

KEEPING YOU UP
TO DATE WITH ALL
OF PENNDOT'S
PROJECTS AND
INNOVATIONS
THROUGHOUT
THE YEAR



Recycled Asphalt Paving is a Highlight of PennDOT's Road MaP Initiative

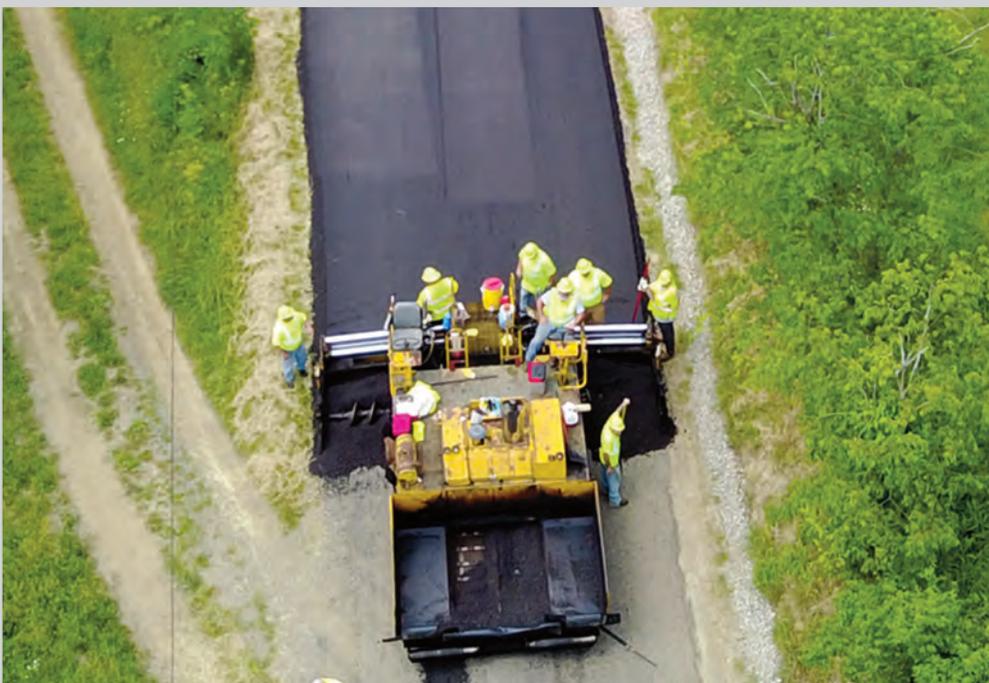


Meet PennDOT's
Bureau of Innovations

Innovations in Concrete

PennDOT Debuts New
Driver's License

Recycled Asphalt Paving is a Highlight of PennDOT's Road MaP Initiative



In June, Armstrong County was the backdrop for the touting of the department's Road Maintenance and Preservation (Road MaP) initiative and the use of Recycled Asphalt Paving (RAP) to improve a nearly five-mile stretch of rural roadway.

RAP is an environmentally conscious method that repurposes materials from projects onto other roadways by mixing ground millings with oil. RAP allows the department to pave less-traveled roads that otherwise wouldn't be paved, or to reinforce roadway shoulders.

With roughly 3 inches of RAP compared to an equivalent of 2 inches of new asphalt, PennDOT estimates a \$225,000 cost with RAP compared to roughly \$371,000. PennDOT can redirect these savings to other maintenance improvements or contracts.

Innovations in Concrete

By Russell Duda, D-12 Materials Manager and Ray Deep, D-12 Community Relations Coordinator



When it comes to a widely-recognized building material, concrete plays an important role. Concrete is used for buildings, dams, bridges, roadways and many other applications. Over the years, innovations in the composition of concrete have evolved and include chemicals added to the wet concrete that produce multiple benefits and light weight aggregates to lower the weight of structures.

In DOT activities, concrete is a key element in bridge structures, with decks being the component most evident to the travelling public. A bridge project can go with minimal problems from the design stage through the construction phase, but if there is a slight bump in the bridge deck, the travelling public will notice and that rough ride will color their impression of the entire project. Any cracking on the bridge deck becomes immediately visible and apparent to the traveling public, and again, this becomes the impression they hold of that structure. Additionally, cracking of bridge decks will decrease the structural stability of the deck and ultimately of the entire structure.

In recent years, studies have been implemented to attempt to maximize our abilities to construct bridge decks with a smoother ride and with minimal cracking. In April 2012, PennDOT adopted a new class of concrete for use on bridge decks. It is referred to as Class AAAP concrete, which is essentially the same class of concrete historically used for bridge decks, but with a difference. It uses what is referred to as "Pozzolans," which are supplemental materials that act like cement. Some examples are ground granulated blast furnace

slag and fly-ash. Both materials are products of the steel industry and due to their miniscule particle sizes, give the concrete a less permeable consistency and aid in the elimination of bridge deck cracking. We have seen great success with AAAP concrete since its introduction into PennDOT specifications.

