

TRANSLINES EXPRESS

Feb. 3, 2021

Westbound Lewis and Clark Viaduct reopens

By Kelly Kultala
District One

Westbound I-70 on the Lewis and Clark Viaduct in Kansas City opened to traffic on Jan. 23. The bridge replacement project started in 2018 and was delayed for several months in 2019 due to the Kansas River flooding. The project was estimated to cost \$65 million.

The Lewis and Clark Viaduct is a network of bridges along I-70 that connects Kansas and Missouri in Kansas City. The original westbound bridge was built in 1962 and updated in 1984. Minor work will continue on the bridge this spring, requiring some lane closures.

The new 2,982-foot-long bridge includes:

- ♦ 20 new piers;
- ♦ 55,072,220 feet of pile in new pier footings;
- ♦ 2,388 feet of 6-foot diameter drilled shafts in four of the new footings (36 drilled shafts total);
- ♦ 3,327,780 pounds of reinforcing steel;
- ♦ 19,967 cubic yards of concrete in new bridge;
- ♦ Over 8,883,902 pounds of steel girders;
- ♦ 5,388 feet of concrete beam girders.



An eastbound view of the new westbound I-70 lanes on the Lewis and Clark Viaduct that opened on Jan. 23. Photo by Joel Smith, District One



A historical look from a similar view to the photo above of viaduct construction in 1962. Archive photo from Multimedia Services

Multiple snowplows hit in late January

By Ashley Perez and Lisa Mussman
District Two and District Three

Multiple KDOT plows were hit during a major winter storm that affected the state in late January.

In District Two, two snowplows were struck while plowing snow on Kansas highways. On Jan. 26, a snowplow was taken off the roadway after being struck from the rear on I-70 near Abilene. The plow sustained significant damage. A truck was also clipped on U.S. 81 near Minneapolis, causing minor damage and removing the truck from its route on Jan. 27.

“We urge motorists to slow down and give our plows room to work, not only for your safety and ours but also to keep our plows on the road and working to improve road conditions as quickly as possible,” says Brad Anderson, Clay Center area superintendent.

A truck in District Three was also hit on Jan. 27 in Trego County. According to the Kansas Highway Patrol, the KDOT truck was plowing in the westbound lanes when it was struck in the rear by a vehicle that had lost control. The driver of the vehicle fled the scene on foot, and it was discovered that the car he was driving had been stolen in Missouri on Jan. 13, the KHP report said. He was apprehended a short time later. Fortunately, the KDOT driver was not injured and the plow was quickly returned into service.



A KDOT plow truck sustained minor damage after it was hit while plowing on I-70 on Jan. 27. Photos by Eric Hendrickson, District Three

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Vogel named KDOT Chief of Maintenance

By Kim Stich
Headquarters

A familiar face is coming back to the Kansas Department of Transportation as Jaci Vogel has been named the Bureau Chief of Maintenance. She replaces Clay Adams, who was named KDOT Director of Field Operations.

Vogel started at KDOT in 1989 in Transportation Planning, then transferred to Construction and Maintenance (later named Construction and Materials) and held several positions in the maintenance area. In 2007, she was promoted to the District One Maintenance Engineer where she served for 10 years. Vogel left KDOT in 2017 to become the Deputy Director of Public Works Operations for the City of Topeka.

When the Bureau of Maintenance position became



Jaci Vogel

available, she took the opportunity to return.

“It’s an honor and exciting coming back to KDOT, which has been the majority of my career,” she said. “I look forward to assisting the agency maintain the highway infrastructure and provide the necessary resources to the maintenance personnel to do their jobs efficiently and effectively.”

Vogel said she is glad to be returning to KDOT.

“Someone sent me an email and said welcome home. It was touching,” she said.

She and her husband Scott, a KDOT retiree, have two grown sons and enjoy hiking and walking.

Menke named KDOT Construction/Materials Chief

Tony Menke has been selected as the new Bureau Chief of Construction and Materials for the Kansas Department of Transportation.

He graduated from the University of Kansas with a civil engineering degree and from Emporia State University with a physics degree. “Physics plays a role in engineering,” Menke said. “There is a lot of overlap.”

Menke started at KDOT in 2003 at the Emporia Construction office. In 2008, he was promoted to District One Assistant Construction Engineer in Topeka. In 2011, he transferred to Headquarters and was the Field Construction Engineer in Construction and Materials. He left KDOT in 2014, returning in 2016 as District One Construction and Materials Engineer where he served until his current promotion.

“I have a variety of experience that will benefit the things this position handles on both the construction and materials sides,” Menke said. “We will be making decisions to lead the agency and help deliver the IKE transportation plan.”



Tony Menke

Staffing shortages will be a challenge as the agency moves forward.

“We’ve got some obstacles. We’re facing a shortage of inspectors, so we’ll have to look at different ways to provide the inspections we need to deliver construction projects as well as maintenance projects,” Menke said. “We also have a shortage of engineers in some

of the Construction and Area offices. Most offices have both positions, but there are several offices that have neither.”

He and his wife, Alissa, have three children and live in Carbondale. They enjoy outdoor activities such as hiking, camping and bike riding.

K-39 bridge repair scheduled

By Priscilla Petersen
District Four

On the evening of Jan. 14, an off-road dump truck using a haul road that runs under K-39 west of Chanute collided with a bridge column.

The speeding truck “basically blew one of the columns out,” according to Construction Engineer Kyler Farmer of the KDOT area office at Pittsburg. KDOT immediately closed K-39 between U.S. 75 and U.S. 169, and placed traffic on a detour along U.S. 75, K-47 and U.S. 169.

