

AGENCIES PARTNER TO HELP PUT THE BRAKES ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING



#WEARBLUE TO HELP PUT THE BRAKES ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

By Secretary Leslie S. Richards



WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?



Every year on Jan. 11, we recognize National Human Trafficking Awareness Day. And on this day, we wear blue to pledge solidarity with the estimated 20 million adults and children worldwide – including hundreds of thousands of people right here in the United States – who have fallen victim to human trafficking.

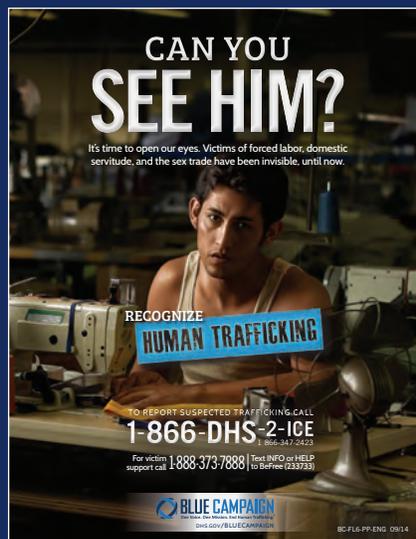
Human trafficking is no small matter. It's a crime, a form of modern day slavery in which traffickers profit from the abuse of others. As a community, we have a responsibility to educate each other on the signs of human trafficking, to

take notice of the red flags, and to report suspected cases. We must do everything in our power to put the brakes on human trafficking – and it starts at home.

At PennDOT, we've been working to train our front-line Driver License Center staff to notice signs of a potential trafficking situation. The agency is working with the Pennsylvania Public Transportation Association to help arrange this training for their operators as well, and is sharing trafficking awareness information with commercial drivers who visit Driver License Centers. To date, PennDOT has

trained 500 front-line Driver License Center employees, 64 Welcome Center employees and transit agent managers to recognize the signs of human trafficking and how to contact the appropriate authorities.

Working in coordination with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Opens In A New Window, along with law enforcement, government, non-governmental and private organizations, PennDOT is truly committed to making Pennsylvania a safer place by bringing those who exploit human lives to justice.



To learn more visit U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Blue Campaign: <https://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign> and go to our Human Trafficking Media Center: <https://www.penndot.gov/about-us/media/human-trafficking/Pages/default.aspx>

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FROM THE secretary

Dear Colleagues,

We face many daunting challenges in our mission to be of service to the people of Pennsylvania. Though we are focused on all aspects of transportation, there are pressing issues that touch on our work that demand our involvement.

In this issue of the DOT.com, you will see my thoughts on the ongoing, terrible issue of human trafficking. This is a new, insidious form of slavery that tragically is all too prevalent in our own nation and state. The harsh truth is that as the Keystone State, Pennsylvania serves as a national cross roads, and this kind of abhorrent activity is being seen too often here. That is why we have trained our frontline Driver and Vehicles staff and transit operator to help spot suspected cases and turn to law enforcement for help putting a stop to it.

We also review the progress we are making implementing the REAL ID mandate, our ongoing work to make PennDOT a more diverse organization, our strides implementing PennDOT Connects by which we draw community needs into our project planning at the most optimum time. As always, we also have wonderful stories about what our PennDOT colleagues are doing in their personal lives to build their families and communities.

Thanks for taking time to read this latest issue. I hope you enjoy learning more about the good we as an organization and individuals are doing every day.

Sincerely,

Secretary of Transportation

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<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DOTcom2019>

This quarterly newsletter highlights our latest efforts to improve mobility and quality of life in Pennsylvania.

This issue features PennDOT's focus on community, diversity, school bus safety, fallen workers, what's new with Real ID and more!

As always, feel free to send story ideas or requests for information you want to see. If you're involved in an interesting or innovative project or initiative, have ever wondered about other parts of PennDOT's operations or have other suggestions, email the Press Office at ra-penndotpress@pa.gov.

We hope you enjoy this latest issue!

MAKING STRIDES TOWARD A DIVERSE ORGANIZATION

By Secretary Leslie S. Richards



As the first woman to head the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, diversity is a critical issue for me. My goal is to make PennDOT a leader when it comes to a diverse workforce and an agent to advance opportunity for those who do business with us to deliver the very best in transportation services.

PennDOT participated in a diversity networking and outreach event at California University of Pennsylvania earlier in 2018.

We are making progress in our continuing efforts to diversify and provide more opportunities for small, disadvantaged, and diverse businesses. Here are some examples of initiatives and programs we conduct:

- A new pilot program for Small Business Enterprises (SBE) to compete as prime consultants for federally assisted preliminary engineering and final design agreements. Seven projects will be included in the pilot in federal fiscal year 2018 (started Oct. 1) and will run to project completion. Based on the measurable outcomes, the program may be expanded to include other contracting opportunities.
- Hosting and participating in many networking and outreach events that include information about marketing, the Diverse Business Enterprise (DBE) certification process, contracting, and upcoming projects. Three were held in 2017 and two were held in 2018. This year's — at California University of Pennsylvania and Cheyney University — included 53 and 78 participants, respectively. PennDOT also collaborates with local and state governments, business, and advocacy groups to provide training and outreach.
- Collaboration with Cheyney University of PA to encourage firms to do business with PennDOT. Cheyney University provides business development planning, including training and workshops for Diverse Businesses, Small Businesses and DBEs, to build a diverse business community to work in the transportation industry.