An even newer innovation with bridge deck concrete is referred to as AAAP Concrete with Optimized Aggregate, which is still in the pilot project phase in District 12. This new type of concrete uses various aggregate (rock) sizes to increase the resistance to permeability by increasing the rocks' density. The aim is to close some of the voids between the rocks in the concrete by using various sizes of rock to pack together better.

Another recent innovation is a type of concrete referred to as Long-Life Concrete. This was created for use in concrete roadways and was designed to produce roadways with a prolonged design life. This type of concrete, similar to Class AAAP, utilizes various rock sizes and requires special tests to verify premium performance. It also requires a specific type of concrete curing compound, which is a spray-on liquid that helps protect the concrete from weather and salt. This helps delay any erosion of the concrete surface to increase its life span.

As we continue to rely on concrete, more and newer innovative practices surely will come to light. We at PennDOT continue to be open to these innovations with an aim to giving taxpayers the best possible materials, roadways and structures.

Meet PennDOT's Bureau of Innovations

Twentieth century management consultant and author Peter Drucker said, "Efficiency is doing things right; effectiveness is doing the right things." It sounds simple -- do the right things, the right way, and your organization will be on top of its efficiency and effectiveness game. Right? Okay, maybe it's not so simple; in fact, it's a challenge, but it's a challenge that PennDOT savors.

As caretakers of the nation's fifth largest state-maintained road network, and tasked with delivering quality transportation services to the nearly 13 million residents who call Pennsylvania home, PennDOT takes the job of efficiency, effectiveness and quality seriously. So seriously in fact that it has a Bureau of Innovations (BOI) dedicated to helping the department focus on continuous quality improvement efforts.

"BOI has a rockstar team of organizational improvement professionals who live, eat, breathe and sleep organizational change," said PennDOT BOI Director Steve Chizmar. "The BOI team is committed to ensuring that each PennDOT office and bureau is firing on all cylinders – we need to ensure that we're meeting the public's expectations, then raising the bar."

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) has deep roots at PennDOT stretching back decades. BOI traces its foundation back to the PennDOT Organizational Review Group, which was formed in the 1970s. While BOI's name may have changed through the decades, its core mission of leading continuous quality improvement and managing organizational change remains the same.

Employee Engagement



3

CQI begins at the employee level, and BOI leads several efforts to ensure PennDOT employees have a voice in how the department moves forward.

Many employees are familiar with PennDOT's IdeaLink 20/20 employee suggestion system, which captures and assembles employee ideas. An online system accessible to every employee, IdeaLink 20/20 empowers PennDOT employees to share innovative ideas they believe will improve the department in the areas of efficiency, safety, customer service, cost savings, morale and revenue generation. Developed in-house, this bottom-up approach provides PennDOT leadership with timely input from staff at all levels showing how the department can operate more effectively and efficiently. A huge hit with employees, PennDOT's IdeaLink 20/20 system has garnered more than 730 employee-generated ideas since its launch in August 2015.

Another shining example of how BOI is engaging employees is the PennDOT Organizational Climate Survey (OCS). Every two years, BOI administers PennDOT's OCS, giving employees an opportunity to identify PennDOT's strengths as an employer and identify gaps that need to be addressed.

BOI compiles OCS data for PennDOT's internal organizations, then assists those groups with creating plans to implement the changes identified by the survey. Several success stories are touted by BOI as results of the OCS efforts. Several bureaus and districts implemented or refined in-house mentoring and cross-training opportunities to address low scores in the "Performance and

Opportunities" category of the survey. Yet another success story is that many leaders brought their staff or mid-level managers together to discuss the OCS results and solicit feedback on specific improvements they could pursue. This helped bridge perceived communication gaps by including staff first in the identification of problem areas, and then in the development of actionable steps their teams could take to improve their work areas.

"As change managers for PennDOT, one of our primary duties is to make sure that our executives have the information they need to make informed decisions about the overall organizational health of our workforce," said BOI Management Analyst Sara Steele. "When the results are used intentionally and with buy-in across the department, the OCS becomes a tool PennDOT can use to ensure we're performing to the best of our ability from an employer/employee perspective."

Currently in development, PennDOT WorkSmart is still another example of an employee engagement tool that BOI sees as essential to the department. WorkSmart is an effective practice, or "smart" practice, sharing tool that will be relaunched later this year, and will give employees an avenue to share effective work practices they have tried and proven in their work areas. These smart practices may not yet be documented, so WorkSmart enables employees to share those effective practices with their PennDOT colleagues in every corner of the state. From different snow-removal techniques to better customer service methods, WorkSmart will help PennDOT improve the services it provides to motorists.

(Continued on page 4)



BOI recently oversaw the State Transportation Innovation Council's first-ever Local Government Safety Seminar.

