

TRANSLINES EXPRESS

July 8, 2020

Flooding hits north central Kansas

By Ashley Perez
District Two

Six inches of heavy rainfall fell in the small town of Simpson and 4.8 inches fell near Asherville in Mitchell County on June 27. It wasn't long before the heavy rainfall caused water to cover the streets of Simpson and wash out the flume of the newly-built bridge on U.S. 24 near Asherville. A flume is a narrow channel next to the bridge carrying water to the creek.

At approximately 4:30 a.m., the KDOT crew in Beloit closed K-194 from U.S. 24 to the railroad tracks in Simpson. The roadway remained closed until water receded and the road was fully reopened at 8 p.m. on June 28.

Once damage to the flume of the U.S. 24 bridge was discovered, the District Crew in Salina was called. They used rocks to make repairs as the ditch liner was washed away by the flood water.

Donnie Burkholder, Equipment Operator Specialist on the District Crew in Salina, drove the dozer and Shannon Clarkson, Equipment Operator Senior on the District Crew, operated the track loader while performing repairs. Repairs were completed on July 1.

Top photo: Dennis Senters, Subarea Supervisor in Beloit, stopped and took a photo of the flood waters that were over and along U.S. 24 near Simpson. Middle and bottom photos: District Crew members make repairs to the flume on the U.S. 24 bridge near Asherville. Photos by Dennis Senters





KDOT employees working together to ship face masks across the state for public transit operators included Matt Messina, Kelly Broxterman, Gregg Kunard, Cory Davis and Rene Hart. Photo by Mike Moriarty, Headquarters

Face masks distributed to public transit providers across state

Face masks were recently provided to KDOT for transit workers across Kansas so they have Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) while delivering critical transportation services throughout communities, according to Transportation Planning Bureau Chief Michael Moriarty.

The masks were provided by the Federal Transit Administration on behalf of the U.S. DOT, in cooperation with other federal agencies, including FEMA and Health & Human Services. It is part of a multi-pronged federal effort to provide additional PPE for transportation workers, first responders and food producers.

Team members from the bureaus of Transportation Planning and Support Services packaged up each transit agency's request and shipped-out the orders.

As of June 26, about 21,000 masks have been shipped to public transit operators statewide. The remaining 5,000 masks that KDOT received will be distributed as further needs arise, Moriarty said.

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Office of the Secretary
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Office Building
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I-70 completed across Kansas 50 years ago

June 17 marked the 50th anniversary of the completion of I-70 in Kansas. The 424-mile stretch of I-70 was the longest continuous segment of Interstate highway to be completed by any state in the United States. At the time, Kansas, Missouri and Pennsylvania were the only states to have a multi-lane I-70 from border to border.

“Kansas’s highways exemplify President Eisenhower’s vision to improve travel throughout the United States,” Gov. Laura Kelly said. “I’m proud that my administration is building on that model by developing and passing the new Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program this year. Preserving and innovating our state’s infrastructure will be critical to our ongoing efforts to bring new business to Kansas.”

In March, Gov. Kelly signed Kansas’ new 10-year transportation program, fittingly named the Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program (IKE). The program will preserve the state’s existing system and provide flexibility to address current and future infrastructure opportunities and challenges.

Kansas’ own President Dwight D. Eisenhower is known as the father of the Interstate system. He signed the Federal-Aid Highway Act in June 1956, which created the system and transformed America.

Eisenhower’s vision stemmed from his participation in a historic 1919 U.S. Army motor convoy to assess the difficulties of transporting soldiers and military



Henry Schwaller (left), General Chairman of the Hays 70/70 committee, and Don Elder, Chairman of the Goodland I-70 celebration committee stand at the sign at the Colorado/Kansas border before the celebration marking the opening of I-70 across Kansas.

equipment across the United States. The expedition took 62 days, and he realized the potential value of an interconnected, quality road system across the U.S.



