

Idea Exchange

Reflective stakes mark plow ends



Drivers can't miss seeing the plow blade and wing end when Mark Hertel clears snow off the Town of Koshkonong's roads. Four-foot-high red and white reflective markers stick up from each end. The flexible Fiberglas stakes are more often seen as markers for telephone boxes so plows won't hit them and they can be located in deep snow. It was Town Chair Paul Swart, a retired Ameritech employee, who got the idea of using them to mark the plow. "It makes it easier for the patrolman to see the plow and wing end," says Swart. A version designed for snow plows, called Fender Finders, is available from RoDon Corp. of St. Charles, IL. They can be shortened to any length and cost \$28 to \$42 per pair depending on color and mounting bracket.

For more information contact Swart at 920/563-2803. Contact RoDon at 630/232-1477.

Wheels on plows conserve gravel



Operators have to be very careful when plowing gravel roads so they don't scrape off the surface with the snow. Road Foreman Larry Halvorson of Towner County Highway Department in North Dakota came up with a good idea. Why not put small wheels on the outside edges of the blade to control bounce?

Using salvaged wheel swivels from old farm drills, they built a framework and mounted 15 inch wheels on each end of the blade. With used radial tires, and salvaged metal for the frame, the cost was minimal. Earlier versions with smaller wheels did not hold up very well.

"The operators feel they can do a better job with this system," says Halvorson. "They are better able to hold up their speeds on the grader, reach out further with the blade, and as such able to throw the snow further."

This idea won first prize in the North Dakota LTAP Center's "You Show Us" contest. For details, contact Halvorson at 701/968-4366.

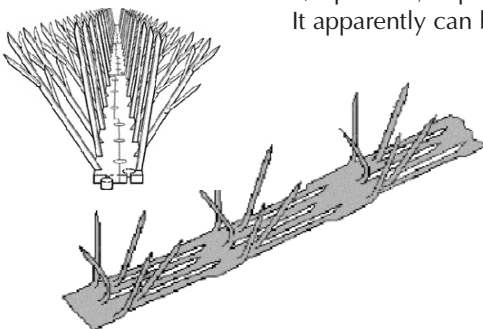
Prongs prod birds to flap on

If pigeons, sparrows, and other nuisance birds are finding a cozy home in your maintenance building, some ingenious folks have a product that can help send them on their way. Bird Guard™ is one of several companies that offer strips of steel or plastic prongs. When applied to joists, girders, ledges and similar places, they keep birds from landing and roosting. The steel prong product comes in five foot strips and costs between \$3.75 and \$5 per foot, depending on quantity ordered. Mastic is additional.

It apparently can be applied to any structure surface, lasts for 30 years, and needs no maintenance.

Depending on the severity of your nuisance bird problem you may want to use several approaches at once, including poison bait and strip coverings for bay doors.

For more information contact Bird Guard at 800/331-2973, or at www.birdguard.com. (Mention of this product is for information only. No endorsement is implied.)



Resources

Booklet copies are available from the T.I.C. Videotapes are loaned through County Extension Offices at no cost.

NEW: Videotape Lending Library Catalogue, T.I.C., June 2000, 54 pp. Lists and briefly describes over 230 tapes available from the T.I.C. video lending library. Great for your in-house training program. Tapes relating to topics in this issue of *Crossroads*:

- Shoulder Maintenance (#16654)
- Replenishing Earth and Gravel Shoulders (#16351)
- Maintaining and Controlling Roadside Vegetation (#17885)
- Pest Management Principles for Right-of Ways (#17724)

Using Weight Limits to Protect Local Roads, 1998, T.I.C. Bulletin No. 8. This 8-page fact sheet discusses how freezing and thawing affects local roads, and reviews the authority of local governments to protect local roads from damage by heavy vehicles by setting and getting enforcement of weight limits.

How Vehicle Loads Affect Pavement Performance, T.I.C. Bulletin No. 2. This 4-page fact sheet discusses the mechanics of pavement fatigue and how wheel loads, axles, tires, pavement base, and thickness affect pavement life.

NEW: Drainage Manual, July 2000, 16 pp. A new T.I.C. manual that guides local officials in evaluating the condition of drainage on their streets and roads. Dozens of photos make it easy to spot defects and to use the manual's simple rating system. The information will help you prioritize when and how to correct drainage problems. A companion to the PASER pavement surface rating manuals.

Crossroads

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