

TRANSLINES EXPRESS

Jan. 22, 2020



Highway repairs continue during winter as weather permits

By Lisa Knoll
District Six

With warmer than usual winter weather, the Ness City and Dodge City crews joined the Jetmore crew to fill edge ruts on K-156 during the past several weeks.

Edge ruts can be caused by a number of things, according to Clay Adams, KDOT's Bureau of Maintenance Chief. For example, vehicles running off the edge of roads can cause edge ruts. This includes oversized vehicles, like agricultural equipment, that have to run off the edge of the road to stay right of the center line. Water running off highway pavement can wash away shoulder material causing edge ruts.

Even wind currents caused by passing vehicles can cause edge ruts. The wind current caused by a passing vehicle traveling at 60 mph can blow away the finer aggregate in the edge rut which helps hold the larger aggregate in place. This causes the larger aggregate to shift, creating the edge rut.



Edge ruts were repaired recently along K-156. Edge ruts can be filled as weather permits with crushed rock, gravel or asphalt millings, depending on what is available. Photos by Lisa Knoll, District Six



Work continues to progress during the winter months on the interchange construction at U.S. 169 and U.S. 160 junction in Montgomery County. The new bridge above U.S. 169 is taking shape, and reconstruction has started on the access road east of U.S. 169. Kings Construction Company is the primary contractor on the \$12 million T-Works project, which KDOT expects to open to traffic this summer. Brad Rognlie's bridge squad and Stephen Bass/Greg Gonzales' road squads designed the project.

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How to properly flag traffic in a work zone

By Tim Potter
District Five

It's one of the most important safety tasks a KDOT worker does -- being a flagger in a work zone.

It's a job that aims to protect the motoring public as well as crews in a work zone.

Besides the safety considerations, there's a public relations side: "Remember, you're out there representing the state of Kansas," District Five Safety Specialist Paul Thomas told employees at recent flagging training in Hutchinson.

To the untrained eye, holding a "Stop" paddle for approaching traffic might seem like a simple thing. Not so. There are layers of safety factors -- and a discipline to be followed.

Here are some of the rules Thomas went over:

--When stopping traffic, "Stand on the shoulder and always face traffic." Once traffic is stopped, move to the centerline so other traffic can see you. And this reminder from KDOT Safety Coordinator Mark Johnson: "When you come to the centerline, watch for traffic from both directions, not only the cars coming into the work zone but leaving the work zone."

--Hold the sign out from your body so the sign won't blend in and can be seen clearly.

--"Plan an escape in case of an emergency."

--Be alert: "You can tell if they're (approaching vehicles) slowing down or not, especially if it's a semi or big truck." "Keep your mind on the job." "Stand alone."



District Five Safety Specialist Paul Thomas with a flagger paddle. Thomas recently gave training on how to properly flag motorists in work zones. Photo by Tim Potter, District Five



--"Do not leave your position until appropriately relieved."

--"Be courteous and professional," in actions and clothing.

--Wear correct clothing for visibility: a KDOT Class II/III vest and KDOT orange hat, stocking cap or hard hat.

--Rotate flaggers frequently to counter mental or physical fatigue. "It gets hot standing out there on that pavement," Thomas said.

--Use a pilot car when the flagger at the other end is not visible. The maximum speed in the work zone -- where workers are present -- is 20 mph. Otherwise, it is 40 mph.

"Again," Thomas told the trainees, "you're there to make sure you guys get home at the end of the day."

KDOT strives to keep the public informed



On Jan. 16, Gardner Subarea Supervisor Rob Kluender was interviewed for a #ShopTalk video on how salt brine is used to pretreat roads for snow and ice. It's had over 2,000 views on Twitter and over 1,000 views on Facebook. It was shared on social media by local weather and traffic TV personalities and helped set the conversation for how KDOT prepares for each winter weather event.

Here are links to Facebook and Twitter posts to check out on personal devices - [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)

Lots of helpful information can be found on all KDOT social media pages. For a list KDOT's Headquarters and regional pages, click [here](#).