Construction of I-70 in Kansas started with a national milestone - it was the first pavement built in the nation under the new Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956. The eight-mile section west of Topeka on I-70 (then U.S. 40) was opened at a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Nov. 14, 1956.

Trivia!

70-year anniversary of Cinderella

1. How old is Cinderella thought to be?
2. Cinderella was the first Disney princess to do this.
3. What are the names of her two stepsisters?
4. What is the title of the song about the Fairy

Godmother transforming an orange pumpkin into a white carriage?

5. What are the names of Cinderella's horse and dog?
6. What town did the 1950 movie first show in?
7. What scene is Walt Disney's favorite animation ever?

Hollis gives the gift of life

By Lisa Knoll
District Six

According to the American Red Cross, each blood donation helps save up to three lives. If so, Mike Hollis, KDOT's Rolla Subarea Supervisor, has helped save up to 300 lives since he began donating blood while he was in college. Hollis recently reached the 100 units donated mark, a milestone most donors never make.

Looking back, Hollis recalls the first time he gave blood. At 21 or 22, he was working a summer job with the gas company in Hugoton. He remembers that if you donated you got a sandwich and you didn't have to clock out, so he signed up. "It was different then. We didn't have all the privacy issues we do today. So, everyone was in one room answering questions together. The older guys teased all the first-time donors. They put the fear in us."

Hollis says he gave the first time because he was asked. After that, it was peer pressure. But before long it just became part of what he does, like helping with youth group or volunteering in the community.

"The last few years I've had goals, like reaching 10



*KDOT's Mike Hollis has donated 100 units of blood.
Photo by Lisa Knoll, District Six*

gallons donated, then 12 gallons donated and now 13 gallons donated," he said. "You used to get a gold card when you reached eight units or one gallon donated. I couldn't wait to get that gold card, because I knew working for the state, it would be the only gold card I'd ever have."

Hollis encourages everyone to give blood. "Try it. If it's not for you, that's ok," he said. "It doesn't take a lot of effort to do it and some day you or your family may be the person that needs it."

Trivia answers

1. About 19 or 20, and is considered one of the oldest of all the Disney princesses.
2. Sing with her love interest.
3. Drizella and Anastasia.
4. "Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo."

5. Major is the horse and Bruno is the dog.
6. Boston, Mass.
7. He loves the scene where the Fairy Godmother transforms Cinderella's torn dress into a gown.

Three ramps open at U.S. 169/160 interchange

By Priscilla Petersen
District Four

In the sultry afternoon hours of June 29, KDOT opened three ramps on a new interchange about seven miles east of Independence.

The interchange is at the north junction of U.S. 169 and U.S. 160. The at-grade intersection it replaces had been the site of several crashes that resulted in a public outcry for improvements.

According to Project Manager Kelly Wilson of the KDOT Independence office, the opening went

smoothly for the most part. The fourth ramp, connecting southbound U.S. 169 to westbound U.S. 160, is not yet complete. Although a state route detour has been signed for westbound drivers, a number of vehicles apparently missed the detour signs and continued south on U.S. 169 before finding locations at which to turn around. Wilson said that extra detour signs have been ordered and will be posted north of the project to help alleviate the confusion.



A truck is about to enter the northbound lanes of U.S. 169 from one of the ramps now open at the interchange. Photos by Priscilla Petersen, District Four

If weather permits, Wilson said, it is hoped to have the fourth ramp finished and open to traffic by August.

KDOT started work on the \$12 million interchange project in April of 2019. King's Construction Company of Oskaloosa is the primary contractor. Stephen Bass' road squad and Brad Rognlie's bridge squad designed the project.



A semi approaches the U.S. 160 bridge over U.S. 169.

Social media encourages reader to share safety story

By Tracy Crockett
District Five

After seeing a social media post on KDOT's Twitter page about the importance of wearing seat belts, Wichitan Heather Fusilier wanted to share her story and about how wearing a seat belt saved her life.

