburg, Virginia. The highway is expected to open some of West Virginia's most remote areas in Grant, Tucker, and Hardy counties to economic development, connect West Virginia's highlands with eastern ports, speed travel times through the mountains and provide a smooth, safe highway for travelers and local residents.

Jason Foster, P.E., Chief Engineer of Development, said the design

includes a relocation of WV 32 to serve as a truck bypass route for the town of Thomas, includes a new interchange to serve Tucker County High School, and includes improvements to help the communities of Thomas and Davis.

"We've really listened to what the public asked us to do," Foster said. "We have continuously revised that alignment to make it better for the region.

A draft of a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement including the additional information on the alternate route is expected to be published for public comment in late 2023, with a final draft expected by late 2024.

Hiring Event

The West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) is hosting a hiring event from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 28, 2023, at Chief Logan State Park in Logan County. WVDOH is looking for Transportation Worker 1 and Transportation Worker 2 Equipment Operator candidates.

Complete an online application at www.transportation.wv.gov. Application assistance will be available at the hiring event. If you need help, bring a valid driver's license, a copy of your work history and a cell phone.

For help or more information, call 304-558-3111.

Tell your friends if they're looking for a good job!

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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Kindness & Admiration Around the DOT

Special Feature:

WVDOT Leadership Team offers compliments for others!

From Cindy Butler, Commissioner, West Virginia Division of Multimodal Transportation Facilities — Although I may sound like a broken record, I honestly can't say enough good things about the DOH Cenforce group. They have helped the DMTF Rail Section in so many ways. In addition to the large Trout Run Bridge project, they have also done many things this past summer. From working on numerous bridges on the South Branch Valley Railroad and the West Virginia Central Railroad, to working on the Durbin Depot, bathroom facilities at Bald Knob at Cass and most recently, pedestrian bridges on a new trail in Preston County. This group and my employees work so well together and their skill level is phenomenal. A big shout out to these employees for everything they have done and continue to do.

From Jim Moore, P.E., WVDOH District 9 Engineer — I appreciate Chief Engineer of Operation's Joe Pack's efforts in striving to provide resources, support and funding to the Districts who are working every day to achieve Division of Highways goals. While a few gray areas are always expected with an new initiative, he is providing clearer direction and coordination on the front end to mitigate needless problems later. Change is inevitable and we are faced with many challenges. However, I sincerely believe that as experienced staff retire it has resulted in the remaining leaders realizing the importance of quality communication and cooperation from all departments.

From Michelle Oxley, WVDOT Performance Management Division Director — The IT Division Director is respectful and passionate about customer service. The Legal Division has been great at collecting data for the Performance Metrics requested by the Secretary. Each staff member has been respectful and courteous and responds quickly with requested information. Each time I've had discussions with them, it has been positive. Hussein Elkhansa, Chief Technology Officer, exemplifies the One DOT motto. Joe Pack, Chief Engineer of District Operations, is helpful, resourceful and willing to answer questions whenever needed and with a positive attitude. The Public Relations Division exhibits kindness every day.

Jill Dunn, Director of WVDOH Legal Division — Hussein Elkhansa and his folks are so helpful and responsive to all our

needs in Legal. Even though it's apparent that he is extremely busy, he always helps us with FOIA requests requiring IT research and any equipment needs. His obvious dedication to WVDOT and his positive attitude are greatly appreciated.

Doug Kirk, P.E., Chief Engineer of Environmental Compliance — I am very pleased to see the great work being done by our maintenance forces along Little Creek in Upper Kanawha County. Their effort and attitude has not gone unnoticed.

Nathaniel Tawney, WVDOT General Counsel — District 1 Maintenance in Elkview has good relationships with the local leaders and works with them in a very positive fashion. Right of Way Division is a great office if you need to have a good visit with good folks. WVDOT Division of Multimodal Transportation Facilities is doing a great job of getting a new, legislatively re-organized agency off and running.

Marvin Murphy, P.E., Assistant Deputy Secretary — I have three people that exhibit many of the same qualities; strong feelings for their work in which they recently received more responsibility, willingness to help at any time they can, and pleased to work with when you ask for assistance. They are; Tracy Brown, Douglas Kirk and Lori Suite. There are many more in field offices that also deserve it.

