

Idea Exchange



Slick idea for stopping sign thieves

From Don Schumacher, Town Chairman in Town of Rush River, St. Croix County, comes this inexpensive idea for foiling sign vandals.

"We had one street that was being vandalized regularly. It happened four times in one year

and it was costing us \$200 or more to replace them each time. The last time it happened, we decided to weld an extra section on the sign post to make it taller and then we greased it.

"We used the messiest, dirtiest black axle grease we could find. We figured if they did it again all we'd have to do is look for someone with a black streak down the front of their jacket. Six months later we haven't lost a single sign on that road."

Small municipalities and GASB 34

Most towns and villages are not required to meet GASB 34 accounting standards, advises Richard Stadelman, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Towns Association "This is a private accounting industry standard. The state Department of Revenue does not require it for towns that use cash accounting," he says.

The GASB 34 national accounting standard for municipalities is supposed to make their financial reports easier for investors and citizens to understand. Among other things it requires a systematic inventory, valuing, and depreciation of all government assets. It was phased in for larger municipalities over the last couple years and will apply beginning in June 2003 to small communities with annual revenues under \$10 million. (See Fall 2002 *Crossroads*.)

Very few towns or villages use general obligation bonds to raise revenue, which is one situation where they might be required to use the standard, Stadelman points out. Also, local roads are the primary asset for many of them. "If you take all the towns in the state, they spend an average 53% of their budgets on roads," says Stadelman. "The PASER system is just as good a means for finding out how money is spent and doing life cycle planning, and it has more relevant tools."

"PASER and PASERWARE have proven themselves effective and are the key to the WISLR system for 99% of our members," he continues. "They are simple and adaptable. GASB 34 is a make-work project related to determining the value of our highways."

Stadelman expressed his opinion in detail in a recent Wisconsin Towns Association newsletter. For a copy, contact WTA at: 715/526-3157 or on the Web at: <http://www.wisctowns.com>

Calendar

T.I.C. workshops

Specific details, locations and registration forms are sent to all Crossroads recipients nearer the date of each workshop. Registration begins after announcements are sent.

Road Maintenance This workshop presents maintenance, repair and reconstruction options for your local roads and streets—including asphalt, concrete and gravel pavements. The workshop will also emphasize good practices for maintaining and improving drainage to extend pavement life.

Mar 13 Mineral Point	Mar 19 Hayward
Mar 14 Brookfield	Mar 20 Eau Claire
Mar 17 DePere	Mar 21 Tomah
Mar 18 Rhineland	

Solving Subgrade Problems (ETN) Mar 13 Often pavement problems are caused by poor subgrades. There are a variety of solutions to soft subgrades, but selecting the most cost effective requires an understanding of soil mechanics and available options. Learn basic soils concepts and review ways to solve subgrade problems—soil stabilizers, undercutting and back filling with select material, geotextiles, and improving drainage. Call 608/262-9960 for registration information.

Learn basic surveying Do you need to set culvert and ditch grades or determine crown and slopes, but don't have surveying

experience? Highway workers and foremen can learn to use a tape and hand level to make fast, reliable measurements for these and other projects. T.I.C. offers a one-day workshop in Basic Surveying for Local Highway Departments with both classroom instruction and outdoor field exercises.

Where? At your site. **When?** You schedule it. T.I.C. will bring the program to you at a cost of \$500 for up to 20 participants. On-site training is economical, efficient and minimizes disruption to your work. For more information or to schedule a session, contact Susanna Fuerstenberg, 800/442-4615 or email tic@epd.engr.wisc.edu

UW-Madison courses

Local government officials are eligible for a limited number of scholarships for the following Engineering Professional Development courses in Madison.

Designing Best Management Practices for Stormwater Quality Improvement Phase II Implementation Mar 24-26

Culvert Construction & Repair Mar 26-28

Soil Engineering for Non-Soils Engineers and Technicians Apr 9-10

Design of Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Jun 2-3

Effective Roadway Lighting Jun 11-13

Crossroads

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