

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Doug Coates, of Pratt, marks 35 years with KDOT

Growing up, Doug Coates was a “military brat,” always moving.

But the Kansas Department of Transportation has been a constant in his life since then. This month, Coates celebrates 35 years of dedicated service to KDOT.

Coates, Engineering Technician Specialist, has spent all his KDOT career based at the office in Pratt. He and his family have lived there since the Greensburg tornado destroyed their home 13 years ago.

He likes the variety of inspecting road and bridge construction. “Basically, you’re just trying to make sure it gets built according to plans and specs,” he says. “As long as you’re looking ahead, you don’t have too many problems. Occasionally, you have to modify things.”

The new roundabout under construction at U.S. 50 and U.S. 281 in Stafford County might be the most interesting job he has inspected, Coates says.

The roundabout is “a whole lot of curves,” he says, which makes it interesting from an engineering standpoint. It’s a fairly complicated design, with plenty of data behind it, Coates says. “I just like to dig into the plans and really understand them frontward and backward.”

And there’s a benefit for the public. Replacing the traditional intersection there with a roundabout greatly reduces the chance of a fatal collision, he says. “And that’s the main goal.”

His direct supervisor, Construction Engineer James Middleton, said of Coates: “I have learned a lot from him. Whenever I have a question or need some advice, work-related or not, he is there to help.”

Coates and his wife, Cristee, have raised three children. The youngest is graduating from K-State. Coates likes to garden and fish. And, he adds, “I always seem to have something that needs to be fixed around the house.”

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