- Launched an Advisory Council in 2017 to increase networking opportunities and provide a forum for stakeholders to address barriers to doing business with PennDOT. The council membership includes PennDOT staff, trade and advocacy organizations, and DBEs and small businesses.
- A *Lean management review of PennDOT's DBE certification process, including requirements imposed by federal regulation and PA UCP procedures, was recently completed. The final report recommended outcomes and measures to implement short-term and long-term changes for a more efficient certification process. A management review of the PennDOT DBE program, processes, and resources will take place in 2019.

Additionally, we commissioned a Disparity Study last year to identify if any disparities exist in our horizontal construction and construction-related engineering and professional services contracts. The study period ran from July 1, 2011, through June 30, 2016, and included quantitative and qualitative data from a number of sources, including PennDOT's engineering and construction and management system (ECMS), construction partners, and various minority- and women-owned businesses themselves.

I am gratified that the disparity study shows PennDOT has made good progress, especially with our subcontractors. The study concluded that minority- and women-owned businesses received about \$1.11 for every dollar that they might be expected to receive based on their availability for the relevant prime contracts and subcontracts that we awarded. That is a plus. We will continue to work to improve opportunities for these enterprises in our prime contracts.

More information on DBE, SBE, and DB programs — including certification, goal-setting, and compliance — can be found on our website on our Equal Opportunity page.

* Lean is a set of tools and strategies to help employees work safer, smarter, and more efficiently.

'PENNDOT CONNECTS' TRANSPORTATION PLANNING INITIATIVE IMPROVING COMMUNITIES



Secretary Leslie S. Richards announced that project-planning collaboration and outreach with more than 750 municipalities is complete on more than 1,850 projects through the department's PennDOT Connects transportation planning process.

Successful project examples and more details on the initiative appear in a newly released PennDOT Connects Implementation report, which updates the public and partners on the deployment of the department's initiative that was implemented in 2016.

The new approach to project planning and development expands the department's requirements for engaging local and planning partners by requiring collaboration with stakeholders before project scopes are developed. PennDOT Connects aims to transform capital and maintenance project development by ensuring that community collaboration happens early, and that each project is considered in a holistic way for opportunities to improve safety, mobility, access, and environmental outcomes for all modes and local contexts. Earlier collaboration will ensure that projects meet current and projected needs as much as possible and can reduce costly changes later in the project development process.

Specific areas for discussion during collaboration include but are not limited to: safety issues; bicycle/pedestrian accommodations; transit access; stormwater management; utility issues; local and regional plans and studies; freight-generating land uses and more.

PennDOT Connects has caught the attention of the worldwide stage through Secretary Richards' acceptance as a presenter on the PennDOT Connects process at the SXSW Conference in March 2019.

Richards' session focuses on how departments of transportation are now not just held responsible for the transportation system, but also for the quality of life in the communities they serve.

Recognizing transportation's role in connecting communities and supporting economic development, Richards announced the PennDOT Connects policy in late 2016 to enhance local engagement and improve transportation-project planning, design, and delivery.

For more information on PennDOT Connects visit www.penndot.gov/connects



District Planners and team members who are leading PennDOT Connects collaboration in their region, along with Secretary Leslie Richards.
Front Row: Eric Buchan, Michelle Tarquino, Anne Stich, Lyndsie DeVito, Secretary Richards, Vanessa Koenigkramer, Allyson Boyd. Back Row: Ryan Whittington, Steve Fisher, Josh Theakston

The PennDOT Connects Implementation report, outlines successful projects emerging from the PennDOT Connects approach across the state, such as:

- Route 1001 in Clinton County: Collaborated with local partners to include a retaining wall and a bicycle/pedestrian path providing connectivity to a park as part of a roadway realignment project.
- 11 bridges in Lackawanna County: Coordinating with the City of Scranton to improve traffic flow, coordinate construction schedules, and enhance bicycle/pedestrian accommodation as part of a series of bridge rehabilitation/replacement projects.
- Route 378 Bridge in Lehigh County: Coordinated with the City of Bethlehem and various stakeholders to understand concerns and future plans for the historic bridge that connects the north and south sides of Bethlehem.
- American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Improvements in Philadelphia: Coordinating with the City of Philadelphia to use data from its Philly 311 maintenance request system to help prioritize ADA curb ramp reconstruction.
- Route 58 in Clarion County: Coordinated with Licking Township and the Amish community to accommodate all modes of local traffic during construction of a bridge replacement.
- Route 4084 in Allegheny County: Collaborated with the City of Pittsburgh to introduce bicycle lanes and intersection improvements as part of a roadway reconstruction and bridge preservation project.

OPERATION SAFE STOP & SCHOOL BUS SAFETY AWARDS

By Ellerie Krot, Intern, Central Press Office

In October, PennDOT partnered with the Pennsylvania State Police, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Silver Spring Township Police Department, and Cumberland Valley School District transportation partners to conduct events for Operation Safe Stop and our annual School Bus Safety poster contest.

Operation Safe Stop is intended to highlight the importance of school transportation safety and point out the potential challenges of school transportation when it comes to changing daylight conditions. The events are held with local and state police departments, school districts, and student transportation to place appropriate enforcement and raise awareness for the consequences of improper safety.