Ron Stanevich, P.E., Director Materials Control Soils and Testing Division — I'd like to say on behalf of our team here at MCS@T, that we work with so many different Divisions and Districts that to compliment one would be a disservice to the others. Additionally, only expressing thanks to those we work directly with would be a disservice to those other Divisions and employees we don not see behind the so-called curtain. We are all in this pipeline of this giant machine we call DOT, and every individual is a cog in the machine doing our best to help each other out and move things forward. Things are not always easy, sometimes we all may not see eye to eye, but I think everyone that works here wants to be part of this team and shares the same vision of making the WVDOT, as the Secretary has said on occasions, "The Best Damn DOT in the Country!" So from myself and everyone here as MCS&T, thanks to all of you.

Joe Pack, P.E., Chief Engineer of Operations — The amount of work currently being generated by the Engineering Division is impressive. Facilitating the design of billions of dollars in road-way construction and maintenance is a major undertaking. The employees in Engineering are fully grasping the massive scope of work before the WVDOH and accepting the responsibility that comes along with the job. They are stepping outside of their normal routine and including district development sections into the consultant procurement and management activities, which will provide great returns.

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Kindness & Admiration Around the DOT

William Hartwell, Civil Rights Compliance Division Director — I want to offer praise to our Budget Division. Whenever we had a question or something quirky occurred, they always helped, even when they were short of staff. Evan, Marty, Kristy, and their staff have gone above and beyond to help us. We greatly appreciate it.

Scott Eplin, Assistant Deputy Secretary — I would like to point out our DMV. Under Everett and Linda's leadership, they've changed the culture to reflect the value of our customers, or better yet our citizens. Our customer service is the best ever.

Randy Damron and Jennifer Dooley, Public Relation's Division Leadership Team — A shout out to Kathy Rushworth, P.E., District 1 Maintenance Engineer, for always being ready to accept requests from media and doing so professionally, with a smile. So many times we receive media requests that are not easy to explain but she always calls back and takes time to offer answers while at the desk or in the field. Likewise, Nate Tawney, Joe Pack, Rob Pennington, Ted Whitmore, Jake Bumgarner, Jeff Miller — we hope you understand the impact you have by being go-to for reliable information. When media have repeated follow up questions we know it's tough but you provide the reliable information that makes it possible for the work of our agency to be understood. Regarding WVDOT Divisions, Natasha White and Matt Ball, you're made Human Resources light years more efficient; and Michelle Oxley and Jessica Taylor, you have the hardest job of all wrestling raw data from across the state and being able to produce usable information. And then there's the folks who show up when we don't ask, just offering to help — Hussein Elkhansa, Arlie Matney, Chris Gay, Scott Eplin. Public Relations Division couldn't run without a team like all of you.

Dawna Skaggs, Auditing Division Director— We sincerely appreciate all our auditees for helping the Transportation Auditing Division staff to complete our role within the West Virginia Department of Transportation. Without our clients' help and cooperation, we would not be able to meet our goals and objectives. We may not always be able to agree, but we are all connected and committed to providing safe and efficient travel through our state.

Ted Whitmore, Traffic Engineering Division Director — Traffic Engineering Division would like to take this opportunity to thank Chief Technology Officer Hussein Elkhansa, Information Technology Division Director Yueming Wu, Performance Management Division Director Michelle Oxley and their staff for all of their recent assistance and support. During the recent transition of the Traffic Monitoring Program from Performance Management to Traffic Engineering Division, Michelle Oxley and her staff have been helpful and informative providing much needed resources and support on sometimes short notice with a

cooperative and friendly attitude. Sometimes organizational changes can be difficult to navigate, but Michelle and her staff have made this a smooth transition. During this same process Yueming Wu and his staff have provided endless support helping resolve any IT related issues that have been encountered during the transition period. We would also like to thank Director Wu's staff for their recent and ongoing support in the development and implementation of the AASHTOWare Safety Program. This deployment would have been a complete failure without the hard work and constant support of GIS Team, especially Charles McNeal and Aaron Ferrari. To say that both of Chief Elkhansa's Divisions go above and beyond to support all efforts routine and out of the ordinary would be an understatement. We appreciate their flexibility and willingness to work with us.

Jake Bumgarner, P.E., Special Programs Engineer — While I was in the Operations Director position, I found every Division and District willing to help me or my Division at some point or another. From Information Technology Division's work on the Core Maintenance Editor and Public Maps, to Equipment Division getting us the equipment we needed to do the job at hand, from the Districts coordination on my crews projects and to Technical Support flying drones and clearing projects; there are a lot of hardworking, passionate, friendly people in the Department of Transportation. That fact has me excited for my new role because I believe it will let me meet and work with even more of the great employees of the DOT.