Organizational Improvements

Woven into the fabric of BOI is its drive to simply help PennDOT operate more safely, efficiently and cost-effectively. From conducting more effective meetings, to eliminating unnecessary process steps, to using data to drive effective decision making, organizational improvements are as unique as the organizations BOI serves. Ready to respond to a variety of internal requests, BOI maintains a well-stocked inventory of tools, techniques and other resources to help PennDOT continuously improve. Essentially, BOI helps PennDOT organizations assess, plan and improve, then begin again.

Paul Sparano, who heads up the organizational change section of BOI, puts it this way: “We’re multi-faceted and we look at continuous organizational improvements across the board -- regardless if that organization is PennDOT as a whole, or at the division or a section level -- we simply help organizations run more smoothly.”

Organizational reviews are one of BOI’s primary tools. Although BOI may commit days, weeks, or months to these projects, organizational reviews all share a common goal. Assessing an organization’s structure, processes, workflow, and overall function within PennDOT, BOI discovers what works well, what doesn’t, and whether steps or activities can be combined or eliminated. Not to be confused with a personnel review or job study performed by human resources staff, BOI’s organizational reviews focus on the processes. BOI assesses how an organization runs and interacts internally, and correlates or contrasts that information with the feedback gained from an organization’s customers, stakeholders and partners.

“Organizational reviews are often the first step we take when a manager comes to us and says ‘something is just not right in my

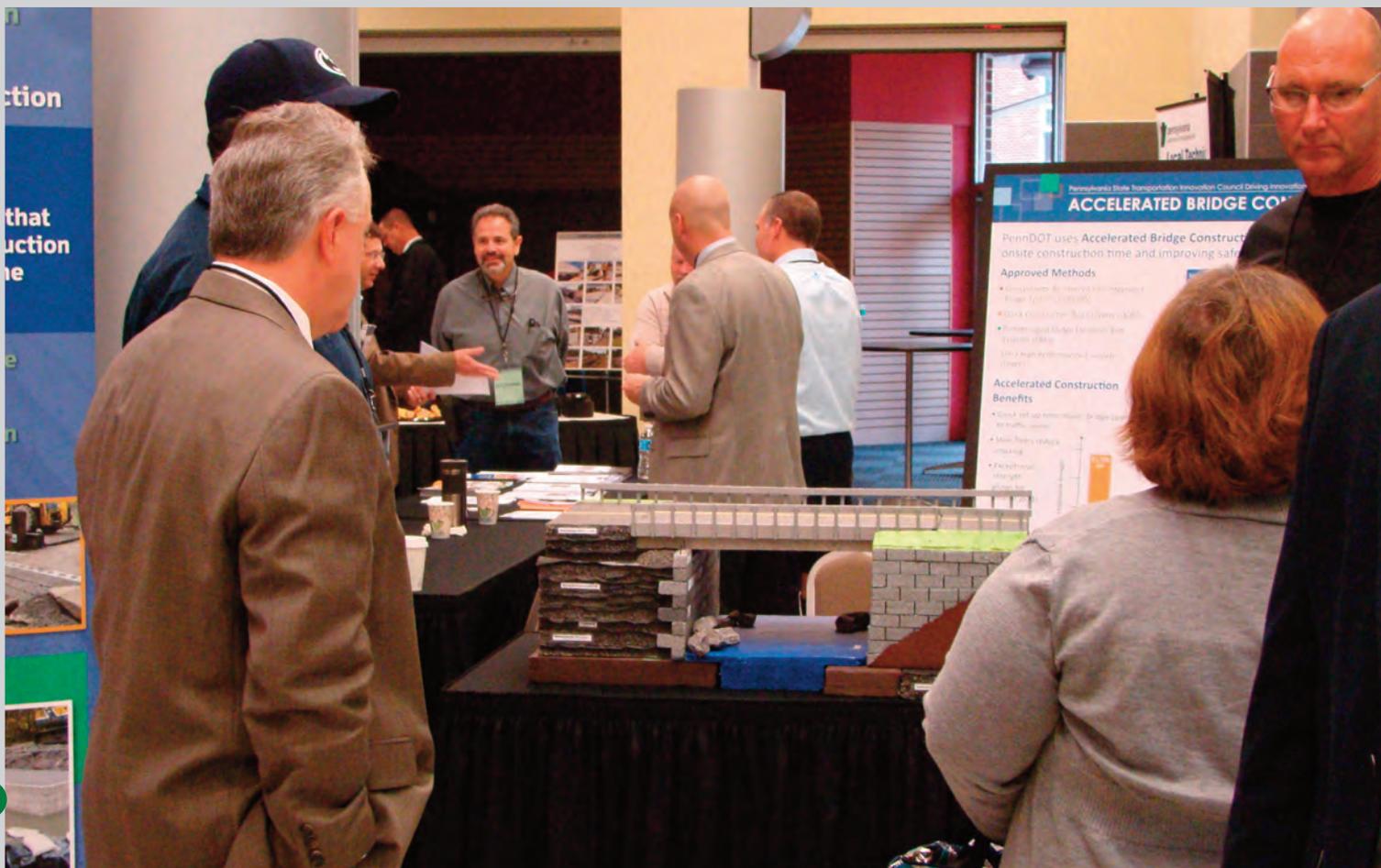
(bureau, section, division, etc.), and we’re not sure what it is.’ These reviews allow us to gain priceless insight into how the organization views itself and, of equal importance, how the organization is viewed by others,” Chizmar said.