As a college student, Fusilier had just finished her shift volunteering at the Wichita Riding Academy. As she was locking the gate, something spooked her and she quickly got in her car and left. But as she approached the stop sign, she realized she hadn't put her seat belt on, so she fastened it and went on her way. It's a good thing she did. Shortly after entering the roadway she looked down, overcorrected and rolled the vehicle into a ditch. "Because of my seat belt I was literally held in place," Fusilier said.

Fusilier said it really hit home when a state trooper



Heather Fusilier is pictured with her daughter. Photo provided

arrived at her house later to check on her. He said he was told she walked away from the crash. However, after seeing the condition of the car, he said there was no way that should have happened. Fusilier believes if it weren't for her seat belt, she wouldn't be here today.

After walking away from the crash, safety still plays a big part in her everyday life. "Nobody gets in my car without fastening seat belts," she said.

Now 20 years later, Fusilier is a wife, mother and a music teacher for the Wichita School District. She also enjoys playing the viola and violin.

"I am sure I would not have had that opportunity if I hadn't had my seat belt on that night. I'm grateful for everything," she said. "Do the right thing. Use your head and don't take the risk."

Thank you for your service

The following employee retired on June 1.

District Five

Roger Wedman, Equipment Operator Senior, Anthony

The following employees retired on July 1.

Headquarters

Ruth Malloy, ROW Property Appraiser Supervisor, Right of Way

District One

James Peterson, Engineering Technician, Olathe
Ronnie Young, Equipment Operator, Edwardsville

District Six

Kelly Warren, Engineering Associate II, Garden City

In Memory

Condolences to friends and family of KDOT employee Joseph Cox of Paola, who passed away on June 11. Cox served as an Equipment Operator at the Overland Park office since 2002.

Condolences to friends and family of KDOT retiree Edward Meyer of Garnett, who passed away on June 4. Meyer started at KDOT in 1957. He retired as the Highway Maintenance Supervisor at the Garnett office in 1994.

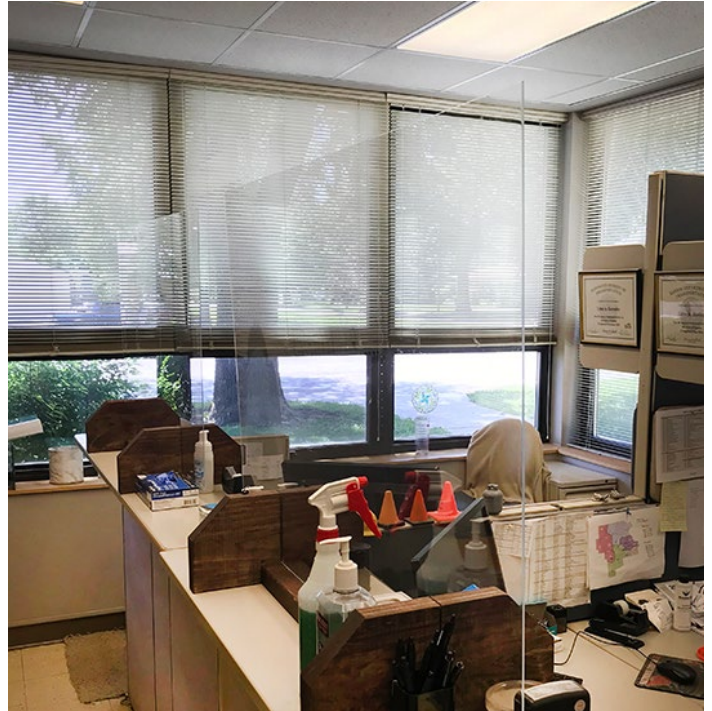
Condolences to friends and family of KDOT retiree Carl Wederski of Atwood, who passed away on June 23. Wederski began in 1995 at the Atwood office and served 14 years as an Equipment Operator. He retired in 2009.