KDOT's Chief of Maintenance Clay Adams took the opportunity to talk with Ralph Hipp on WIBW's Red Couch show on Jan. 15 about the various ways the agency is using beet juice to reduce snow and ice on the roadways. Beet juice has been used at KDOT since 2015, Adams said.

In addition, Adams brought jars of beet juice, salt brine and beet juice/salt brine combined for viewers to see. To watch the five-minute interview, click [here](#). An article on beet juice also is included in this edition.



One voice can make a difference

By Kelly Kultala
District One

Just one person speaking up can inspire others to do the same - this is the message being conveyed in KDOT required employee training course, "Ouch! That Stereotype Hurts. Communicating Respectfully in a Diverse World." The course is based on a book by Leslie C. Aguilar.

The goal in the class is to explore communication skills for promoting inclusion and respect in the workplace. During one of the exercises, everyone in the room writes down one thing that is unique to them on a piece of paper. As each unique experience is read out loud the person that wrote down that unique quality moves to the center of the room. The rest of the class is asked if they have had the same or similar unique experience and if so, they move to the center of the room. Pretty soon everyone is in the center of the room connected by something they have in common.

Other aspects of the training help participants to understand the impact of stereotypes and biased statements, even when casually said; identify the most common reason people sit silent in the face of bias and stereotypes; and to enhance skills for speaking up against stereotypes without laying blame or guilt.

When experiencing demeaning or stereotypical comments there are several techniques that are recommended to use in order to be able to speak up without blaming or shaming others. A few are explained here.

One example is - assume good intent and explain

Just one person speaking up can inspire others to do the same.

OUCH! That Stereotype Hurts



Communicating Respectfully in a Diverse World

impact. This is appropriate when you hear someone say, "I think she's great. I just don't want to put her in a situation where she can fail." A response could be, "I know you mean well, but you're not giving her a chance at all."

The Organizational Development Unit offers a variety of trainings. Please find the available courses on the KDOT Learning Center, located on the Intranet [here](#).

A second technique is to interrupt and redirect - this requires stopping the conversation and redirecting the conversation to talk about something else.

Another technique that could be used is to, "say ouch!" An example could be, "So, about the holiday schedule. Let Jenny work the holiday shift. She's single; she doesn't have family." A response could be, "Ouch!"

The takeaway from the class is that one voice can make a difference.

(Information for this article is from the "Ouch! That Stereotype Hurts" participant handout.)

Trivia!

A look back - 1999

1. What was the most popular television show?
2. What was the top earning movie?
3. What film won the Oscar for Best Film?
4. What toys made their first appearance in the U.S.?
5. Who won her first Daytime Emmy Award?
6. What team won the World Series?
7. What team won the Super Bowl?

Thank you for your service to KDOT

The following employees will retire from KDOT on Feb. 1.

Headquarters

Steven Beale, Engineering Technician Senior, Research

District One

Paul Beeman, Equipment Operator, Emporia

John Herrmann, Equipment Operator Senior, Topeka Gage

District Two

Edward Dohl, Equipment Operator, Lincoln

Ronald Rothchild, Equipment Operator Senior, Beloit

District Three

Gene Burton, Refrigerator & AC Service Technician Senior, Norton

John Scott, Equipment Operator Senior, Atwood

Kudos to Phillipsburg Subarea crew members Tony Beckman and Joel Bienhoff. The District Three employees found a lost wallet while working on K-383 before Christmas. After turning it in to local law enforcement, the owner was able to be located. She stopped in at the Phillipsburg office to express how grateful she was that it had been found... especially right before the holidays.

In memory

Condolences to friends and family of KDOT employee Rodney Montney, who passed away on Jan. 17 in Topeka. Montney started with KDOT in 1984 in District Six and moved to Headquarters in 1986. He was serving in the Bureau of Construction and Materials as the Engineer of Tests. He also was an instructor for Certified Inspector Training for Kansas State University in Salina for 10 years.