All levels of an organization -- managers, employees, customers, stakeholders -- play a role in an effective organizational review, but employees must be at the heart of any substantive change. Employees are the lifeblood of PennDOT and they usually know how to fix what’s wrong, but may not be sure where to start. BOI gives them the tools, resources and time necessary to make impactful changes.

“We help employees and managers dig deeper into what their organization does and really think about the why,” Chizmar said. “Organizational reviews give employees the platform and the time they need in order to think differently, share ideas and build an action plan.”

While helping PennDOT organizations assess their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges, organizational reviews often uncover out-of-date processes or procedures that may not have been examined in years. Updating outdated or inefficient processes and procedures is usually the next step BOI recommends for an organization. Process maps or Value Stream Analysis will be used to gain a holistic understanding of a current process before looking at eliminating waste, such as duplicated efforts, unnecessary steps, or automation of manual activities.

State Transportation Innovations Council



In addition to its key role in organizational improvement, BOI is also home to the State Transportation Innovations Council (STIC). The STIC is a cross-section of various stakeholders including representation from state and federal agencies, local governments, research organizations and industry partners. These entities work together to forge an environment of innovation, imagination and ingenuity to pursue specific transportation-related initiatives and their rapid implementation.

Danielle Klinger-Grumbine, the BOI division chief who oversees PennDOT's involvement with Pennsylvania's STIC, said, "The STIC is a forward-thinking organization that takes proven innovations, not

unproven ideas, and gets them in front of the decision makers whose collective knowledge and support are needed to implement these innovations across the department."

Some of the STIC's recent accomplishments include the expanded use of a High Friction Surface Treatment that's helping drivers stay safe by increasing skid-resistance on certain road surfaces, and influencing PennDOT's decision to move to 100 percent Warm Mix Asphalt on new paving jobs. Warm Mix Asphalt has environmental and pavement-quality benefits because it is applied at a lower temperature than traditional asphalt.

Data-Rich Decision Making

As one of its key services, BOI provides data analytics and management for a variety of PennDOT organizations.

“We’re the support organization to the support organization,” said BOI’s Program Analyst and Data Manager, Robert Snyder. “One of the organizations that we recently worked with had a process that was literally taking a week or more to analyze data; they called us in and we helped them build a data process that took the analysis time down to one hour or so.”

BOI’s data services recently played a key role in helping the Bureau of Maintenance and Operations (BOMO)

deliver on the department’s recent county accreditation initiative. BOI’s Snyder served as both the Business Analyst and the Business Lead for the development and launch of the Statistics, Measures and Results for Transportation (SMART) system that automatically captures, analyzes and reports on PennDOT county maintenance statistics to help counties make more informed operational decisions. SMART is helping PennDOT maintenance operations with peer-to-peer benchmarking to identify cost savings, close budget gaps and ensure every available dollar is being spent wisely.

GO-TIME

As the primary liaison between PennDOT and the Governor’s Office of Transformation, Innovation, Management and Efficiency (GO-TIME), BOI routinely works with internal PennDOT organizations to explore opportunities for inter-agency coordination and collaboration as a means of maximizing and modernizing efficiencies in state government operations.

A major GO-TIME project PennDOT has delivered recently was the outfitting of most of its plow trucks with Automated Vehicle Location (AVL) technology to improve location and operations information. PennDOT also delivered mobile construction applications for PennDOT’s construction inspectors, which enabled real-time data entry of construction inspection results and eliminated the need for inspectors to travel back to the office to input data.

Other Services



PennDOT also houses the department’s Agility Program. Created in 1996, PennDOT’s Agility Program enables service-for-service exchanges with partners, such as state agencies, local governments, universities and eligible non-profit organizations. Agility exchanges save time, save money, create efficiencies and provide additional and improved services to the public. Since the Agility Program’s inception, PennDOT and its partners have executed over 3,000 different agreements.

Dan Hartman, who coordinates BOI’s Agility Program, cited its value.

“The Agility Program is a win-win, not just for PennDOT and its partners, but most importantly for Pennsylvania residents who see service provided more rapidly or in a more-efficient manner,” he said.

In addition to Agility, BOI also oversees the operations at PennDOT’s 14 Welcome Centers. Tiffany Brown, who oversees the Tourism Services area, acknowledges the importance of their interaction with the traveling public.

“We have very knowledgeable tourist information counselors at all of the Welcome Center locations,” Brown said. “It’s an integral part of the organization in terms of customer service.”

And Finally...