In the photos above and below, crews worked overnight on June 11 to pour concrete for the new span bridge in Gove County carrying westbound I-70 over County Road 62. The multi-year project is in its final construction season with work shifting into the westbound lanes. In addition to constructing the new bridge, the project scope includes replacing the pavement on a 9-mile stretch of the interstate starting one mile west of the K-23 spur near Grainfield and ending four miles east of K-211. The pavement at the westbound rest area near Grainfield will also be replaced. Work on the \$38.1 million project is expected to be completed by the end of November. Debbie Tanking's road squad and Brad Rognlie's bridge squad designed the project. Photos by Todd Anderson, District Three



Transitioning back to business as usual?



The addition of Plexiglas at the Area Five office in Wamego (left) and the Area One office in Horton are subtle but will help improve safety for both employees and visitors. Photos by Jeff Romine and Kerry Bramhall, District One

By Kelly Kultala
District One

In late June, Area offices in District One started to reopen to the public. But, what does transitioning back to business as usual look like?

On July 3, Gov. Laura Kelly's Executive Order requiring most people to wear masks in public areas went into effect. However, before the Governor's announcement, several area offices had already taken precautions, by installing Plexiglas around office workspaces and putting up signs to inform the public that appointments may be required and a phone number to call.

KDOT crews now are allowed to have more than one person in a truck at one time, keeping air flow and hygiene a priority. Many employees will continue to telework and managers will continue to make decisions about the office accessibility, workspace requirements and teleworking based on the health and well-being of our employees.

Transitioning back in personal life is going slowly as

many of the Governor's Phase 3 recommendations are still being followed. Nonessential travel may resume, provided travelers follow KDHE travel and quarantine guidelines for travel to high-risk areas. As of June 29, Kansas residents and those visiting Kansas who have traveled to the following locations need to quarantine for 14 days after arrival in Kansas - Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, South Carolina, cruise ship or river cruise passengers and international travelers.

As always, everyone should continue to adhere to hygiene and social distancing protocols, including:

- Washing hands frequently, while avoiding contact with one's face.
- Remaining home when sick or running a fever.
- Following isolation and quarantine orders issued by state or local health officers.
- Using a cloth face mask when in public.

For more information, "Ad Astra: A Plan to Reopen Kansas," is available [here](#), in addition to industry-specific guidance for Kansas businesses.

KDOT is a key responder in highway crashes

By Tim Potter
District Five

When a crash closes all or part of a highway, KDOT workers must respond.

Once alerted, a supervisor sends at least two employees to control traffic on both ends of the crash site. They might get the call in the middle of the night or when it's freezing outside.

Another KDOT employee enters closure information into the KanDrive system so motorists can be alerted.

When KDOT workers get to the scene and take over traffic control, it allows law enforcement and rescue crews to focus on their roles. The KDOT role also helps lower risks to motorists by diverting traffic past or around the crash.

"The quicker we get that road open, the less chance we have of another accident," says Gene Watts, Pratt Area Superintendent.

When emergency communications staff notify KDOT of a crash, "Basically, we just round up the troops," says Randy Miller, Lyons Subarea Supervisor. "I try to get the closest guys I can in a timely manner. The last thing I want to do is call somebody and wake them up, but it is part of the job."

Often, law enforcement is notified first and starts flagging traffic until KDOT workers arrive.

"Our goal is to keep the first responders safe, because we don't want to make it any worse," Miller says. "And keep everything flowing as smoothly as we can."

"We try to get out there as quickly and safely as we can," says El Dorado Area Superintendent Tom McCartney.



File photo of KDOT and emergency responders working together at a crash scene.

A road closure also could call for barricades or signs. "We really don't know until we get there to assess," McCartney says. "So many things to take into consideration. Once we're in place, things calm down."

There can be added challenges, like gawkers. Some drivers take pictures with cell phones as they pass the wreckage. "So they're not paying attention to what's in front of them," McCartney says. "So we try to get them through as quickly as we can. People always ask, 'Is there a fatality?' We always tell them, 'We don't give that out'."

And there's the weather. What is the nastiest weather for flagging at a crash? "Wet and cold is the worst," says Winfield Area Superintendent Greg Dixon.