“Local school districts work hard to identify the safest locations possible for school bus stops and to train their staff,” said Dr. David Volkman, Executive Deputy Secretary, Department of Education. “But to ensure that students remain out of harm’s way, we urge all drivers to watch for flashing lights of school buses and to always stop when students are getting on and off.”

The School Bus Stopping Law requires that all motorists traveling from all directions stop at least 10 feet away from the bus when approaching a school bus with its red lights flashing and a stop sign extended. The results of Operation Safe Stop showed 147 violations of the law that were reported by school districts and law enforcement agencies. Motorists traveling from the opposite side of a divided highway are not required to stop.

“We unfortunately saw more people breaking the School Bus Stopping Law last year so we’re reminding motorists of its importance,” said PennDOT Secretary Leslie S. Richards. “With additional challenges such as darkness coinciding with more students’ school bus ride times and the distraction of the quickly approaching holiday season, it is important that motorists remain vigilant while sharing the road with school buses and students.”

PennDOT Deputy Secretary for Driver and Vehicle Services Kurt Meyers and other Pennsylvania school bus safety advocates honored nine students for their school bus safety posters and six school bus drivers for their excellent safe-driving skills. The driving competition is held each June for school bus drivers to test their knowledge and skills on school bus safety and safe operations of their school buses.

The winners of the School Bus Safety poster contest were chosen from 352 public and private schools. Students in kindergarten through eighth grade participated in the contest with a theme of “My School Bus, the Safest Form of Transportation.”



The student winners of 2018 Poster Contest:

K-2

- 1st: Maya Bearden, Eagleville Elementary School, Eagleville, Montgomery County
- 2nd: Amanda Sommer, Conneaut Valley Elementary School, Pine Grove, Schuylkill County
- 3rd: Kaylynn Fidler, Pine Grove Area Elementary School, Pine Grove, Schuylkill County

3-5

- 1st: Alivia Spitz, Reiffton School, Reading, Berks County
- 2nd: Sally Nguyen, Reiffton School, Reading, Berks County
- 3rd: Lee Edgell, Friendship Hill Elementary School, Port Marion, Fayette County

6-8

- 1st: Lauren Schmader, Brockway Area Jr/Sr High School, Brockway, Jefferson County
- 2nd: Desteny Keiser, Upper Dauphin Area Middle School, Lykens, Dauphin County
- 3rd: Emalie Brown, Upper Dauphin Area Middle School, Lykens, Dauphin County

The school bus driver skills contest winners of 2018:

Conventional Bus

- 1st: Shanon O’Brien, Chester County, Krapf Bus Companies
- 2nd: Larry Hannon, Sr., Bucks County, Krapf Bus Companies
- 3rd: Larry Hannon, Jr., Bucks County, Krapf Bus Companies

Transit Bus

- 1st: Micahel Webster, Lebanon County, Brightbill Transportation
- 2nd: Ruth Del Vecchio, Chester County, Krapf Bus Companies
- 3rd: Beth McGowan, Montgomery County, Lower Merion School District

For more information on school transportation, visit our [School Bus Safety Tips](#) page.

WOLF ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES THE OPENING OF INDIANA CNG TRANSIT FUELING STATION



The Wolf Administration announced the formal opening of two more of the 29 Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) fueling stations planned as part of a Public Private Partnership (P3). Officials from PennDOT, Trillium CNG, and IndiGO-Indiana marked the start of fueling at the facility at 1657 Saltsburg Ave., Indiana, and at Lebanon County Transit located at 200 Willow Street in Lebanon.

Through the \$84.5 million statewide P3 project, Trillium is designing, building, financing and will operate and maintain CNG fueling stations at 29 public transit agency sites through a 20-year P3 agreement. Other stations will be constructed over the next several years, and Trillium is also making CNG-related upgrades to existing transit maintenance facilities.

As part of the conversion, IndiGO-Indiana will replace its current 13 CNG buses with updated versions.

In addition to the transit bus fueling, the Indiana station will be open to the public 24/7.

Lebanon Transit will convert eight buses to CNG under the program. The authority estimates saving roughly \$50,000 annually based on current diesel costs and their diesel usage of roughly 35,000 gallons per year.

PennDOT's overall P3 project includes CNG fueling accessible to the public at six transit agency sites, with the option to add to sites in the future. PennDOT will receive a 15 percent royalty, excluding taxes, for each gallon of fuel sold to the public at public sites, which will be used to support the cost of the project.

Using the P3 procurement mechanism allows PennDOT to install the fueling stations faster than if a traditional procurement mechanism were used for each site, resulting in significant estimated capital cost savings of more than \$46 million.

To see the complete list of CNG Fueling Stations and learn about other P3 projects visit www.P3forPA.pa.gov

PENNDOT OFFERS SERVICES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS



PennDOT not only administers statewide transportation programs, but also aids local governments in a variety of ways.

Services include:

- Nearly \$1 billion allocated to counties and municipalities annually;
- A program to inspect all locally-owned bridges over 20 feet every two years;
- Web-based planning tools that local governments can use free of charge in their work serving the public's transportation needs, such as the Bridge Condition Tool that tracks over 30,000 state and local bridges;
- Training and technical assistance on safety and maintenance issues free of charge to more than 6,000 municipal officials annually through the Local Technical Assistance Program.