BOI is the “go to” resource for those efforts that help PennDOT organizations perform more efficiently and cost-effectively. Steeped in continuous quality improvement, BOI is constantly looking for ways to improve the quality of service PennDOT offers.

“We’re here as a resource to help internal organizations be the absolute best they can be,” Chizmar said. “As trusted stewards of taxpayer dollars, PennDOT owes its best efforts each day to all Pennsylvania residents who hold us accountable -- that’s why the BOI team takes so much pride in what we do -- it’s about helping PennDOT continuously meet and exceed customer expectations, and raise the bar for the transportation services we provide every day.”

PennDOT Now Issuing New Driver's Licenses and Photo ID Cards, with Updated Security Features and Design

As a measure to help protect against counterfeiting, fraud and identity theft, PennDOT makes periodic improvements to its products and processes. Upon the expiration of the previous contract with the commonwealth's driver license vendor and the issuance of a new contract, PennDOT has updated the design and enhanced the security features of its driver license and identification card products. Over the last 22 months, PennDOT has worked with MorphoTrust USA on planning, design and deployment of this major new security enhancement initiative. This update is unrelated to the REAL ID Act.

All Driver and Photo centers will transition to the new products by the end of October 2017. The new products will be phased in over the next four-year renewal cycle and will replace existing products. Both current and new card designs will be in circulation during the transition period.

The new cards are not currently REAL ID-compliant. System, infrastructure and process changes will be necessary for Pennsylvania to issue REAL ID-compliant products. Preliminary work has already begun and PennDOT anticipates that REAL ID-compliant driver licenses and identification cards will be available at customers' option in 2019. PennDOT's work on REAL ID could start after Governor Wolf signed Act 3 of 2017 on May 26, which repealed Act 38 of 2012, which had barred PennDOT from taking any steps to implement REAL ID.

7

Current cards will be phased out during the normal renewal process – no need to replace current products, although customers are welcome to do so by requesting a duplicate product and paying the appropriate fee.

The cards look very different, but they also have additional enhanced security features, which improve fraud prevention and protect from counterfeiting and alteration. The new cards also comply with the most recent American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators' (AAMVA) security specifications.



Some of the enhanced features include:

- Elimination of the magnetic strip on the back of the card
- Larger primary portrait and smaller ghost portrait
- 1D and 2D barcodes, which contain data visible on the front of the card
- Laser perforation - The keystone outline with "PA" is embedded into the card stock and can be observed by holding the card up to any light source
- Laminate - Each card is laminated with an optically-variable pattern with the state motto, "Virtue, Liberty, Independence," Keystone outline and "1787," the year when the U.S. Constitution was ratified by Pennsylvania.

Honoring Our Veterans to Benefit Veterans



The Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) and PennDOT would like to remind you that the purchase of an attractive "Honoring Our Veterans" Pennsylvania license plate will benefit the Veterans Trust Fund (VTF)

Available for passenger cars, motorcycles, and light duty trucks up to 10,000 pounds, an Honoring Our Veterans license plate costs \$35, with \$15 benefitting the VTF. The VTF issues grants to statewide charitable organizations that aid veterans service organizations and county directors of veterans' affairs in assisting veterans in need of shelter and necessities of living.

In addition to the sales of these license plates, there are other programs designed to help fund the VTF in support of Pennsylvania veterans. To learn more about other VTF programs or to purchase an Honoring Our Veterans license plate, visit www.vtf.pa.gov or follow DMVA on Facebook at www.facebook.com/padmva.

Three Funding Initiatives Announced

Automated Red Light Enforcement (ARLE) Funding

Twenty-one municipalities will benefit from Automated Red Light Enforcement (ARLE) funding, with \$6 million going for 27 safety projects.

Under state law, fines from red light violations at 30 intersections in Philadelphia supply the grant funding. Pennsylvania's ARLE program aims to improve safety at signalized intersections by providing automated enforcement at locations where data shows red-light running has been an issue.



Nine Airports to Improve Via \$10 Million in State Investments

9 Nine airports will make safety upgrades and expand operation opportunities with the assistance of \$10 million in state investments.

The funds are administered by PennDOT's Bureau of Aviation through the Aviation Transportation Assistance Program, a capital budget grant program funded with bonds. The program complements the state Multimodal Fund, which will dedicate \$6 million to aviation in this fiscal year alone. The fund was created by Act 89, a far-reaching transportation funding program that clears the way for significant investments in all transportation modes.

The airports targeted for the funding are:

- **Allegheny County:** Allegheny County Airport
- **Clinton County:** William T. Piper Memorial Airport
- **Dauphin County:** Harrisburg International Airport
- **Indiana County:** Indiana County/Jimmy Stewart Airport
- **Lancaster County:** Lancaster Airport
- **Lehigh County:** Lehigh Valley International Airport
- **Luzerne County:** Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport
- **Lycoming County:** Williamsport Regional Airport
- **Northampton County:** Braden Airpark

Traffic Signal Improvement Funding to Benefit 94 Municipalities via "Green Light-Go"

Ninety-four municipalities will receive \$33 million to support the costs of upgrading traffic signals under PennDOT's "Green Light-Go" program. The funding is disbursed to support increased safety and mobility across Pennsylvania.