Linda Ellis, Deputy Commissioner of DMV — The Training and Development section in DOT has been a wealth of information for DMV as we transition from DOP to DOT Human Resources. The trainers are knowledgeable, friendly and genuinely enjoy their jobs. The training section has gone out of their way to provide training for DMV, going so far as to create a new training specifically for DMV employees and tremendously helped make sure all DMV employees are currently trained. We really appreciate all their assistance and it has been a wonderful experience to get to know these employees.

Everett Frazier, WVDMV Commissioner -- Shout Out to WVDOH. As everyone may or may not know, I commute approximately two hours each way to work every day, and being the DMV Commissioner, I visit all 26 offices that the DMV has throughout the state. During those travels I encounter what I feel are some things that may need some attention from time to time (plus constituents don't care to ask me to sometimes lend a hand in relaying their concerns or needs as well). Those concerns are always dealt with in a timely manner, with the safety of drivers always being at the forefront from everyone involved at the WVDOH.

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Kindness & Admiration Around the DOT

Mike Daley, District 4 Manager — I want to recognize our District 4 employees, districtwide, for their dedication to the public and the dangerous environment they must work in on our expressways. Our team is very excited to be able to accomplish our goals throughout the year and are competitive with each other to accomplish the most work throughout the year. I am also very proud of our Human Resources employees for their dedication to assist our employees at all times to assure they have what they need to make their work easier to understand. I think this been a great experience for our peer exchange with our HR employees working with and sharing ideas with the HR Division in Central Office. I think this was a great idea to share the knowledge from each to expedite new hires as well as our current employees needs. I am very proud of our performance management team for all their dedication to assure our reporting is correct and give us the opportunity to follow our successful accomplishments throughout the year. I am also proud of our design and development group for all of the challenges they endure throughout the year to bring projects to the table that will help the general public in their daily travel. I also want to recognize our construction employees for their dedication to our assigned projects and the collaboration with the contractors to be successful in each of the projects. Also all of our mechanics hard and experienced work and knowledge to be able to make the repairs to all our equipment so we are able to complete our work daily. I want to recognize all our office assistants and secretaries for all of their hard work ensuring that all of our employees get paid and that the correct data is stored into databases to show how successful we are as a team. I really do appreciate the collaboration with my fellow co-workers statewide. We have a great opportunity to learn from each other's endeavors as well as success stories in how the outcome has become a benefit to the residents of West Virginia and those travelling through our wonderful state.

Natasha White, Human Resources Director — The Information Technology Division always responds rapidly to any technical issue the Human Resources Division is having and provides quick

responses to our technology purchasing needs such as computers, iPads and software subscriptions. They also provide graphic design materials for our training and recruitment needs. We would really like to thank Hussein Elkhansa, Yueming Wu, John Toomey, Dustin Feazell, Bill Brogan, Philip Skeen, and Lon Vannoy. They go above and beyond to ensure we have everything we need anytime we ask.

The Office Services Division is always quick to respond to any of the Human Resources Division maintenance needs as well as aiding with moving any items. The Print Shop and Office Supplies areas assist with training and recruiting needs and the Scanning Section has helped us with various projects that we have needed completed. We would like to give a special thanks to Ameche Watson, Bobby Martin, James Harmon, Sarah Farmer, Kimberly Thompson, and Wilson Hudson for all their help anytime we ask.

Human Resources Training and Development would like to thank Jake Bumgarner, Gehan Elsayed, Todd Rumbaugh, Perry Keller, Doug Kirk, Janie Matics, and Steve Boggs for contributing to our Technical Writing course development. Your insight and suggestions for this initiative have been invaluable as we develop a course to meet the documentation needs of our agency.

The Human Resources Division would like to extend their gratitude to Ron Stanevich, Ted Whitmore, and their staff for taking the time to accommodate the Human Resources Division with a tour of the MCS&T, the Sign Shop, and the TMC Facilities.

Our recruiters were able to learn about the skills and abilities of their division's classifications, and our new employees now have a better understanding of the agency and how we achieve our organizational goals. It was a warm and friendly atmosphere, and the employees were truly passionate about their jobs.

