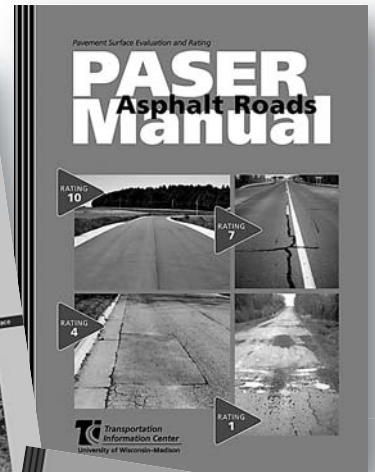
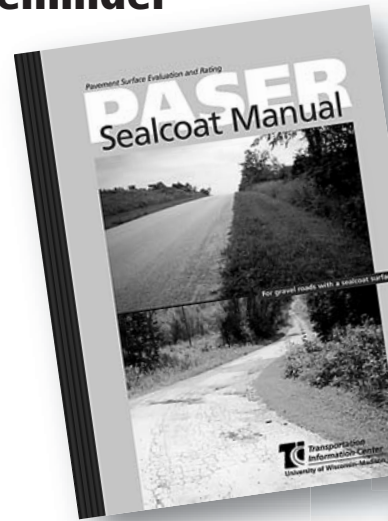


Pavement rating reminder

LOCAL AGENCIES must rate and report the condition of all their pavements again this year. The deadline is December 15, 2005. Details on how to submit the data are in a letter sent to all municipalities after the spring elections. The preferred method is on-line with WEB WISLR. Electronic or paper spreadsheets are other options.

After three rounds of rating roads for WISLR, most localities have a trained inspector or have arranged for inspections by another agency or consultant. The rating process is not complicated and can be learned quickly from booklets and video tapes.

The TIC's manuals for all surface types — asphalt, concrete, gravel, sealcoat, unpaved, and brick/block — are self-explanatory. Booklets are available on request and as PDFs on the TIC Web page.



Videos are loaned free through County Extension offices. (To contact us, see page 10.)

If you need additional training or help, talk with your county highway commissioner or regional planning commission.

PASER Series
TIC 74 min. #18390

Three-part video with PASER training for these road surface types:

Asphalt (46 min.)
Gravel (15 min.)
Sealcoat (13 min.)

Can be used with PASER manuals to learn how to evaluate and rate pavement conditions. Also available separately.

Checking signs for retroreflectivity

NEW ROADWAY SIGNS are easy to see at night. Retro-reflective sheeting picks up light from vehicle headlamps and reflects it back to the driver. Over the years, sunlight, moisture, and

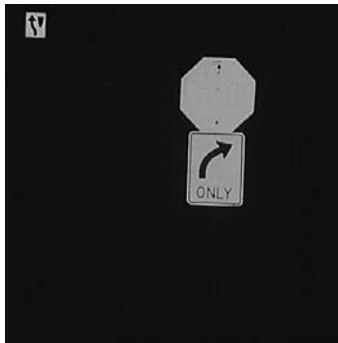
pollutants make them dimmer until drivers can no longer see the warning or message. Vandalism also takes its toll.

Since damage can happen any time, and signs age at different rates, it is important to inspect them regularly. Guidelines for ensuring that signs meet minimum standards for retroreflectivity have been published for comment by the FHWA and will probably be formally adopted soon. Agencies will be required to adopt a method for meeting the requirement and for keeping documentation.

Nighttime windshield surveys and data kept in a basic computer spreadsheet can work well, especially for smaller municipalities. In fact, research has shown that trained observers can adequately determine which signs need to be replaced.

Inspection tips from "Retroreflectivity: Making Sure Signs Measure Up," by Paul J. Carlson, which originally appeared in the Texas LTAP newsletter.

To contact Dennis Premo, e-mail dpremo@co.adams.wi.us or call 608-339-3355.



Use regular nighttime inspection to find failing signs like this.

