

Crossroads

Summer 2002



TRANSPORTATION Information Center — LTAP

University of Wisconsin—Madison

WisDOT adopts new safety vests

When construction season began this year, WisDOT crews were sporting highly visible new safety vests and pants. The bright yellow-green garments with flashy reflective tape may not be the height of fashion, but they meet the new ANSI standard for high visibility clothing.

"For the most part crew members really like our vests and pants and they are being received quite well," says Julie White, WisDOT, Safety and Health Manager. The vests are lightweight and washable with a mesh side. There are inside pockets for field notebooks and pens, and the vests have a tear-away feature. The pants fit over a worker's own regular pants and have side opening so they can put their hands into their own pockets. Vests cost \$38-\$42 each depending on size; pants cost \$33-\$37.

The state Safety Steering Committee developed its bid specs for the vests after looking at a variety of samples in two different demonstrations held at dusk. The reflective tape is very visible against the bright yellow-green fabric, says White, and the state version adds silver reflective piping to be even more eye-catching.

Until recently there was no national standard for the high visibility clothing. The American National Standard Institute (ANSI) has just

published one. However, it has not yet been adopted by OSHA or the Department of Commerce, which regulates municipal and state roadway crews. It will take some time before the new standard is adopted.

"Despite what some local officials may be hearing from sales reps, there is no requirement to replace existing high visibility vests and pants, either from the state or the feds," says White. "We want local officials to know that WisDOT is

meeting the federal guidelines with what we have adopted. When they are ready to purchase new vests they may want to consider our specs." If they prefer, local municipalities can order "high-vis" clothing by piggybacking on the state contract. Information is available on the state's purchasing web site:

<http://vendornet.state.wi.us>

The new ANSI standard is very detailed, running 26 pages. Basically, there are three classes of safety vests:

1. Crossing guards
2. People working in 50 mph and under traffic
3. People working in traffic over 50 mph

The new WisDOT vest meets class 2. Combining the vest with high visibility pants meets class 3 which must be conspicuous through the full range of body motions, says White.

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Flaggers should use proper tools, technique



For their own safety, and the safety of others working on roadways, everyone who directs traffic should use correct equipment and procedures. Although these workers are still called flaggers, they

should not actually use flags except in emergency situations. Studies show that Stop/Slow paddles are more visible to drivers. If you or your crew member must use a flag, be sure it is a 24x24 inch red flag. Also use proper hand signals and flag positions. It is important to be readily visible and use motions that drivers will understand.

T.I.C. offers half-day programs to train flaggers on your site. Programs to train trainers are also available. Please see Calendar, page 3, for details.

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Great job done on road ratings

Thanks to a lot of hard work and cooperation, more than 98% of Wisconsin's municipalities and counties reported pavement ratings to WisDOT's Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) as of February 2002. Just over 1,880 submitted condition ratings by the December 2001 deadline. WisDOT is working with the remaining towns and villages to obtain their roadway data.

The information will help communities set priorities for their annual road projects and develop multi-year budgets. It will also help the state identify needs for the local road network and develop biennial budget recommendations. The WISLR Web site should be working by August, letting local officials review their own pavement conditions and compare them to other Wisconsin communities.

"We really commend local officials and staff for their efforts," says Scott Bush, WisDOT Bureau of Transit and Local Roads. "Many had to learn both the rating process and the submission procedure for the first time to get this done." Much credit goes also to County Highway Department and Regional Planning Commission staff who taught locals how to develop PASER ratings in county-by-county workshops.

To help in the process the T.I.C. produced new PASER Manuals covering seal-coat roads, unimproved roads, and brick and block streets. These supplement the Asphalt, Gravel, and Concrete PASER manuals that have been in use for more than a decade.

Sixty percent of municipalities used PASERWARE, the T.I.C.'s pavement rating computer program to submit their condition ratings. Using PASERWARE was a big help to WisDOT and local staff. Having the data in a standard, electronic form made it easier to process and store. The software will also help local officials and staff compare annual projects, develop budgets, and rate their pavements again in two years.

"WisDOT staff also deserve a lot of credit," notes T.I.C. Director Don Walker. "They were very flexible. They helped people through the process and were willing to take data in a variety of formats."

Looking ahead to 2003, the recently collected roadway data can be helpful in another context as well: the new federal

requirement for asset accounting known as GASB 34. By next June communities with revenues less than \$10 million must begin reporting the value of their assets—dams, bridges, tunnels, sewerage systems, water systems, buildings, and roads. All the information needed to report the value of your road system should be available from your PASERWARE data.

New safety vests *from page 1*

"We provide class 2 vests to our workers and require them to use them around live traffic. The pants should be added for nighttime operations or traffic speeds over 55," says White.

More than one vendor meets state specs. The state contract is with Head Lites Corporation (<http://www.headlitescorp.com>; Contract #404-915; Tel 800/777-5630). The vest chosen is similar to the "Roadstar 200" shown on their website. Information is also at: <http://vendornet.state.wi.us>

Calendar

T.I.C. workshops

Details and locations are in announcements sent to all Crossroads recipients. For more information or additional copies, call the T.I.C. at 800/442-4615. Registration starts after announcements are distributed.

Winter Road Maintenance Prepare for winter operations. This workshop covers equipment preparation, the latest on ice control materials, and operations planning. It's a great opportunity to share experiences and tips for better winter operations.

Sep 23	Rhineland	Oct 1	Green Bay
Sep 24	Hayward	Oct 2	Brookfield
Sep 25	Eau Claire	Oct 3	Barneveld
Sep 26	Tomah		

T.I.C. On-Site Workshops Several workshops are available to be conducted at your shop or office. If there aren't enough people from your agency to fill the workshop, invite nearby agencies. The cost is \$500 per class and maximum class size depends on the topic. For more information contact T.I.C. for a brochure. The following workshops are currently available:

Basic Surveying for Highway Departments
One day, 20 participants

Basic Work Zone Traffic Control
One day, 30 participants

Flagger Training
Half day, 20 participants

Flagger Instructor Training
One day, ten participants

Local Transportation Issues (ETN) The Transportation Information Center and the UW Local Government Center present five 2-hour workshops that focus on transportation issues. This series is available via Educational Telephone Network (ETN) at over 100 locations throughout Wisconsin.

You can register for one workshop or the whole series. Look for a brochure in August announcing topics.

UW-Madison Seminars

Local government officials are eligible for a limited number of scholarships for the following engineering courses. Use the form on page 7, call 800/442-4615, or e-mail tic@epd.engr.wisc.edu for details. Courses are in Madison unless otherwise noted.

Fleet Maintenance Management
Sep 25-26

Parking Lot and Site Access Design and Review, Sep 25-27

Soil Engineering for Non-soils Engineers and Technicians, Oct 15-16

Neighborhood Design and Traffic Calming, Oct 7-8

Managing Snow and Ice Control Operations, Oct 7-8

Implementing a Sidewalk Management System, Oct 25-26

Evaluation and Rehabilitation of Pavements, Nov 6-8

Environmental Impacts of Highway Projects, Nov 18-20

Effective Bridge Rehabilitation, Dec 4-6

Highway Bridge Design, Dec 9-11

Minimizing Pavement Damage Caused by Utility Cuts, Dec 11-12

Other Training Opportunities

The Snow Plow Roadeo of the Wisconsin Chapter American Public Works is your opportunity to test the best crew you've got against the best crews from other communities in friendly competition. It's also a great way to get everyone tuned up and ready for winter. It will be held Wednesday, September 18, 2002 at the Waukesha County fairgrounds. Call Mark Hochschild at 414/761-5372 for more details.