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Harpers Ferry Rockfall Project to Begin Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2023

A contract to stabilize a rockslide-prone section of mountain high above US 340 near Harpers Ferry is scheduled to begin Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2023.

In May 2023, Triton Construction Inc. was awarded a contract for \$10,277,500 to remove rock and install rockfall barriers above US 340 where it hugs the Shenandoah River just south of Harpers Ferry. The project will require closing US 340 completely.

US 340 is a high-traffic volume corridor carrying about 24,500 vehicles a day including local, commuter, and truck traffic from West Virginia, Virginia, and Maryland.

The contract calls for stabilizing the corridor through rock slope scaling, localized rock bolting, and removal of potential large scale rockfall hazards. Additionally, the slope will have rockfall mitigation efforts including draped and pinned mesh, ground-level rockfall barriers, and on-slope rockfall attenuator systems.



A posted detour around the project area during work will be WV 9 and Virginia SR 9 and Virginia SR 671. Work is being scheduled after Memorial Day and before Christmas to lessen the impact on the traveling public.

US 340 along the Shenandoah River was built in the mid-1950s. The cut slopes and exposed rock tower from 150 to more than 300 feet above the roadway. WVDOH will remove rock and install barriers to minimize potential hazards to the traveling public.

The WVDOH is working closely with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to coordinate the project. The WVDOH will issue additional press releases to keep the public informed of progress on the project.

Work is scheduled to be completed within 90 days. Access to the Appalachian Trail will be maintained throughout the construction period.

Traffic Restrictions in Place in Downtown Lewisburg

West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) District 9 has installed signs in downtown Lewisburg along US 60 Westbound indicating “No Right Turn For Trucks Longer Than 50 Feet.”

This is a measure aimed at mitigating large interstate trucks failing to navigate the intersection from US 60 west onto US 219 north, while continuing to allow smaller delivery trucks and commercial vehicles to navigate through the city. On several occasions, large trucks have struck buildings while trying to negotiate the intersection.

Commercial traffic is asked to schedule their routes accordingly because the turn restriction requires interstate trucks greater than 50 feet long to continue on US 60 westbound for approximately 11 miles before reentering Interstate 64 at Alta.

The signs are a collaborative effort between WVDOH District 9, the City of Lewisburg, and the WVDOH Traffic Engineering

Department.

The effectiveness of the turn restriction will be monitored and may be adjusted if necessary.

The signs are temporary and will remain in place while the WVDOH coordinates with a consultant to complete an extensive traffic study to recommend potential improvements that could lessen traffic congestion from Holt Lane, through downtown Lewisburg, to Brush Road. The study should also provide recommendations to improve turning movements at this critical intersection. The Division will consult with city officials as soon as the recommendations become available.

The public, and especially commercial traffic, are advised to follow all traffic control measures. The WVDOH appreciates their patience. The WVDOH will keep the public informed of future changes in the area.



Where There's a Will There's a Way: Funding Opportunities Available Through IIJA



The Infrastructure Funding Summit was intended to hook organizations interested in applying for IIJA funding up with federal and state officials able to provide advice on how to best apply for and receive funding.

In attendance and available to answer questions were Gayle Manchin, Federal Co Chair of the Appalachian Regional Commission; Tracey Rowan, with the U.S. Economic Development Authority; Leo Lopez with the U.S. Small Business Administration; Ken Woodward, with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; John Rogers, with the Federal Highway Administration; Ryan Thorn, with the U.S. Department of Agriculture; Transportation Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E.; Jennifer

On Wednesday, Aug. 23, 2023, Gov. Jim Justice gathered representatives from numerous federal and state agencies at the state Culture Center in Charleston for the Governor's Infrastructure Funding Summit. Purpose of the summit was to help identify opportunities to leverage local, state and federal dollars to take advantage of funding available through the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). West Virginia is expected to receive about \$7 billion in funding through 2027 through the act. Of approximately \$4.4 billion already announced for West Virginia, IIJA projects in the state include \$3 billion in highway projects, \$506 million in bridge replacements and repairs, \$487 million toward clean drinking water projects, \$190 million for public transportation, \$100 million for broadband expansion, \$46 million to build electric vehicle infrastructure, \$44 million for airports, \$14 million for cyber security, and \$11 million for protection against wildfires.

Ferrell, with the state Department of Economic Development; Marie Prezioso, with the state Water Development Authority; Bob Rice, with the state Department of Environmental Protection; Kelly Workman, with the state Broadband Office; and Carrie Staton and George Carico, with West Virginia Brownfields.