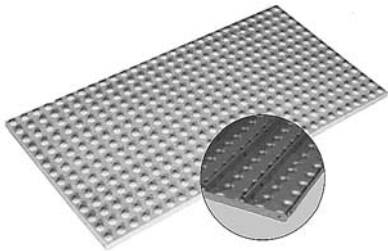
MORE TIPS FOR EFF

- The inspector must know signing and be at least 50 years old. (Older eyes require more light.)
- Use a sport utility vehicle or pick-up truck because the driver's eye is farther from the headlamps.
- Make sure headlamps are aimed properly; use low beams.
- Drive at normal speeds for the road.

The training approach used in Adams County is basic but effective. "We usually have two people to a team," says Dennis Premo, Sign and Marking Supervisor. "We have them look at old signs we have taken

New curb ramp option

ANOTHER TRUNCATED warning dome product has been added to the WisDOT Approved Products List. As of April the Advantage Tactile System was approved for use.



Truncated warning domes provide contrasting color and a rough surface to help visually impaired pedestrians at curb ramps. The surface is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and must meet ADA specifications. For more information on curb ramps see the Spring 2005 *CROSSROADS*.

EFFECTIVE INSPECTION

- Document the procedure with a tape recorder, video recorder, second person taking notes, or other method.
- Don't inspect in rain, fog, or when water has condensed on the sign.
- If uncertain, drive past the sign again.
- When in doubt, throw it out.

down that have different grades of sheeting, ages, and condition, and compare them to new sheeting. They work at it until they get used to it." Adams County inspects about half its signs each year.

Setting safe speeds for curves and turns

A BEND IN THE ROAD can be a hazard for vehicles. While older rural highways probably have the most, every roadway system has a few curves and turns. How do you know which bends need signing? What information tells you which signs to use? The answer may be sitting in your driveway.

"Most signing decisions for horizontal alignment change, that is turns and curves, are based on the 'safe and comfortable speed,'" says Tom Heydel, Traffic Operation Engineer, WisDOT District 2. Heydel is the TIC's signing instructor, making presentations and answering questions in our February Safety workshops.

No signs are required at roadway bends under the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), the nation's signing "bible." Signs are helpful at locations where drivers will have to slow down 10 MPH or more from the posted limit. Past accident experience is the most reliable indicator. Visibility is critical, especially if the curve is hidden or unexpected, following a long straight section, for example.

Although an engineering study is preferred, you can determine an advisory speed by driving the curve at various speeds. You will need a test car and an experienced mature driver. For consistency throughout the system, use the same test driver. A ball bank indicator can also be helpful to develop consistency in application.

Although vehicles vary tremendously — a little sports car can corner much faster than a loaded semi — choose an average passenger car, like a mid-size sedan, for your test vehicle. Before making the test runs check the tires and inflate all of them to the proper pressure. Also calibrate your speedometer.



Use the Curve sign if the advisory speed is 35 to 55 MPH.

Check the odometer and time the car over a measured distance at specific speeds — ideally 5 MPH intervals starting at 25. A speed gun can also be used.

Drive through the curve at various speeds, staying in the center of the lane, parallel to the center line. For the advisory speed, select the highest value that lets you travel the curve in your own lane without feeling like you are losing control or without throwing you and your passengers uncomfortably to the side.



A ball bank indicator, or manual inclinometer, is a curved level with degree markings, available commercially for about \$75 each. On the flat, the gauge's small metal ball rests at the bottom of the curve, at 0. As the car travels through the curve, the ball shows the angle of deflection. When the gauge shows a maximum reading of 16 degrees, use your test vehicle's speed as the advisory speed.

If the advisory speed is 30 MPH or less use a Turn sign. Use the Curve sign if the advisory speed is 35 to 55 MPH. An Advisory Speed Plate should be mounted below the sign if the advisory speed is 10 MPH or more below the posted speed limit on the road.



If the advisory speed is 30 MPH or less use a Turn sign.

For more information see the TIC's Transportation Bulletin No. 7, *Signing for Local Roads*. (See page 10.)

TIC Highway Safety workshops held in February cover the basics of signing and marking. Mark your calendar now and look for dates and details in the next *CROSSROADS* and on our Web page.

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