A treasure hunt for Kansas highway history

By Tim Potter
District Five

Near the Barber/Harper County line, John Wiens crunched over gritty soil and through dried weed stalks so he could reach the treasure.

There, along a country road, the KDOT employee found a hunk of history -- a monument of sorts to our road-building past.

What he recently located is a 97-year-old concrete post with this embossed on a metal plaque: "Kansas Federal Aid Project No. 209 Section A 1923."

It was fitting that the KDOT Engineering Technician Senior found the marker. Wiens is the person who keeps District Five's older highway plans. Some date back a century.

To Wiens and a group of Kansas highway and road engineers, his discovery out in the weeds was an important find, part of an effort to document some of the state's oldest highways.



John Wiens poses, amidst the weed stalks, with one of the old highway markers – dated 1923 – that he found at the Barber/Harper County line, south of U.S. 160. Photos by Brent Terstriep, District Five



A close-up of the Barber/Harper County line concrete post with a metal plaque dated 1923.

From 1919 to 1929, workers set in concrete posts – to mark the starting points and end points of highway projects. During that decade, the State Highway Commission funneled federal money to counties to build state highways. In 1929, the State Highway Commission took over construction and maintenance of state highways and stopped marking the project limits.

It's not clear how many posts were erected, but Norm Bowers has documented 46 of them so far that are still standing, including recent finds by Wiens.

For a few years now, Bowers, Local Road Engineer for the Kansas Association of Counties, has kept a spreadsheet on where the markers are located. According to Bowers, the farthest west marker located is one Wiens found at the Pawnee-Edwards County line.

Since 2018, Bowers has been asking county employees to help spot the posts.

Many of the surviving posts sit along roads that have long since been bypassed by newer alignments.

Along with Bowers, KDOT'S Mike Stringer has taken an interest in the markers. Stringer is Chief, Bureau of Local Projects. He has been encouraging KDOT employees to locate the posts "so we can preserve them for posterity."

A 619,000-pound load travels through state

By Priscilla Petersen
District Four

The morning of Jan. 15, a Canada-bound semi hauling a 619,000-pound cargo began the first leg of its trip at Chanute. Departing from Chanute Manufacturing, Inc., the truck with its immense contents inched over city streets and onto K-39, continuing on a serpentine route through central and northwestern sections of the state. The semi made a final Kansas stop at Glade before traveling to points farther north.

KDOT issued the permit for the oversized load to Perkins Motor Transport, Inc., of Northfield, Minn. The cargo was a D boiler on the way to the province of Alberta. The massive boiler will generate steam



pressure to recover oil from the Canadian tar sands. A video of the oversized load was posted to the KDOT Southeast Kansas Facebook page. The footage has generated a good deal of interest, with many comments and questions from impressed and inquisitive members of the public.



Neil Croxton, KDOT Professional Geologist in Salina, photographed this windmill along K-9 in Smith County.

Numerous benefits to using beet juice

By Tim Potter
District Five

If you work at KDOT, you probably know the agency uses beet juice to help battle ice on highways during the winter.

But could you pass a pop quiz on it? Do you know how to explain why KDOT crews use sugar beet juice to fight wintry road conditions?

Think of it this way: The sugar in sugar beet juice offers sweet benefits for ice-fighting efforts on the highways, especially when pre-treating trouble areas like bridges, which tend to ice up faster than non-elevated pavement. There's a chemistry at work, says Jim Frye, Field Maintenance Manager/Emergency Coordinator with KDOT.

Frye recently gave beet and brine application training to District Five snow-and-ice crews in Larned and Wichita.

Here are seven points -- and a little science lesson -- from the teacher that could help you pass the quiz and explain it to others:

--Beet juice added to brine (saltwater) is especially useful with temperatures from 15 down to 5 degrees. That's because beet juice, as Frye says, "slows the process of water molecules forming into (ice) crystals. Come to find out, sugar helps the water molecules from freezing solid down in these lower temperatures. It keeps it slushy, which is what we want."