While the rules, regulations and hurdles necessary to receive project funding through IIJA are numerous, Wriston advised would-be applicants to be creative in their approach to project development.

If there's a project out there that someone really wants to fund, there's probably a bucket of money available somewhere within the IIJA framework to pay for it, Wriston advised.

The trick is to identify that bucket of money and go after it, Wriston said.



Major Construction Project Underway in Fayette County

A major road work project on US 19 between Oak Hill and Fayetteville is currently underway.

Work will be performed during the overnight hours from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m., Monday through Friday, to minimize the impact on the traveling public, weather permitting. The work on US 19 stretches from MP 10.73 to MP 15.28, near the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve. A work zone speed limit of 40 MPH will be in effect and strictly enforced.

Governor Jim Justice and Secretary Jimmy Wriston have placed the focus on catching up on years of underfunded road maintenance, making projects such as this one possible. The project is being performed to increase safety to the traveling public and restore the riding surface. The project includes two phases of work.

Phase I occurring through the end of the 2023 construction season includes:

- Perform concrete pavement repairs – The existing roadway is concrete pavement with an asphalt overlay. Numerous existing concrete slabs have deteriorated and will be removed and replaced with new concrete.
- Extend two median turn lanes – The existing NB left turn lane at the Sheetz fuel station and the existing SB left turn lane at

Court Street (WV 16) will each be extended approximately 500 linear feet to increase safety to the traveling public.

- Begin initial work to upgrade the existing traffic signals and overhead lighting at US 19 / Appalachian Drive intersection, US 19 / Fayette Town Center intersection, US 19 / Laurel Street (CR 8) intersection, US 19 / WV 16 intersection.

Phase II occurring through Spring and Summer of 2024 includes:

- Remove all existing asphalt down to the existing concrete slabs.
- Place a new asphalt base on the existing concrete slabs.
- Place a new asphalt riding surface on the asphalt base.
- Complete the installation of the new traffic signals and overhead lighting.
- Remove and replace the existing guardrail.

No work will be performed during the 2023 Bridge Day festivities in October. All lanes will be opened up during that time.

The West Virginia Department of Transportation will update motorists on this project via press release and social media. For the latest information on road conditions in West Virginia, visit wv511.org or download the WV 511 app.

WVDOH Awards Record Number of Scholarships

Each summer, the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) awards scholarships of up to \$12,000.00 to selected students. To qualify for a scholarship, the student must be enrolled in an accredited college or university program within the State of West Virginia seeking a degree in engineering, computer sciences, accounting, a doctor of juris prudence, or other programs for professionals and para-professionals which have an application to some aspect of the activities of the Division of Highways. Additionally, they must have been employed as a Highways Co-op in good standing for at least one year. Upon graduation the student is offered employment and must work for a specified period of time with WVDOH to pay back the funds or repay the scholarship.

Transportation Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E., awarded 13 new scholarships for the upcoming school year at a luncheon that took place on Tuesday, Aug. 15, 2023 in WVDOH District one Headquarters located on Smith Street in Charleston, the most ever awarded at one time.

"Recruiting qualified talent is an increasing challenge for DOT," said Human Resources Director Natasha White. "This scholarship program is an effective way to combat this issue by investing in developing a pipeline of talent."

"The DOT scholarship program is a good way for our Agency to show we are committed to having a well trained workforce for the future."



WVDOH Work Crews on the Move

All around West Virginia, West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) work crews are on the move undertaking core maintenance. Crews in each district are mowing, ditching, and making repairs to the Mountain State's roads, bridges, and drainage structures.

Here are some photos from around the state, showcasing some of the work crews are taking on.



Appointments Now Available at all State DMV Offices

West Virginia Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) customers may now make appointments, including same-day appointments, at any of the 26 regional offices across the state.

"We are happy to be offering appointments in all offices again," said DMV Commissioner Everett Frazier. "For a while, only the offices in some of West Virginia's largest population centers were offering appointments with walk-ins, while the smaller area offices were walk-in only. Now, all 26 offices will offer both. The best part about this new scheduling program, though, is the possibility of a same-day appointment for our customers."

Appointments may be made for transactions such as: driver's license knowledge testing – including Class E, F, and CDL, applying for a new driver's license or identification card, changes to a driver's license or ID card, driver's license transfers from out-of-state, and vehicle work including titles and license plates.

