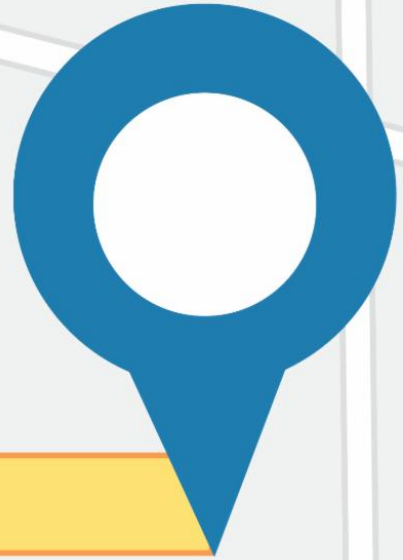


Friday, April 10, 2020

EN ROUTE TO **FRIDAY**



HAPPY FRIDAY!

Governor Kelly signs Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program



Last week Governor Laura Kelly signed Senate Bill 173 creating the new 10-year Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program.

“This fiscally responsible program provides a visionary approach so that Kansas has the flexibility to address immediate needs and secure more opportunities for our future,” Kelly said. “Investing in

Kansas’ infrastructure means putting people to work. It means fixing our roads and bridges. It means safer transportation for our most precious cargo — our children.”

Key elements of the program include:

- **Promises kept.** All remaining T-WORKS projects will be let to construction by July 1, 2023.
- **Highway preservation is prioritized.**
- **Rolling program** ensures emerging needs can be met.
- **Every region of the state will see modernization and expansion**

work sooner rather than later.

- **Every Kansas county will receive at least \$8 million in transportation improvements.**
- **Broadband and new technology investments** are included to facilitate internet expansion and prepare Kansas infrastructure for improved safety and communication.

“Sincere thanks to legislators and Governor Kelly for quickly approving this legislation,” KDOT Secretary Julie Lorenz said. “We have a lot of work to do. Beyond identifying projects for the development pipeline to garner potential federal stimulus funds, we need to deliver projects faster and at the highest value for Kansas taxpayer dollars.”

Read the whole story [here](#):

Participate in choosing the new look for the Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program!

Transportation belongs to all of us, which is why we want your input on the Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program logo design.

Fill out our survey and let us know which new Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program logo is your favorite and why. The survey closes April 10.



We want your input on how to best visually represent the new program! Fill out the survey: <https://surveymonkey.com/r/C7CBVDF> and tell us which one is your favorite! Survey ends today at 5 p.m., so make sure your voice is heard! It only takes a few minutes to fill out the survey.

A Different Way To Work: How KDOT employees are working during COVID-19

In just a matter of weeks our world has changed in many ways. For most KDOT employees that has meant changes in how work gets done, whether that's through social distancing practices on construction sites or living rooms and kitchens becoming offices overnight. In the next couple of issues we will

How KDOT work goes on, stranded motorist, potholes and all

By Tim Potter, Public Affairs Manager, District Five



On his first day of working for KDOT under coronavirus precautions, including keeping a safe distance from others, George Weber encountered a stranded motorist.

It was just one instance of Weber's new KDOT work life – getting necessary maintenance done out on the road during the coronavirus crisis.

That first day, an older man had run out of gas and sat in a small pickup on the side of K-96 near the town of Albert, west of Great Bend. Weber, Equipment Operator Specialist with the Great Bend Subarea shop and a 20-year KDOT veteran, worried that the stranded pickup was at risk of getting struck by passing traffic.

So he walked up to the driver – but kept his distance, about 10 feet between them.

“Well, I ran out of gas,” the man said.

“I said, ‘Not a problem’.” He then asked the man to get out of his car and open his gas cap so Weber could retrieve a gas can from his KDOT truck and supply enough fuel to get the man out of harm's way.

On another day, because of coronavirus distancing concerns, Weber patched some deep potholes – by himself.

It was out on K-156. Normally, pothole patching would involve two to three crew members. This time, with no one around to watch out for traffic, Weber had to be extra careful when stepping out into the lane to fill the hole. Fortunately, traffic has been lighter than normal, he noted. But Weber knows an accident can happen with just one car.

So working alone makes him appreciate his crewmates.

“I think about it (the coronavirus),” Weber said. He worries about his teen-age children and elderly parents. “What this does is it puts a lot more stress on you than you think,” he said.

“But,” he said, “I also know that things gotta get done.”

Adapting to a new routine

By Tracey Crockett, Public Affairs Specialist, Wichita



For me the “new normal” came only a week after returning to work after Parental Leave. As a first-time mother, I felt both excited and scared returning to work. Would I be able to find balance between caring for my daughter Avery and responsibilities at the office?