The PennDOT Services for Local Government Brochure (PDF) highlights some the many ways that PennDOT provides resources and services to Pennsylvania municipalities and is available at PennDOT.gov in the Resources box on the Local Government page under Doing Business. Link to pdf above, please hide .



RAILROAD TO RECOVERY

By Joel Morris, Community Relations Coordinator, District 11

Earlier this year, PennDOT had the unique and privileged opportunity of making a connection that would ultimately help fulfill a special wish. The effort involved a young cancer patient, Parker D'Appolonia, who has an affinity for all things related to trains.



Parker D'Appolonia, 9, tours a locomotive with his CCChampions mentor Brian Wingrove. PennDOT helped set up the meeting for Parker, who hopes to be a train conductor when he grows up.)

CCChampions, a Pittsburgh-based nonprofit, contacted Dave Conrad, former railroad coordinator for PennDOT's Pittsburgh-area District 11. The group told Conrad about how 9-year-old Parker would like to be a train conductor when he grows up. He wished to meet someone from a railroad. Conrad then contacted Adam Zweig, right-of-way manager at Carload Express Inc., who was excited to make Parker's wish come true.

CCChampions' mission is to match kids with cancer to inspirational role models by asking "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

"Our organization aims to create a long-term friendship with a local role model that can be there through all the transitions of the cancer journey," said CCChampions Executive Director Sidney Kushner.

The organization arranged a meeting in June at UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh with Parker, Zweig, and Parker's mentor, Brian Wingrove of Carload Express. Also, there were Jen Lutz and Coy Thompson of CCChampions, as well as Parker's mother, Samantha D'Appolonia. Parker had been recently diagnosed with cancer and was receiving treatment at the hospital.

"Parker's room was decked out with everything trains and they spent an hour talking trains, trains, trains," Kushner said. "He was so excited that he and his mom even practiced his questions the night before. Afterward, he couldn't stop telling everyone in the hospital about his new friend, Conductor Brian."

A second meeting was arranged in August at the Allegheny Valley Railyard after Parker received permission from his doctors. This time, Parker was accompanied by his dad Nicko and others from Carload Express, including Chief Executive Officer James Streett. He was given the opportunity to tour a locomotive and learn about the inner workings of the components from the mechanical staff. "Conductor Brian" even allowed him to blow the horn.

"It's just such a great sound" were Parker's words, according to Kushner.

Wingrove introduced Parker to several of the folks at the railyard and gave him an old train number sign. He got to ask a bunch of questions and talk with the crew as if they were peers.

"He really knew his stuff!" Kushner said.

Wingrove told Parker if they ever needed to test the horn, they'd know who to call.

Now, Parker is doing well, is back at school, and glad to be done with his stays at the hospital.



Parker shows off the trains decorating his hospital room to Brian Wingrove, sitting, his CCChampions mentor, and Adam Zweig, both of Carload Express Inc.

BRADFORD COUNTY PENNDOT'S JOE MCMAHON: A LIFETIME OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

By Dave Thompson, Community Relations Coordinator, District 3



Joe McMahon

Joe McMahon loves his job so much, he volunteers to talk about it during jobs fairs.

McMahon is a transportation equipment operator specialist who drives a fuel truck for PennDOT's Bradford County Maintenance Organization. He has worked for the department for more than 26 years.

"I usually take a truck up (to the job fair) and talk about how great it is to work at PennDOT," he said.

"There are advancement opportunities and a chance to run lots of equipment with the proper training."

Working for PennDOT runs in the family. McMahon's father, Joseph McMahon Sr., also served as an equipment operator with Bradford County PennDOT.

Helping to maintain the state roadway system in Tioga County is rewarding because it positively impacts the community he lives in. But McMahon's service to the community goes well beyond his work with the department. He has been a member of the New Albany Volunteer Fire Co. for nearly 40 years. That can be a full-time job, especially with the training requirements firefighters must undergo, he said.

However, McMahon has found time to take on yet another demanding job. He is in his third year as a school board member of the Wyalusing Area School District.

"I initially said 'no' (to serving on the school board) but they couldn't get anyone to run so I did a write-in campaign," he said.

When asked what he finds more rewarding in terms of serving the community, McMahon is hard-pressed to answer. Each job has its challenges and rewards and all of them benefit the community in some way, he said.

"I like being in the fire company and I like being on the school board," he said.

McMahon especially enjoys participating in an annual fire company fundraiser. For the last five years he's been part of a theatrical production at the fire company social hall that spoofs famous movies, TV shows, or plays.

Last year, the production focused on 1970s-era television shows such as "Love Boat," "Cheers" and "Laverne and Shirley." In this production, McMahon was a member of "Charlie's Angels," a not-so-glamorous trio who appear in each of the TV show scenes depicted in the play.

The production is a family affair.

McMahon's wife, Katrina, is the brains behind the spoofs, coming up with ideas for the plays, while his in-laws, Royce and Alberta Molyneux, bake pies and auction them off during intermission.



"I enjoy working in the community," he said. "It makes me feel good when I help someone else out. I believe in giving back to the community and always tell my sons (Matthew and Kyle) that."