And wind, McCartney says. In one foggy instance, he says, "We didn't know how to get people to see us until they were actually on us." Reflective lights or message boards can help.

Before a highway reopens, KDOT workers make sure the site is clean, clear of debris. "We have to make sure the road is in good shape," Miller says.

KDOT projects honored by Kansas APWA

By Matt Messina and Tom Hein
Headquarters and District Five

Two projects have recently been recognized by the American Public Works Association Kansas Chapter.

First, in 2018, the City of Lawrence was awarded Transportation Alternatives (TA) funding by KDOT to construct a bicycle and pedestrian underpass at the 19th Street/Iowa Street intersection and construction wrapped at the end of 2019.

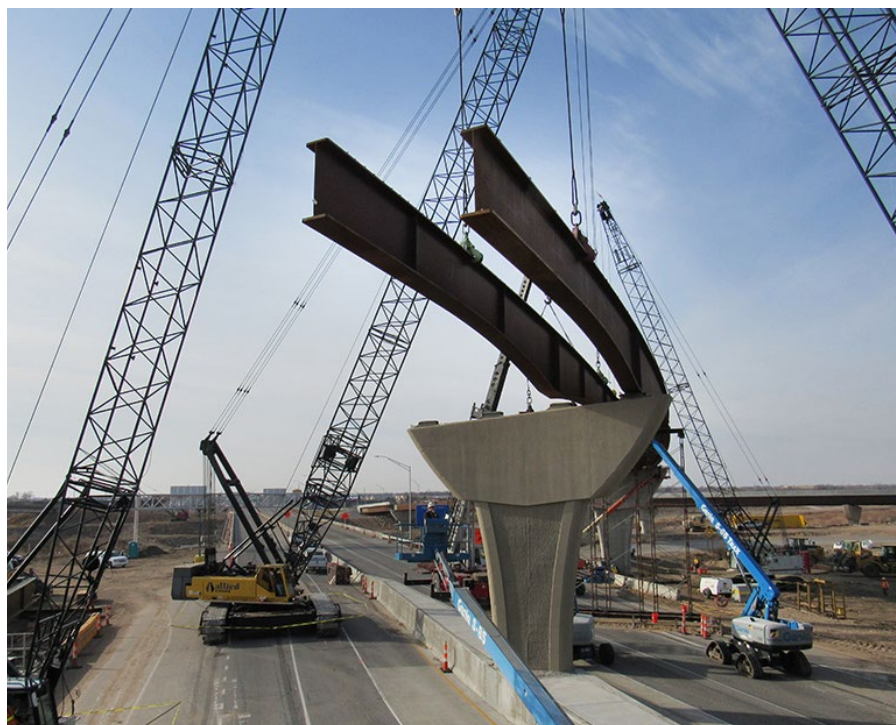
The project was selected as the Public Works Project of the Year for \$5-25 million transportation projects.

The project is in central Lawrence, west of the University of Kansas (KU) Central and North Districts, east of KU's West District, and north of major retail and residential areas and addresses several safety concerns due to the high traffic volume in the area.



The \$6.9 million bicycle and pedestrian underpass project in Lawrence. Photo provided by the City of Lawrence

The new underpass has one tunnel crossing under Iowa Street and another crossing under 19th Street. The two tunnels connect KU's West Campus with the new Central District and would connect with another path planned to be added to the north side of 19th Street.



Construction on the \$105 million Red Project (I-235 and U.S. 54/400 interchange) took nearly four years. Photo by Tom Hein, District Five

Second, in the category of projects greater than \$75 million, the Project of the Year winner is the I-235 and U.S. 54/400 Interchange Red Project.

The Red Project was the first of four phases of the reconstruction of this system-to-system interchange at I-235 and U.S. 54 (or Kellogg). This phase eliminated many of the issues with the original cloverleaf which motorists found so frustrating to navigate.