--Because beet juice is sticky, it holds ice-fighting brine to pavement longer.

--Other advantages: By using a mix



Jim Frye talks with District Five employees during beet/brine application training on Jan. 14 in Wichita. Photos by Tim Potter, District Five



A "beet juice"-labeled storage tank in Wichita. The juice is a byproduct of sugar beet processing.

of beet and brine, it takes less brine, so it lowers the corrosive effect of the salt in brine -- which helps cut down on road and bridge repair. It also reduces the amount of salt seeping into the environment.

--Does beet juice look brownish and get on vehicles? Yes, but it will wash off with water.

--KDOT uses beet juice to pretreat or treat highways at more than 20 locations around the state.

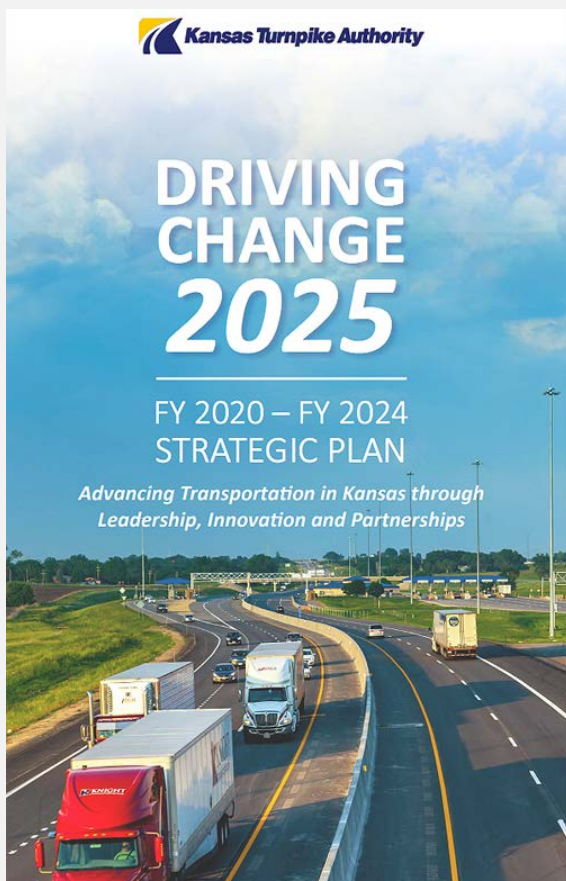
--KDOT has used beet juice since 2015.

--The beet juice comes from an Iowa supplier.

Trivia answers

1. "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?"
2. "Star Wars - the Phantom Menace."
3. "Shakespeare in Love."
4. Furby Babies, Pokemon, Mary-Kate and Ashley and Britney Spears dolls.
5. Susan Lucci, after 19 nominations, for her role on "All My Children."
6. New York Yankees.
7. Denver Broncos

KTA Brief



The KTA has announced a new strategic plan, *DRIVING CHANGE 2025*, that will guide the organization's ability to provide Kansas transportation solutions. Read the full release [here](#) for more information.



An SUV is covered during windstorm that caused tumbleweeds to invade Washington highway on New Year's Eve. Photo by Washington DOT East District

Tumbleweeds bury vehicles, close Washington highway for 10 hours

According to an article in Better Roads, snowplows hit the road on New Year's Eve in eastern Washington to tackle an unusual weather attack – tumbleweeds.

The rolling balls of dried-up vegetation began barreling over cars and trucks on SR 240 near Richland on Dec. 31. The highway was closed for 10 hours through the night as Washington State Department of Transportation snowplows and workers cleared the road and uncovered several buried vehicles, including tractor trailers.

No injuries were reported. However, the DOT tweeted that at one point the tumbleweeds nearly swallowed a snowplow.

The situation was unusual enough to gain the nickname Tumblegeddon.

The final vehicle, an abandoned car, was discovered at daylight and uncovered by DOT workers around 4:30 a.m., according to the Washington State Patrol District Three, which also assisted in clearing the road.