U.S. 219 OPENS AFTER DECADES OF DEVELOPMENT

By Anthony Scalia, Safety Press Officer, District 9

The long-awaited 11-mile section of U.S. 219 from Somerset to Meyersdale finally opened to traffic in November.

This project has been in development since the 1970s, but the project was put on hold due to a lack of available funding. Design work took place in the 2000s but, again, construction was delayed. In 2012, the passage of the federal transportation bill made projects in the Appalachian Development Highway System eligible for 100 percent federal funding. This made the 219 project a reality.

Ground was broken on the project in 2013 and construction was completed five years later, on schedule.

The new section of four-lane limited-access highway will provide motorists with a safer, more modern facility. It also will help promote economic development in the communities along this corridor.

This project ultimately was made possible through the hard work of many community members, local leaders, and elected officials and this effort was recognized by PennDOT Secretary Leslie S. Richards at the ribbon-cutting event held Nov. 21.

"We are excited to be here today to open this new and much-needed piece of highway," she said. "The passion surrounding this project from the community members to local leaders and elected officials has been outstanding and has helped bring this long-awaited project to fruition."



PENNDOT HONORS FALLEN WITH WORKER MEMORIAL LOGO

By Secretary Leslie S. Richards

Knowing the right thing to say or do when someone is lost in an incident is always a challenge. Unfortunately, at PennDOT, this heartbreak has touched us many times. During my time as Secretary, we have lost five team members in the line of duty and I have seen and felt the impact that these losses have had on the PennDOT family.

I feel very strongly about honoring our fallen team members. This was also the theme of an IdeaLink submission from Christopher Kapitan Jr. and Arlan Thomas, two team members in District 9, who suggested a graphic to honor these employees. Recently, more than 3,000 PennDOT employees took part in choosing a logo to honor our fallen colleagues. I am very pleased that so many team members helped choose the attached memorial logo, which was the clear preference of those who took the survey.

Based off the existing PennDOT logo, this black-and-white Keystone symbolizes the tragedy of our losses, while the stripe

invokes the importance of safety and remembrance. The logo can be found for download in our work zone awareness media center, along with other important graphics promoting work zone safety.

In addition to the logo, the department is beginning an initiative on our social media channels — Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram — to publicly honor our fallen employees by posting about them on the date that they lost their lives in the line of duty. My hope is that we never have to use this newly selected logo beyond these posts and its use on our memorial page, www.pennidot.gov/memorial.

I want to take this opportunity to, once again, thank all PennDOT's employees for their service to the department.



PENNDOT REPLACES HERR STREET BRIDGE IN 10 DAYS

In early October, PennDOT reopened the Herr Street Bridge in Harrisburg after using accelerated bridge construction techniques to replace the 98-year-old bridge over just 10 days.

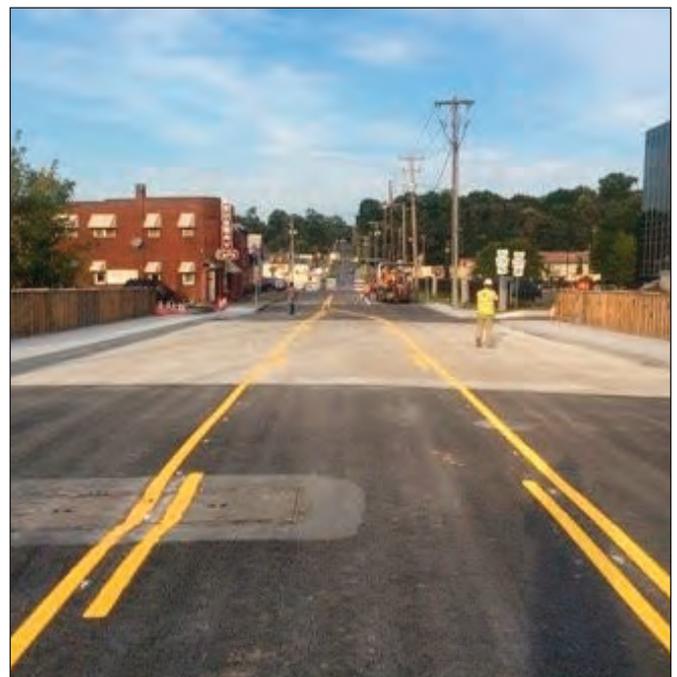
The contractor removed the existing bridge and abutments, replaced it with the new precast structure, and rebuilt the roadway. Accelerated bridge construction was selected to reduce traveler inconvenience by avoiding a lengthy bridge closure or a two-year project under phased construction.

This portion of Herr Street — between Seventh Street and Cameron Street — averages more than 12,345 vehicles traveled daily.

Watch a timelapse video of the construction on PennDOT's [YouTube](#) page.

For more information on projects occurring or being bid this year, those made possible by or accelerated by the state transportation funding plan (Act 89), or those on the department's Four and Twelve Year Plans, visit www.projects.pennidot.gov.

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NEW ROUNDABOUT CAPS OFF MULTI-YEAR TRANSPORTATION PROJECT IN MERCER COUNTY

By Jill Harry, Community Relations Coordinator, District 1

Earlier this year, Erie County-based District 1 opened a single-lane roundabout as the final, major piece of PennDOT's six-year, \$28.1 million project focused on improving safety, efficiency, and the streetscape of the Route 718/Route 760 corridor in the Mercer County communities of Wheatland, Farrell, and Sharon.