These reimbursement grant awards can be used on existing traffic signals to install light-emitting diode (LED) technology; to perform regional operations such as retiming; to develop special event plans; to monitor traffic signals; and upgrade traffic signals to the latest technologies.



Please Watch for Motorcycles – They’re Everywhere!

As more and more people enjoy the fun and excitement of motorcycling, PennDOT reminds both motorcyclists and motorists to share the road safely. Staying aware while driving or riding, obeying speed limits, and being responsible will help keep fatalities and injuries as low as possible.

There were 3,447 crashes involving motorcycles on Pennsylvania roadways in 2016, resulting in 192 fatalities.



livefreeridealive.com

Here are important points to keep in mind:

- Watch for Motorcycles: be aware that motorcycles are small and may be difficult to see. Check mirrors and blind spots before changing lanes and at intersections.
- Allow more following distance: leave at least four seconds when following a motorcycle.
- Always signal your intentions before changing lanes or merging with traffic.
- Respect a motorcycle as a full-size vehicle with the same rights and privileges as any vehicle on the roadway. Allow a motorcyclist a full lane width as the motorcyclist needs the room to maneuver safely in all types of road conditions.
- Never drive impaired.

Motorcyclists can do their part to help avoid crashes by following some simple safety tips:

- Be seen by wearing reflective clothing and put reflective tape on your protective clothing and motorcycle. Also, wear face or eye protection and a DOT-approved helmet.
- Use common sense by riding sober, obeying all speed limits, and allowing enough time to react to potentially dangerous situations.
- Know your motorcycle and conduct a pre-ride check.
- Practice safe riding techniques and know how to handle your motorcycle in adverse road and weather conditions.

10

Sharing the road safely, staying aware while driving or riding, obeying speed limits, and being responsible can help keep motorcycle fatalities and injuries low. Taking a training course under the watchful eye of a trained instructor also goes a long way in reducing the likelihood of a crash.

The Pennsylvania Motorcycle Safety Program (PAMSP) offers state residents with a motorcycle permit the opportunity to earn a motorcycle license or refresh their skills by way of five different courses for riders of various skills. For more information or to enroll in a course, visit www.pamsp.com.



PennDOT Introduces its First Blog — PennDOT Way

By Larissa Newton, Digital Director, Central Press Office



How many times – as an employee of PennDOT – have you been asked such questions as “Why can’t you do construction at night?” or “Why’d you get rid of registration stickers?” or even “What’s up with all the roundabouts?”

PennDOT is a huge organization — we’re directly responsible for nearly 40,000 miles of highway and roughly 25,000 bridges. We oversee programs and policies affecting highways, urban and rural public transportation, airports, railroads, ports and waterways, in addition to administering the state’s more than 11 million vehicle registrations and 8.8 million driver’s licenses.

That’s why in April we launched PennDOT Way, our first-ever public blog, at www.penndot.gov/blog. It’s our effort to convey to the public what PennDOT is, what we do, and how and why we do it.

11 So far, we’ve covered such topics as the [department’s Stars of Excellence](#), [distracted driving](#), [roadside beautification](#), and [work zone safety](#). FAQ Fridays and Maintenance Mondays are our two monthly

features. FAQ Fridays so far have focused on [construction season](#), [cyclists’ rights and responsibilities](#), and the [elimination of registration stickers](#). And Maintenance Mondays look at one of our day-to-day maintenance activities to explain more about it, like [pothole patching](#), line painting, or seal coating.

We also occasionally highlight specific projects going on around the state, such as the [long-awaited U.S. 322 Conchester Highway Improvement Project](#) in District 6 or how more than 90 projects worth around \$210 million will be [under construction in District 1 this year](#).

New articles are posted twice a week – usually Mondays and Fridays – and we encourage you to read and share with family and friends. If you have any suggestions for article topics, or if you even want to write a guest blog, email one of our digital team members: Larissa Newton at lanewton@pa.gov or Jackie DeTrano at jdetrano@pa.gov.

Rebecca Bickley Recognized at Inaugural “Women in Technology” Event

Rebecca “Becky” Bickley, the director of PennDOT’s Bureau of Information Technology Project Development and Delivery, was recognized by the Technology Council of Central Pennsylvania (TCCP) at their inaugural “Women in Technology” awards banquet. More than 30 women leaders in technology were nominated across eight award categories, including two more of our IT professionals – Laurita Povilavicius and Doreen Wallen.

Bickley was the recipient of the “Moxie” award, which recognizes a pioneer who has blazed the trail for other women in technology. She commented on her receipt of the award by saying, “The Moxie Award is particularly meaningful to me. It’s important that women understand the impact of technology on today’s society, and embrace the roles they can play in its development. I’m pleased to have been considered worthy to receive this award, and dedicate it to all women who choose to work within this challenging but ever so rewarding field.”