Improvements included flyover ramps, the removal of two loop ramps that created weaving conflicts, plus additional lanes that help traffic flow.

Seven new bridges were constructed, six existing bridges were widened, while three others were repaired. A SPUI (single point urban interchange) was added at nearby West Street under U.S. 54.

The project began in late 2015 and was completed in June 2019.

Kudos

Emails sent to KDOT:

♦Just wanted to give a big thank you for the repairs made on I435 going north from Overland Park. I had to go to Leavenworth last Friday and thought I'd lose my teeth on all the potholes! Had to go back today and it was like a different highway! Thanks so much for what you do!!! Great job.

♦A citizen wrote on June 19 - I access K-4 highway on the east side of that highway. South of that access is a bridge that crosses the little muddy creek.

On the east side of that bridge the weeds and grass has grown high enough that its is increasingly difficult to see northbound traffic from Oakwood Drive.

I'm hoping you can direct the cutting crew to address this situation or perhaps spray the area.

The same citizen replied on July 2 - Thank you so much. Your crew did a wonderful job. Looks great now.



KDOT's Neil Croxton saw this wheat field with a windmill while traveling in southeast Osborne County recently.

Heartland Logistics Park video highlights groundbreaking

Secretary Julie Lorenz (seen at right) spoke at the June 23 Heartland Logistics Park's groundbreaking in Shawnee along with Gov. Laura Kelly and Commerce Secretary David Toland to celebrate the \$4.2 million Economic Development project. To watch video highlights of the event, click [here](#).



KTA projects rolling along



The first girder is set for the new 159th Street Bridge spanning the southbound lanes of I-35/KTA at MM 54. This project is a partnership with the City of Andover and the KTA.

Projects along the Kansas Turnpike made good progress this month. A few highlights include bridge girders being placed on the 159th Street bridge in Andover as well as the westbound East Kellogg bridge, both which cross over the Turnpike. These construction projects are partnerships between KTA and the City of Andover and the East Kellogg Improvements (City of Wichita and KDOT).



Sixteen girders were set in early June for the new westbound East Kellogg Bridge crossing I-35/KTA. East Kellogg Improvements is a partnership between the City of Wichita, KDOT and KTA. (This photo is after the 16th girder was set and shows the girders the full length of the bridge.)

Paving in the northeast part of the state on I-70/ KTA continues. The pavement surfacing between the Lecompton and East Topeka Interchanges is wrapping up. A paving project near the South Topeka Interchange will resume in July. More information about these projects can be found in the KTA monthly construction report [here](#).

Ohio DOT reports string of work zone crashes

According to Better Roads magazine - Though the coronavirus pandemic has enabled road construction to accelerate because of less traffic, reports of those remaining drivers taking the opportunity to speed has also made road workers more vulnerable, say some state departments of transportation.

The Ohio Department of Transportation reports that five of its work zones have been crashed into by drivers within an eight-day period (May 27 to June 4), with two of the crashes injuring its employees.

The first of the crashes resulted in a worker being airlifted to a Columbus hospital after a tractor trailer ran into the back of an ODOT truck in a rolling work zone on U.S. 30 in Crawford County.

On June 1, another ODOT worker was treated at a hospital with an arm injury after being hit by a vehicle while he was closing a ramp.

The other three incidents occurred within work zones



This Ohio Department of Transportation truck was hit by a tractor trailer in Crawford County, sending a worker to the hospital. The pickup was hauling an arrow board for a rolling work zone on U.S. 30. Photo credit: Ohio DOT



within the next three days, with no injuries.

“These crashes are 100 percent preventable,” says ODOT Director Jack Marchbank. “Our workers and their vehicles are highly visible when they’re on the road.”

The National Safety Council reports that the pandemic led to an 18.6 percent drop in the number of miles driven in March compared to March 2019, but the month also saw a 14 percent jump in fatality rates per miles driven.

“Disturbingly, we have open lanes of traffic and an apparent open season on reckless driving,” says Lorraine M. Martin, NSC president and CEO.