Known as the Broadway Avenue Improvement Project, work started in 2012 and was completed in three phases.

- Phase 1 (2012-2013) – Completed in two stages on Broadway Avenue/Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard at a cost of approximately \$9.2 million. Stage one went from Council Avenue in Wheatland to Fruit Avenue in Farrell. Stage two went from Fruit Avenue in Farrell to Roemer Boulevard in Farrell.
- Phase 2 (2015-2016) – Completed in three stages on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard at a cost of approximately \$7.3 million. Stage one went from Roemer Boulevard in Farrell to Union Street in Farrell. Stages two and three went from Union Street in Farrell to Malleable Street in Sharon.
- Phase 3 (2017-2018) – Completed in two stages at a cost of approximately \$4.1 million. Stage one involved the area of South Dock Street from Orchard Street to the entrance of the Metalico recycling plant. Stage two went from the recycling plant to Bank Place and included the construction of a roundabout at the intersection of South Dock Street and Connelly Boulevard.

“The roundabout is the capstone of this major project, which included highway reconstruction, addition of a center turn lane, turning radius improvements at intersections, new sidewalks and curb ramps,” said Jim Foringer, District Executive for PennDOT's northwest region. “PennDOT is proud to make this investment into the business and residential communities of Mercer County as part of the state's commitment to providing a government that works and jobs that pay.”

The work also included streetscape upgrades to drainage, traffic signals, decorative highway lighting, signs, as well as pear tree plantings.

Kirila Contractors Inc. of Brookfield, Ohio, was the contractor for all three phases of the project. SAI Consulting Engineers of Pittsburgh was the design consultant, and Quality Engineering Solutions of Conneaut Lake, Pa., was the inspection contractor.

Design and inspection costs for the six-year project were approximately \$7.6 million.

PennDOT marked the opening of the roundabout by partnering with the Shenango Valley Chamber of Commerce to host a public ceremony and ribbon cutting.

“We thank both the community officials and residents of Wheatland, Farrell and Sharon for their patience during the reconstruction of the corridor the last several years,” said Reggie Jannetti, PennDOT Project Engineer. “It is exciting to be part of the team to construct the first roundabout in Mercer County, because of its proven increased efficiency and safety.”

THE UMPIRE: ELK COUNTY WORKER BRINGS CONSISTENCY TO TWO FIELDS

By Marla Fannin, Community Relations Coordinator, District 2

Photo courtesy of Steve Blackman, Your Official Image



Through the week, he serves Elk County as a Roadway Programs Technician. But since 2007, Doug Metheney has answered another official calling — serving each spring and into summer as a Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) umpire for girls' softball.

At PennDOT, Metheney fills specific roles related to purchasing and inventory. He is responsible for inventory of contract materials used for maintenance roadway work in Elk County, and purchases items like parts needed in the garage and consumables kept in the county storeroom. It's a job that keeps him busy at work year-round.

Umpiring, on the other hand, keeps Metheney busy from April through June, when championship games typically take place. He covers a large region stretching from Clearfield to Bradford, Brookville to Sheffield.

Umpires come out of a Chapter within the PIAA District and there are two Chapters in PIAA District 9 — the Interstate 80 Chapter and the Northwoods Chapter. Metheney belongs to Northwoods.

A shortage of umpires has him officiating across the region through game-to-game contracts and assignments made by the assigner in his Chapter. Through these contracts, Metheney can flag schools and games where he might have a conflict of interest. For example, he would avoid games involving Johnsonburg High School because he lives in Johnsonburg.

Each April through May, Metheney officiates regular season games. Late in May, district playoffs begin, with champs crowned at each level. Once district playoffs are complete, state competition takes place.

Once state playoffs begin, teams from levels 1A through 6A could be involved. Throughout the softball season, PIAA evaluates umpire performances individually and as a crew. The assigner in the Chapter puts district and state crews together and submits them to PIAA. The PIAA

then makes the umpire assignments. This year, Metheney had the honor of being the crew chief (Home Plate Umpire) for the Class A State Championship game between Central Dauphin and Mohawk, held at Penn State.

Out of approximately 1,200 umpires statewide, only 24 get to officiate at a state championship game each year.

There are aspects of umpiring that translate at work, including discipline, consistency, and being methodical. Although Metheney has always been a prompt person, he said the need to arrive early for an umpiring assignment is a skill well-suited to any job where being on-time is expected.

"Growing up, we were taught if you're on time, you're late, so I'm usually early," he said.

Metheney also shared that throughout the spring, the umpire chapters meet on a regular basis to hone skills and discuss changes.

"That helps everyone be consistent and consistency is really important," he said. "You don't want to do something that effects the outcome of a game."

Photo courtesy of Steve Blackman, Your Official Image



PennDOT's Doug Metheney acts as umpire during a girls' softball game.

WHAT'S THE LATEST ON REAL ID?



As PennDOT draws closer to issuing REAL ID products in March 2019, customers are urged to educate themselves on whether they are likely to need a REAL ID and pre-verify, if necessary.

Because PennDOT may already have electronic documents on file for approximately 35 percent of its total customers — individuals who received their first PA driver's license or ID card after September 2003 — these customers have had the option to apply for REAL ID pre-verification online since March.

