

Crossroads

Winter 2000



TRANSPORTATION Information Center — LTAP

University of Wisconsin—Madison

Time to fix roadside safety hazards

Keeping roadways safe and free of hazards is a local agency's continuing task. Roadway hazards often seem to sprout overnight, like the weeds that leap up in ditches the minute your back is turned.

There are many different types of hazards to be looking for—from guardrail problems to unsafe mail boxes, edge dropoffs to culvert headwalls. Each has the potential to make a driver's mistake a costly one. Some also can turn a snow

plowing operation into a demolition derby.

The T.I.C.'s *SAFER Manual* can help you spot safety problems. Dozens of photographs illustrate hazards in a variety of categories. Using the SAFER ranking system you can identify which ones need immediate action and then plan when and how to correct others. A sampling of some common hazards seen on Wisconsin roadsides in the past year are shown here.



Top row, from left: **Edge dropoffs** over 1½ inches can turn a driver's steering error into a serious crash. Give them year round maintenance attention. **Trees** close to the road edge at curves or intersections are candidates for removal. Be selective to avoid negative public reaction. **Hazardous rail**, like this useless short piece with a projecting blunt end, should be removed, along with the trees it is failing to protect. **Mailboxes** on non-standard supports and multiple boxes on planks are hazards found much too frequently along roads.

Left: **Driveway posts** on the right-of-way decrease the clear zone and also make snow removal more difficult.

Bottom, from left: **Guard rail** should meet safety standards. This wood plank is not strong enough. The connection to the bridge railing is also unsafe. **Culvert headwalls** extending above the shoulder are a hazard and serve no purpose.

Refresh your memory about common roadside hazards and learn to recognize others. Attend the T.I.C.'s January Safety Workshops. See the Calendar on page 4.



Inside

Idea Exchange: Signs, mirrors and lights help plow drivers; Tips from winter workshops	2
Winter is a good time to inspect signs	4
Calendar	4
Resources	5
Pavement cuts cost more than you think	6
Good sampling and testing make better roads	7
Many advantages to flowable fill	8