Additionally, customers who take advantage of the REAL ID HeadStart program through DMV's online services portal may also use the appointment scheduler to make an appointment once their documents have been approved.

Customers may visit the appointment scheduler at: <https://telegov.egov.com/wvdmv>.

According to Frazier, "Walk-ins are still welcome at every office, but having an appointment will give customers more opportunity to receive fast and efficient service and not have to wait in line as long. This is just another example of how we continue to look for new ways of providing good customer service."

For more information, including regional office and kiosk locations, the online services portal, and appointment information, please visit the DMV website at dmv.wv.gov.



Child Passenger Safety Week is September 17-23

September 17-23, 2023, is National Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Week. While we work to educate families year-round on the importance of child passenger safety when it comes to car seats, booster seats, and seat belts, we use National CPS Week to highlight common usage errors and car seat misconceptions. We partner with Highway Safety Offices throughout the country as well as the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to keep all children as safe as possible while traveling in vehicles.

What are some important questions to ask yourself about the child safety seats you use?

- Are the children in the right types of seats for their height, weight, and maturity level?
- Do the car seats fit the children properly?
- Are the seats correctly installed in your vehicle?

We never want anyone to be involved in a vehicle crash, but in the event you are, we want to make sure you and the children in your lives are as safe as possible, by always being properly restrained in your vehicle. Unfortunately, crashes have become a part of everyday life, and the statistics show why it's so important to make sure children are properly restrained.

- On average, in 2021, two children under 13 were killed in passenger vehicles crashes each day.
- In 2021, more than one third (36%) of children under 13 who died while riding in passenger vehicles were unrestrained.

- Between 2017 and 2021, there were 1,753 "teens" (8 to 14 years old) killed in passenger vehicle crashes.

Not all crashes are survivable no matter how well restrained vehicle occupants are, but proper seat belt and car seat usage provide the best chance for surviving a crash. Here's the good news:

- In passenger cars, proper use of car seats reduces the risk of fatal injury by 71% for infants and 54% for toddlers. For infants and toddlers in light trucks, the corresponding reductions are 58% and 59% respectively.
- NHTSA estimates that from 1975 to 2017, child restraints have saved the lives of 11,606 children under the age of 5.

State law requires children in WV to be in child restraints until at least 8 years old or four feet, nine inches tall. The best and safest practice is to keep your child in a child safety seat with a five-point harness until they outgrow the height or weight of the seat. Do not move children into booster seats until they outgrow the seat with the five-point harness. Some children are small and could use the help of a booster seat until age 12 or older, so that the seat belt fits them properly across the shoulder and hips.

Help the GHSP celebrate National CPS Week by ensuring the children in your life are in the right seat. If you have questions about car seats, please reach out to our office at (304) 926-2509 or DMVGHSP@wv.gov. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter for car seat safety tips throughout National CPS Week.

WVDOT Laudes Auditing Certifications

The West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT) (CFE) would like to give a shoutout to four of our auditors who obtained new certifications recently.

Tenna Bell, MBA; Janet Gunther, CPA; Robert Stewart; and Corey Wade received the certification of Certified Governmental Financial Manager (CGFM). CGFM is accredited through the Association of Government Accountants (AGA).

Stewart also obtained certification as a Certified Fraud Examiner

"We are proud of our team members taking the initiative to obtain certifications to help our agency gain better credibility," said Dawna Skaggs, Transportation Auditing Director.

The Auditing Division fosters an environment meant to encourage employees to expand their knowledge and retain certification to help the agency with its credibility.



In the Face of Flooding

West Virginia Division of Highways crews are on the ground in times of flooding, opening up roadways to assist emergency responders and citizens in getting through. In Kanawha County, on August 26 and 27, our efforts were recognized by Kanawha County Emergency Management Director, CW Sigman, who credited Division of Highways quick response following the first round of flooding to prevention of worse flooding in a second storm.

"You can see behind us, this bridge was damaged in the event Saturday night," said Sigman. "Highways got in here quick and fixed it Sunday, opened it back up mid-Sunday afternoon so these people could get in and out. Thankfully it's still standing."

"Saturday, I was thankful for the response from Highways," continued Sigman. "Sunday I was very thankful and told them so. Today I'm even more thankful as we're getting these places opened back up. There was a lot of debris against some of these bridges. Highways cleared that. They cleared a lot of debris on Saturday, and if it hadn't been for that, there would have been even worse flooding."