Most of PennDOT's customers, however, received their initial product BEFORE September 2003, so PennDOT does not have their required REAL ID documents on file. Customers in this group who want a REAL ID will need to bring the required documents to a Driver's License Center so they can be verified in person.

These customers may now bring the required documents to any PennDOT driver license center. Federal regulations require that to be issued a REAL ID-compliant product, PennDOT must verify the following documents:

- Proof of Identity (Original or certified copy of a birth certificate with a raised seal or valid U.S. Passport)
- Proof of Social Security Number
- Proof of all Legal Name Changes (Marriage certificate or court order issued by your county's family court)
- Two Proofs of Current, Physical PA Address (Current, unexpired PA license or ID and a no more than 90-day-old bank statement or utility bill with the same name and address)

PennDOT staff will image the documents to the customer's record, and when REAL IDs are available in March 2019, the

customer can opt into the REAL ID program online, and their REAL ID product will be sent through the mail, eliminating any need for this customer to visit a Driver License Center.

To obtain a REAL ID, customers will pay a one-time fee of \$30, plus a renewal fee (current renewal fee is \$30.50 for a four-year non-commercial driver's license or a photo ID). The expiration date of their initial REAL ID product will include any time remaining on their existing non-REAL ID product, plus an additional four years, unless the customer is over 65 and has a two-year license. This expiration date structure means that the customer won't "lose" time that they've already paid for. After the initial REAL ID product expires, the customer will pay no additional fee, beyond regular renewal fees, to renew a REAL ID product.

Enforcement Extension

The Department of Homeland Security has granted Pennsylvania a REAL ID enforcement extension through August 1, 2019. This extension means that Pennsylvania residents will not face access issues when entering federal facilities or boarding commercial aircraft through that date.

REAL ID is optional for Pennsylvania residents. A federally-accepted form of identification (whether it's the forthcoming Pennsylvania REAL ID driver's license or ID card, a U.S. Passport/Passport Card, a military ID, etc.) must be used as identification to board a commercial flight or visit a secure federal building on and after October 1, 2020. There is no requirement that any resident obtain a REAL ID and PennDOT will continue to offer standard-issue driver's licenses and photo IDs.

More information about REAL ID in Pennsylvania, including frequently asked questions and information on documents required for REAL ID, can be found at www.penndot.gov/REALID.

INVASIVE SPECIES PREVALENT ALONG ROADWAYS

By Greg Penny, Community Relations Coordinator, District 8



Jim Cessna — roadside specialist and professional arborist in PennDOT's Harrisburg-area District 8 — deals with a lot of vegetation issues along our state roads, especially invasive and noxious plants and bugs.

Cessna recently shared his latest find — a huge leaf from a princess tree found along Route 225 on top of Peters Mountain in Middle Paxton Township, Dauphin County. The princess tree — also called an empress tree, foxglove tree, or more formally as a *Paulownia tomentosa* — is a deciduous tree native to central and western China. It is an extremely fast-growing tree and is a persistent exotic invasive plant in North America. It was introduced to America in the 1840s. A Dutch botanist, who found the tree in China while working for the Dutch East India Co., named it after a Romanov princess, the Grand Duchess Anna Pavlovna of Russia.

Cessna discovered the plant after being contacted by a concerned citizen who reported it as giant hogweed, which is also an invasive plant classified as a noxious weed. He discovered that it was a princess tree instead. It can grow to between 32 and 83 feet tall.



Invasive species represent one of the most significant ecological threats of the 21st century. Invasive species are exotic plants and animals that have been intentionally or accidentally introduced into native ecosystems. These invasive species displace native species and change the ecological structure of the invaded community, sometimes with dire consequences to native plants and animals.

PennDOT has taken the initiative to address invasive species within its rights-of-way by preparing guidance for its staff, as well as contractors working for the department, to help them address invasive species throughout the life of a project from design, through construction, and finally continuing ongoing maintenance.

To report giant hogweed, use the toll free hotline: 1-877-464-9333. To report bad bugs, contact the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture at 1-866-253-7189 or badbug@pa.gov. To report other invasive species, contact PDA at 717-772-5225.

PAINT THE PLOW PROGRAM LETS STUDENTS MINGLE ART AND SNOW

Some of Pennsylvania's most creative students have transformed PennDOT snow plows in the spirit of winter.

PennDOT's Paint the Plow program invites students to paint a snow plow blade with artwork. The painted blades will then run throughout the school's community during the winter. It also promotes safety and fosters appreciation of both PennDOT and the school's art program.

When painting, the school must use a themed safety message. But they also can include patriotic, weather-related motifs, or their school's mascot or emblem.

The competition includes both a "Judges' Pick" winner and a "Fan Favorite" winner. Some districts will have a winner per county, while others will choose a district-wide winner. Judges are from both PennDOT and local community organizations or businesses. The public votes for the Fan Favorite through PennDOT's Facebook page. Each like on a photo of the plow counts as a vote.

View a slideshow of the winners at: www.penndot.gov/PennDOTWay



PENNDOT TO REHABILITATE NATION'S FIRST CAST-IRON BRIDGE

By Raymond Deep, Community Relations Coordinator, District 12



PennDOT plans to rehabilitate America's first all-metal bridge while maintaining the historic significance of the structure. The cast iron bridge, also known as Dunlap's Creek Bridge, is an 80-foot-span cast-iron arch in Brownsville.