Wallen was nominated for the Impact Award in Public Sector/Government and Povilavicius for the Next Gen Award.

Per their website, the Technology Council of Central Pennsylvania (TCCP) connects, educates and promotes the advancement and development of technology in Central Pennsylvania. As the only trade association seated in the Commonwealth’s Capital representing technology and innovation sector, TCCP is uniquely positioned to enhance Pennsylvania’s economic development and prosperity by fostering the growth of a strong technology industry.



Left to right - Laurita Povilavicius, Doreen Wallen and Becky Bickley

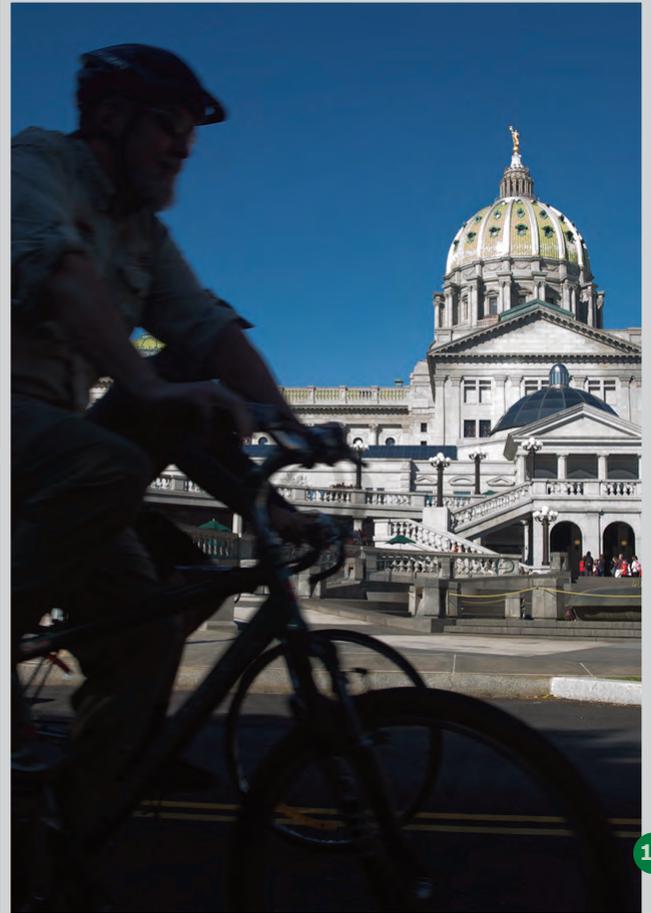
PennDOT Leads Multi-Agency Celebration of Bike Month in Pennsylvania

Several state agencies joined PennDOT at the start of Bike to Work week in May to celebrate bike month in Pennsylvania. PennDOT used the opportunity to announce plans to establish and update goals, objectives, and performance measures while offering guidance to local planning partners in setting priorities and developing bicycle and pedestrian plans.

The department's overall goal is to integrate pedestrian and bicycle activities into its transportation network rather than have them be an afterthought.

Examples Include:

- As part of a pilot effort, PennDOT will be constructing and maintaining several demonstration bike lane projects in District 6 in the five-county Philadelphia region that will help to clarify the costs of long-term maintenance for these facilities.
- PennDOT will expand the Secretary's PennDOT Connects initiative to include work in our projects to widen shoulders to improve bicycle accommodations where planning efforts indicate it is appropriate. (See the [May issue of the DOTcom](#) for more on PennDOT Connects)
- PennDOT will be issuing a policy change removing the Bicycle Occupancy Permit from its design manual. Moving forward, local governments will need only provide a letter of request for the proposed bicycle lane that includes the necessary information for PennDOT to appropriately evaluate the request. After a review, a letter of approval will be issued by the department. This will replace the previous requirement for a formal agreement between PennDOT and the municipality.



Twin Power - McKenna and Madison Lampe

By Ray Deep, D-12 Community Relations Coordinator



A year ago, John Lampe took over the Greene County storeroom. Being a temporary employee prior to accepting this job, he had a lot to learn. John jumped in with both feet. Being a perfectionist and detail oriented, he has reorganized the storeroom with a never-quit attitude. So, it should surprise no one that his girls, McKenna and Madison, have catapulted West Greene sports from obscurity to excellence.

The tiny school, which comprises just 99 girls, has undergone a Herculean transformation through the talents of the “M&M twins.” These super sophomores helped West Greene to its first WPIAL Class A softball championship last season; its first postseason victory in girls’ basketball in March; and its first dual-representation at the PIAA cross country championships.

In softball, the twins are looking to add a PIAA title and a second WPIAL championship this spring. Last season’s WPIAL crown was just the second in the school’s 62-year athletic history. West Greene entered Thursday with a 16-1 overall record and 10-0 in Class 1A Section 2.

