

How's your Metric-Q?

The move to metric in highway design and construction is going smoothly, says Ron Nohr, WisDOT Metric Coordinator. In 1996 the state will have four or five pilot projects with metric specs so some contractors can begin working in metric. "Things have settled down to pretty much routine," says Nohr.

The state is negotiating with FHWA to carry over some existing English projects into 1997-98. While sign conversion has been delayed, the federal requirements for moving to metric in other areas are all still in place. They apply also to local units of government if their projects use federal funds.

Designers and supervisors/managers are being trained in metric as WisDOT district offices start using it for project designs. "We have a workshop where they work through examples of metric problems," says Bill Bertrand of District 3. "The hands-on activities are the most well-received portion of the training." Three brief videos introduce the material, then participants work on engineering, real estate or administrative problems. A 9-page summary of important changes in the *Facilities Development Manual* is particularly well-received, Bertrand says.

The three metric training videos, *SI Metric for the Workplace*, can be borrowed from County Extension Offices (for descriptions, see **Resources** page 6). Copies of District 3's training packet are available from the T.I.C. Please use the form on page 7 or call 800/442-4615 to order. WisDOT has a listing of metric publications available. Call Shelly Carney at 608/267-0763. She can also put you on the mailing list for the department's quarterly **Metric Conversion Fact Sheet**.

So, how's your metric-Q? Try your hand at this selection from the managers problem sheet:

Please write the corresponding metric unit and abbreviation. (example: feet = meter, m)

- 1) pound _____
- 2) acre _____
- 3) pound force _____
- 4) pounds per square inch _____

Locate the errors in these values. There may be more than one per line. (example: 75 kn should be 75 kN)

- 1) 115.2mm _____
- 2) 2.65 l _____
- 3) 10000 kg _____
- 4) 45,250 cm _____


Look for the answers and explanations on page 5.

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