The American Society of Civil Engineers writes:

"Not only was Dunlap's Creek Bridge the first cast-iron bridge in America, it was the first metal bridge anywhere to use what its builder, Capt. Richard Delafield, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, described as 'standardized, interchangeable, manufactured parts.' The bridge was built as part of the federal government's effort to make repairs on the National Road before handing authority over to the states. Dunlap's Creek at Brownsville was an especially troublesome crossing, having destroyed three previous bridges since 1801."

Dedicated July 4, 1839 and heralded as the first cast iron bridge built in the United States, it is still in use today with no weight restrictions. This bridge has received five historical and engineering awards.

The project to rehabilitate the bridge will have early public involvement and coordination to provide alternatives that will preserve historic integrity and limit adverse effects.

More on the bridge's historic significance can be found in an article, "[Dunlap's Creek Bridge: Enduring Symbol of American Endeavor](#)," (PDF) from the Transportation Research Board.

NEW POND EDDY BRIDGE OPENS, MAINTAINS BEAUTY OF ORIGINAL

Because it serves only a few homes, some assume the Pond Eddy Bridge is less important than bridges with higher traffic counts. But for the people who live on the Pennsylvania side of the river, it is vital as their only access to and from their home.

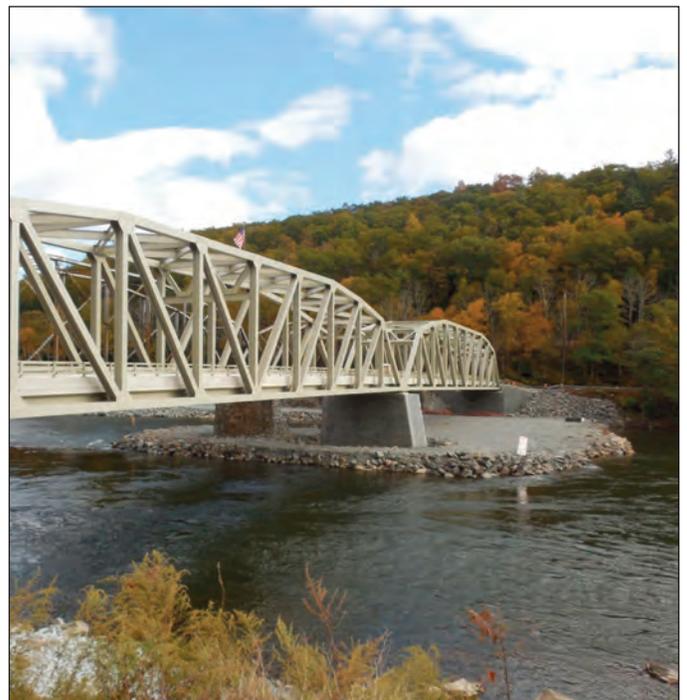
Built in 1903, the Pond Eddy Bridge is one of 10 bridges in PennDOT's Northeastern District 4 that spans a river between Pennsylvania and New York. After more than 100 years of wear and tear, the old historic bridge had a weight restriction and required constant repairs and monitoring. Home heating oil trucks had to make many trips back and forth because a standard fuel truck couldn't safely cross the bridge.

The decision to replace the bridge thrilled the residents.

The replacement project did present some unique challenges.

The original bridge is on the National Register of Historic Places, which requires PennDOT to consider rehabilitation first. But rehabilitation was not possible to meet the transportation needs of the crossing. After many public meetings, it was decided to create a new bridge that resembled the original as much as possible. So engineers designed a new single-lane steel truss bridge. Crews also took extreme care to ensure the boating and tourism industry was not affected.

In late October, after two years of construction, the new single-lane bridge opened. Though it may look like the old historic bridge, the new bridge is now both beautiful and functional.





PENNDOT DISTRICT 10 DEMOS BENEFITS OF HIGH FRICTION SURFACE TREATMENT

By Deborah Casadei, Former Community Relations Coordinator, District 10 (Now Retired)

An innovative technique designed to provide increased friction on pavements was recently demonstrated in Indiana and Butler counties.

High Friction Surface (HFS) treatment is an innovation introduced by the State Transportation Innovation Council. It is applied to areas where motorists brake excessively, when going around curves, down steep grades, or approaching an intersection.

PennDOT District 10 — which covers Armstrong, Butler, Clarion, Indiana, and Jefferson counties — hosted HFS treatment events at two separate locations on Route 22 in Blairsville Borough, Indiana County, and one on Route 3018, Rowan Road, Cranberry Township, Butler County. These events provided an opportunity for local governmental officials and others to see the HFS application and discuss potential safety benefits to their municipalities.

HFS uses high-quality, wear-resistant aggregates to provide increased friction on pavements. This helps vehicles on slippery pavement and reduces stopping distances. The materials used to bond the aggregates together are designed to set quickly so there is minimal impact to the traveling public.

The benefits of using HFS include:

- Reduces crashes, injuries, and fatalities on curves and intersections that exhibit a higher propensity for wet-pavement-related crashes.
- Installs quickly with minimal traffic impact.
- Provides a durable, long-lasting, moderate-cost surface option over the pavement's life cycle.
- Increases road-surface skid resistance and water drainage.
- Decreases braking distance, hydroplaning, splash, and spray.