On July 27, the West Greene Pioneers softball team was recognized as State Champions on the floor of the House after their come-from-behind victory. They were losing 7-0 after two innings and came back to win 9-8. McKenna was named Observer Reporter player of the year for her outstanding talent and abilities - ending the season with a .643 batting average, 48 stolen bases as well as other outstanding stats. Madison was named along with McKenna to the all-county first team. Madison ended the season with a .578 batting average with nine homeruns and 33 stolen bases. Madison and McKenna combined for a total of 115 of the 284 runs that the West Greene Lady pioneers scored this season. They are a lethal weapon at the top of the Pioneers’ line up.

“We set goals really high for ourselves,” said Madison, the first athlete in school history to earn all-state honors in two sports (softball and basketball). “We push each other to get there. We’ve always been that way.”

If that isn’t enough - they are both honor roll students.

Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs and PennDOT Urge Drivers Not to Mix Prescription Drugs and Driving

Acting Secretary of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) Jennifer Smith and Secretary Richards teamed up recently to raise awareness of the effects on driving of some prescription and over-the-counter medicines. Impaired driving can result from both prescription and over-the-counter medications that can cause slowed reflexes, blurred vision, or drowsiness and dizziness.

In Pennsylvania, driving under the influence can mean driving under the influence of alcohol, prescription or other drugs, or both. Prescription drug usage either by itself or with alcohol is not safe and can lead to crashes, which can be fatal for both the person under the influence and other innocent drivers and passengers.

According to a study released in April by the Governors Highway Safety Association, drugs were present in fatally injured drivers more frequently than alcohol, demonstrating the growing problem of drug-impaired driving. The report noted that hundreds of different drugs can impair drivers.

Drivers should remember that anything that affects your ability to drive safely could cause you to be guilty of driving under the influence.

The departments offered these safe driving recommendations for those taking medications:

- Avoid driving if you don't know how a drug affects you.
- Take your medicine at the prescribed doses and at the prescribed intervals.
- If you are tired, sick or disoriented, don't drive.
- Plan your driving around medication dosages and drive when you are least likely to present side effects.
- Never combine medications and alcohol.
- If you need to travel and don't feel comfortable driving, take public transportation or call for a driver. If you or someone you know is suffering from the disease of addiction, call 1-800-662-HELP or visit www.Pa.Gov/opioids for treatment options.

14

Pennsylvania Joins U.S. Bicycle Route System with Route 50

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) officially approved the U.S. Bike Route 50 in May, making Pennsylvania the 25th state to join the developing U.S. Bicycle Route System (USBRS).

PennDOT and partners developed more than 160 miles of trails and roadway for U.S. Bicycle Route 50, which is expected to result in significant transportation, health, and economic benefits to the region.

The 163-mile route mostly follows off-road trails, including the popular Great Allegheny Passage; Montour Trail, which was the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' 2017 Trail of the Year; and the Panhandle Trail, and connects Maryland to West Virginia through a variety of natural and agricultural landscapes, historical sites, thriving small towns, and recreational hot spots. Cyclists can visit restored rail stations; Ohiopyle State Park, which has some of the best white water rafting on the East Coast; Point State Park in Pittsburgh; and the nearby Fort Pitt Museum.

Additionally, Amtrak's Capitol Limited route parallels U.S. Bicycle Route 50 between DC and Pittsburgh and offers the opportunity for cyclists to carry their bikes on or off the train at any station. This multimodal option allows for more flexibility to plan bicycle trips without a car.

To see the placement of USBR 50 in Pennsylvania visit "Statewide Bike Routes" at PennDOT's "Ride a Bike" page at www.penndot.gov.



PennDOT Bridge Design Engineer Michael Miskanin Rocks!

On April 29th, one of PennDOT's own District 12 Bridge Design Engineers, Michael Miskanin, took home a big check (literally) for winning the 2017 Stonehouse Idol (sponsored by Mike Wood Toyota). The idol began on January 7th and ran just about every Saturday until the finale in April, containing over 175 singers who had qualified for the event, ranging throughout Southwestern PA and Northern West Virginia.

The idol finalists had to compete in two championship rounds between April 22nd and April 29th, both with a different set of judges whose combined scoring of the contestants determined the grand prize winner. On April 22nd, Michael got the attention of the hundreds in attendance by singing his own rendition of "Nothin' but a Good Time" by Poison. On April 29th, he capped off the finale by modeling his attire like Angus Young (AC/DC lead guitarist) and sang "TNT" by AC/DC.

If you are interested in seeing Michael perform, you can follow his band, "Martyr Kanin," where he performs alongside other fellow PennDOT employees: transportation construction inspection supervisor Charlie Kiel (drums/keyboards) and district highway safety engineer Cory Craft (soundman). You can find "Martyr Kanin's" schedule on their website, <http://martyrkanin.com/>

15



IF YOU SEE THIS STEER CLEAR

PLEASE, KEEP OUR
EMERGENCY
PERSONNEL SAFE.