Secretary of Transportation, Jimmy Wriston, P.E., has often called our West Virginia Division of Highways crews the best in the country when it comes to emergency response.

"Our people are absolutely phenomenal," said Wriston. "Crews were out Saturday night, on the ground, seeing what they could do, assisting the first responders to get access to places so they could check and make sure people were safe. At one point, in seven hours, they had a bridge that had been washed out reopened. They just went above and beyond."

Wriston elaborated to praise employees whose own homes were flooded, but who worked through the weekend and into the next week helping others.

"Many of them, their own homes flooded," said Wriston. "Their own property at risk, and they're at work. One employee lost his pickup truck, had his pickup truck wash away. He got that vehicle, hustled on in to work, filled out an hour of leave slip for that hour that he was out there getting his truck, and then went in and worked ten or twelve hours that day."

"The culture has changed in the Division of Highways," said Wriston. "They understand their place in the world, and their place as West Virginians. They have those West Virginia values."



Enforcement Works

Months of increased police patrols and the issuing of more speeding tickets are slowing drivers down in the Interstate 64 work zone in Barboursville.

In 2022, there were 800 crashes in West Virginia work zones, killing eight people and injuring 276. Gov. Justice directed West Virginia Transportation Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E., to do everything possible to lower highway fatalities in the Mountain State to zero.

In partnership with public safety officials and police organizations throughout the Mountain State, the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) began cracking down on drivers speeding through work zones in March. West Virginia State Police, the Cabell County Sheriff's Department, and police departments from Huntington, Barboursville and Milton took part in multiple targeted speed enforcement operations in the I-64 work zone in Barboursville.

Law enforcement began cracking down on speeders in the Barboursville work zone in the middle of March 2023. Traffic data collected by the WVDOH show a dramatic decrease in the number of speeders in the months since the crackdowns began.

In March, only 20.43 percent of motorists traveling through the work zone obeyed the posted 55 mph speed limit, the data show. That number increased to 37.26 percent in April.

Decreases in speed were most dramatic for drivers going over 85 mph through the work zone. Drivers going over 85 mph dropped from 1.54 percent of all drivers in March to a low of 0.33 percent following increased speed enforcement.

VISION AWARDS

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

Tim Walker—Public Transit

Kimberly Thompson—Office Services

Richard Allen—DMV

Mary Sturgell—DMV

Chase Linsdsey—District 2

Brandi Wiley—District 2

David Oldaker—District 7

Rusty Clingerman—District 7

Jeremy Bennett—District 7

Ben Claypool—District 7

David Hamrick—District 7

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.



Secretary Wriston Named WVU Tech Alumni of the Year

West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT) Secretary and Commissioner of Highways Jimmy Wriston, P.E., has been honored by West Virginia University Institute of Technology (WVU Tech).

Wriston has been named one of the Alumni of the Year as part of the institution's academic alumni award winners for 2024. Wriston, Class of 1996, is the recipient for the Leonard C. Nelson College of Engineering and Sciences. All academic alumni award winners will be celebrated at a reception and dinner at The Resort at Glade Springs on Friday, February 9, 2024, as part of homecoming weekend.



program in 2017.

WVU Tech and WVDOT have partnered for numerous educational opportunities. In 2022, WVU Tech recognized WVDOT for its expanded summer co-op program. In partnership with universities around the state, WVDOT has expanded educational outreach to include tuition reimbursement for WVDOT employees, a recently expanded Summer Co-Op program, on the job training for WVDOT employees, sponsorship of five technical conferences at engineering colleges, a growing capstone project opportunity where college students can design real WVDOH projects, the West Virginia Bridge Design and Build Competition for middle and high school

“Secretary Wriston’s connection with his alma mater, his commitment to the state of West Virginia, his commitment to continuing education are all of those important things that we would look for in recognizing an alumnus,” said Jen Wood, Chief of Staff at WVU Tech in Beckley.

After completing his general equivalency diploma (GED) in his 30s, Wriston decided to enroll at WVU Tech and graduated with his bachelor’s degree in civil engineering. Since then, he’s served as the Deputy Secretary and Deputy Commissioner, as Chief Transportation Engineer/Special Projects Manager/Engineering Advisor to the Secretary of Transportation and as Structures Project Manager for the engineering division.

