

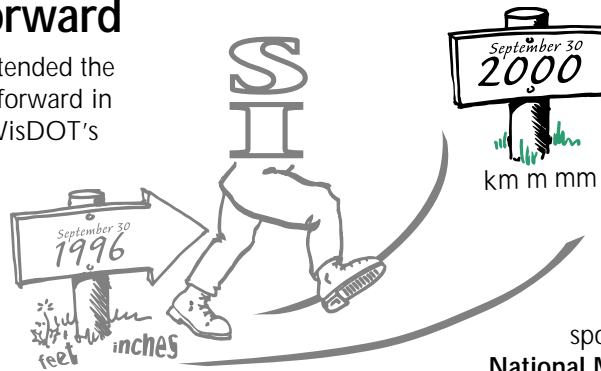
Metrication moves forward

Although recent federal legislation extended the deadlines, metrication is still moving forward in Wisconsin, according to Ron Nohr, WisDOT's metrication coordinator.

"We're continuing on schedule," he says, "with pilot projects beginning in the spring and more metric designed projects in the letting schedule this fall."

The federal highway system act passed at the end of 1995 changed the mandatory date for all roadway improvement plans to be in metric units from September 30, 1996, to September 30, 2000. According to an AASHTO survey, Wisconsin is one of 33 states who will continue on the original schedule, while six others will have slight delays.

"We had already received exceptions for 320 projects which were far enough along that it was more economical to leave them in English units," says Nohr. "This new



deadline just gives us a little flexibility in case some projects slip behind schedule."

The change also gives local governments more time and flexibility to convert their road project planning to metric.

An AASHTO and FHWA sponsored national conference, **The**

National Metric Conference, will be held

April 15-18 in Minneapolis for people interested in what is happening in metrication nationally. For information contact Robert McPartlin, 612/296-4337.

WisDOT has a new brochure, **The New Metric Rule**, to explain metric to members of the public affected by transportation projects. Copies are available from the T.I.C. Use the form on page 7 or call 800/442-4615.

Winter road survey results

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Written snow policy — More than 40% of the respondents said their agency had a written policy or snow removal plan (175 out of 421). Two-thirds of city-based participants have a written plan (51 of 85), while villages and counties are about half and half. Relatively few towns have such a plan (40 out of 169).

"People find written plans very useful," says Walker. "It's easier to sub in replacement drivers. You can explain your practices better to the constituents. And you can remove snow more efficiently when you think comprehensively about your procedures, as you must in preparing a plan."

Levels of service — One aspect of a written plan is deciding which roads are to get the highest service levels, such as school bus routes and heavily traveled roads. About one-third (148 out of 479 responses) try to achieve bare roadways on their most important routes during overtime hours, the survey shows, while half, 226, sand hills and intersections and plow to keep the road open to traffic.

News media reports — More than 100 respondents (about one-quarter) regularly get policy and road condition information to the media, including half of the county and state agencies represented and a third of the cities. Relatively few from villages and towns do so.

"It's encouraging that significant numbers of people are getting information out, but more need to," says Don Walker. "Road condition reports are a good way to build support and understanding for your agency and its efforts."

Do you have an idea to exchange? Have you designed a gadget or found a new way to do something that other highway people can use? Use the form on page 7 to let us know, or call Don Walker or Steve Pudloski at 800/442-4615.

Calendar

T.I.C. workshops

Specific details and locations for workshops are in the announcements mailed to all **Crossroads** recipients.

Spring ROADWARE User Group Meetings Current ROADWARE users will have a chance to get together to share ideas and ask questions of the computer support and TIC staff at six regional user group meetings in March and early April. A new version of ROADWARE (6.0) will also be demonstrated. Notices will be sent to current ROADWARE users. If you are not a current ROADWARE user and would like to attend call 800/442-4615 for locations, dates, and times.

Roadway Maintenance This workshop includes how drainage affects road life, pavement maintenance techniques, an opportunity to discuss either asphalt paving or gravel road maintenance, and a look at new techniques and materials.

March 19	Rhineland	March 25	Green Bay
March 20	Cable	March 26	Brookfield
March 21	Eau Claire	March 27	Barneveld
March 22	Tomah		

UW-Madison seminars

Local government officials are eligible for a limited number of scholarships for the following engineering courses in Madison. Use the form on page 7 for details or call 800/442-4615.

Bridge Rehabilitation, March 4-6

Environmental Impacts of Highway Projects, March 18-20

Intro to Global Positioning Systems (GPS), April 9-12

Roadway Safety Improvements, April 15-17

Managing Roadway Liability, April 17-19

Managing Fleet Maintenance Operations, May 16-17