My office is in the Sedgwick County Public Safety building where our intelligent transportation system is located. WICHway provides traffic information on Wichita’s highways. There are 89 closed circuit cameras, 79 traffic sensors and 33 dynamic message signs helping drivers make informed decisions, with 911 operators managing the system. Since they’re essential employees, the decision was made to eliminate all non-essential staff in the building to keep them healthy.

Now, I’m back home with Avery. It’s nice to be with her again, but it also has its challenges. She nurses every two hours for about 15 minutes. In between diaper changes and caring for her other needs, it cuts into my workflow. But we’re adapting to our new routine. It’s nice to have the flexibility to be able to work while spending time with my newborn. While I miss going into the office, I feel blessed to be able to work from home during this public health emergency.

Ups and down of working at home

By Kelly Kultala, Public Affairs Manager, District One

Sherri Hildebrandt is the District One, Area Three Administrative Office Manager in Bonner Springs and she has been working from home during the COVID-19 crisis. She only goes into the office on Monday and Thursday mornings for a couple of hours to complete payroll, open the mail and pay some bills.

Hildebrandt was surprised at how much she has enjoyed working from home. She misses her co-workers and the social interaction very much, but said she has been very busy at home working on her KDOT duties and helping her three grandchildren work on their virtual schooling responsibilities. She also said she has been cooking a lot and hasn’t had any



time to watch TV.

The downside to this crisis for Hildebrandt has been the effect it has had on her youngest daughter who graduated from Leavenworth High School last December, though her anticipated graduation ceremony, graduation party and prom all were canceled. Her daughter also lost her job at a local clothing store. Missing these family milestones has been very difficult.

Looking back over the last couple of weeks, Hildebrandt said, “these are different times for sure,” however, she and her family are hanging in there.

A new set of co-workers

By Ashley Perez, Public Affairs Manager, District Two



When it comes to working from home it sometimes comes with new distractions you must learn to work around, such as furry, close companions.

This is the case for Jean Istas, Construction Engineer in Belleville. Istas has six cats at home that are excited to have their mom home to keep her company as she works diligently on contracts for construction projects.

While working, Istas jokingly says with her cats close by, she has learned to close her laptop even if only leaving the work area for a minute and to always make sure her pens or pencils are fastened down. Although the cats may create a brief distraction, she’s also

learned they can help make her temporary work home more enjoyable and create positive motivation during this difficult time.

Motivation that became a necessity when learning the logistics that come with virtual communication. She learned that the signal for her hotspot that she needs when holding pre-construction conferences is strongest in the cemetery on the hill located 1.5 miles from her home.

With the communication challenges, Istas says coordinating inspection needs for the construction projects has been more difficult. She also misses getting together with everyone to quickly bounce ideas off fellow employees.

Working at home can be the best of both worlds

By Lisa Mussman, Public Affairs Manager, District Three



For Sierra Percival, Human Resource Professional in District Three, working at home during the past few weeks has been the best of both worlds.

“I’m really enjoying it,” Percival said. “It’s giving me the ability to spend time with my children while still doing my work job that I love.”

Percival said establishing a daily routine was fairly easy because it was something she had been thinking about for her upcoming maternity leave.

While there have been a few hiccups, their family has found a method that works well for her to get KDOT work done and to help with the kids’

schoolwork now that classes have moved online.

Even though she appreciates the extra time at home, Percival said there are some things she misses about the office.

“As much as I can be fully functioning from home, there is something to be said about having a conversation with co-workers,” Percival said. “When you work closely with the same people every day, you learn about them and their lives, and when you don’t see them for a long period of time, it can feel like you’re missing out.”

KDOT equipment and staff being used during COVID-19 relief efforts

District One Crews recently delivered important Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) to various locations across Kansas. Crews used two D1 semi-tractors along with two rental box trailers on behalf of the Kansas Department of Emergency Management to assist with the relief delivery efforts.

In addition to delivering PPE, KDOT staff members have assisted the Kansas National Guard in various other capacities. Thanks to all for assisting. We’re all in this together!



Thank you to all the truck drivers who travel across the country delivering important products, food and supplies.



KDOT is committed to keeping the highways open and commerce moving.



Repairs to the Homewood Rest Area along I-35 began earlier this year, and restrooms have been closed. But in an effort to provide an option for truck drivers as they transport goods through Kansas, portable toilets were set-up, along with hand-washing stations.



Take care of yourselves and stay healthy!



A bison statue outside of the Stockton Public Library demonstrates wearing protective gear can help save your life. Remember to wash your hands and practice physical distancing as we work to fight COVID-19 together.

Photo by Kevin Zimmer, District 3.

HAVE A SAFE
AND HAPPY
EASTER



Kansas
Department of Transportation