Wriston was appointed in October 2021 by Gov. Jim Justice to serve as Secretary of Transportation and Commissioner of Highways. Wriston is working to meet Gov. Justice’s strong vision to have the best roads in the country. More than 1,100 of 1,300 road and bridge construction and maintenance projects have been completed under Gov. Justice’s Roads to Prosperity program since West Virginia voters approved bond sales for the

students, and participation in job fairs and career days.

“Secretary Wriston is a champion for education and opportunity, and making sure folks are prepared and ready for the workforce,” said Wood. “I know he does a lot to mentor and empower his staff at WVDOT.”

Wriston, like the other alumni award winners, was nominated for a level of recognition and successful stature in a profession. Winners are also thought of to have a strong commitment to service, dedicating time and talent to the community and alma mater.

Wriston has long listed the goal of being the best educated DOT in the country. Through a series of bridges that help students and workers advance no matter where they are, there are opportunities available at WVDOT for anyone who wants a career that continues to grow.



WVDOH Repairs More than 100 Slips

With the summer construction season well underway, the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) continues to repair slips and slides throughout the Mountain State.

Gov. Jim Justice and Transportation Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E., have placed a special emphasis on taking care of the state's secondary roads and making the WVDOH a true maintenance organization, not just building and paving roads and bridges but taking care of them so they will last as long as possible for the people of West Virginia. Tracking, monitoring and repairing slides on roads is part of that process.

"Every slide we see is a little different," said WVDOH District 2 Engineer Rob Pennington, P.E. "We use a similar approach to evaluate each one and determine the best method to correct it."

On McComas Road and 4-H Camp Road in Cabell County contractors are using soil nails to stabilize two slides as part of the WVDOH continuing maintenance program. To properly fix a slip or slide, 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. This evaluation



takes time, but ensures that the project goes smoothly once on the ground construction begins.

Depending on how serious a slide is, Pennington said it could take anywhere from a couple of weeks to a few months to design a project to correct it. One option is building a piling wall – basically a concrete retaining wall secured by steel beams sunk deep into the ground – to stop the earth from moving underneath a road.

On McComas Road, designers chose to address the slide with soil nails, because utilities located alongside the road would have made it difficult to sink steel pilings.

"Soil nails are more like an anchoring system," Pennington said. "They go underneath the road."

Soil nails look like long steel bolts that are driven horizontally under a road to tie into rock and keep the earth from shifting. "It may be two or three rows of 50 soil nails," Pennington said. "It depends on the particular site how many they have to use."

Contractors are also installing soil nails at a slide on nearby 4-H Camp Road.

In all, the WVDOH has completed more than 100 slide repair projects so far in 2023, with another 59 under construction or scheduled.



Main Span of New Legg Bridge Lifted Into Place

The West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) celebrated the continued success of Gov. Jim Justice's Roads to Prosperity highway and bridge construction and maintenance program on Wednesday, Sept. 6, 2023, as contractors lifted the main span of the new Donald M. Legg Memorial Bridge into position in Nitro.

The main span, five beams wide, 11 feet tall, and 314 feet long, was pre-assembled and lifted into place Wednesday from a barge in the middle of the Kanawha River. The section of bridge weighs about two million pounds.

"Thanks to the Governor, we are almost finished with this important project," said Joe Pack, P.E., WVDOH Chief Engineer of Operations.

The main span of the old Donald M. Legg Memorial Bridge was gently lowered onto a barge in December 2022 as contractors Brayman and Trumbull began disassembling the old structure. The bridge served the public for 60 years, opening to traffic in 1962.

Contractors have spent the past few months working on approach spans and pouring new concrete support piers for the main span on top of the old bridge piers. Lifting the main span into place completes construction of the bridge superstructure, although Brayman and Trumbull will still need to pour the bridge deck and pave the new

roadway.

Contractors hope to pour the bridge deck before winter and complete paving when asphalt plants open in the spring of 2024.

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.

"This is one of the largest Roads to Prosperity projects in the state," Pack said.

In October 2022, Gov. Justice announced the opening of the Nitro WW I Memorial Bridge just north of the old Donald M. Legg Memorial Bridge to carry westbound traffic. The old bridge is being 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.

Completion of the two bridges and widening I-64 to six lanes will open a major bottleneck on one of the most heavily travelled sections of interstate in West Virginia. The old Donald M. Legg Memorial Bridge carried approximately 60,000 vehicles a day.