A push is underway to begin an emergency repair project to shore up and stabilize the bridge deck, and also replace the footing of the destroyed column. Farmer said that a design consultant has been working on project plans with the KDOT bridge inspection team. On Feb. 1, KDOT held a virtual pre-bid conference with three contractors. Project bids were expected to be received a few days later.

It’s important to have the bridge repair finished and K-39 reopened to traffic by March, said Farmer. A project to reconstruct a section of U.S. 169 in Neosho County is scheduled to let this year, and K-39 will be a part of the detour for that improvement.



This bridge column underneath K-39 did not survive an encounter with an off-road dump truck. Photo by Wayne Nelson, District Four

Thank you for your service

Retirees

The following employee will retire from KDOT in March.

District Three

Holly Richards, Engineering Technician Senior, Phillipsburg

In Memory

Condolences to the family of Rodger “Rod” Gregory, of Panama City Beach, Florida. He passed away on Jan. 24, according to Kent-Forest Lawn Funeral Home and Cemetery. Gregory retired as Highway Maintenance Superintendent in Winfield in 1998 after a three-decade career with KDOT.

KDOT employees assist in effort to provide warmth to Topeka students

KDOT employees from the Office of Civil Rights and Chief Counsel’s Office helped distribute 274 packages of winter hats, gloves and scarves to students at Lowman Hill Elementary School in Topeka on Feb. 2.

Doria Watson, KDOT employee and representative of the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) Kansas City, coordinated the donations, which were provided by COMTO.

“It is a blessing to be able to support the scholars at Lowman Hill and their families during the winter months,” Watson said. “Making a difference in our communities through youth engagement is a focus of COMTO.”

“Our staff, students, and families are very grateful for this generous donation and hope it brings joy to each scholar as they receive their gifts,” said Lauren C. Frederic, Principal of Early College Prep Academy at Lowman Hill Elementary.

Be aware, plan ahead in every work situation

By Troy Whitworth
Division of Safety Director

As I think back to when I started working for KDOT I remember many things. I remember being the young guy on the crew with a little experience and a lot of enthusiasm. Many of my co-workers would tell me to slow down, we have adequate time to get this done.

At the time, I had the habit of jumping into a job without thinking of the potential adverse consequences of my actions. Most of the time I got away with my carelessness. Every now and then, I would get a wakeup call though.

You know that moment where you see your life flash before your eyes. The cold sweat and heart pounding, wow...that was close.

I would bet all of you have experienced that feeling at one time or another. You probably said to yourself - I will definitely not do that again. Just being able to say that is a testament to the fact that you survived. Hopefully there were no consequences. But some of you may have ended up with an ache, scar, limp or some other

reminder of the incident.

For me, these close calls made me think more about what I was getting ready to do. I started to think more about the potential hazards involved in the work. Once I started to think instead of just jumping in, it helped me in several ways.

I started having less of those 'wow' moments and became more productive. The reason I was more productive is because I started to plan my approach

to the jobs that I was assigned. This plan helped me decide what equipment and supplies I needed to help me get the job done safely and efficiently.

There can be many hazards that we have to deal with in the jobs we do every day. Slow down and think about the best approach to completing the work you

are assigned. Discuss the process with the crew you are working with prior to starting the job. Define the visible hazards and discuss the potential hazards that may crop up.

These are critical elements to improving your safety and situational awareness at work each and every day.



Forestry head saves time, protects workers

By Tim Potter
District Five

During a recent Teams meeting of District Five area supervisors, the talk turned to the benefits of a forestry head.

What is a forestry head? It's a brush-devouring tool – a drum with carbide teeth that spin rapidly as they chew through timber and shoot mulch ahead. The forestry head attaches to the front of a skid steer loader.

To District Engineer Brent Terstriep, the forestry head offers two main benefits: being able to clear trees and brush from right of way in less time and being able to do it with less risk of injury.

Keeping brush under control on right of way is key to giving motorists better visibility, including a better chance of seeing approaching wildlife or vehicles.



The forestry head at work on K-15, above, and on K-55, below. Photos by Greg Dixon and Scott Kent, District Five



Greg Dixon, Winfield Area Superintendent, said a forestry head can do in a day what a five-person crew can do in a week. Without a forestry head, a crew must use chainsaws and feed cuttings into a chipper.

"It's much safer" with a forestry head, Dixon said. In the shelter of an enclosed skid steer cab behind protective glass, "You don't have a chance of a chainsaw hurting someone or limbs falling" onto workers, he said.

Area Three has used the forestry head for brush work along U.S. 77, K-15, K-55, K-44 and K-360.

Area Three in Winfield shares the forestry head with Area Two in El Dorado, where Area Superintendent Tom McCartney agrees with Dixon on the tool's effectiveness. "It's amazing how much more efficient it is," McCartney said.

Another advantage, he said, is the combined comfort and health benefit: The operator works in a climate-controlled cab, shielded from oppressive heat or bitter cold and all kinds of irritants amongst the brush, from mosquitoes, to wasps to poison ivy. And without the heavy exertion that comes from wielding chainsaws and handling brush.

Snowplow operators - they give and give up

By Max Dirks
Hays Area Superintendent

Snowstorms earlier this winter in southwest Kansas made me think about KDOT snowplow operators in general. Something I had realized, but never thought about in my 28-plus years with KDOT; KDOT snowplow operators - they give and give up.

Think about this:

When a plow operator is called out to pretreat, or to treat or plow road, they give:

- ♦ They give to that school bus driver bringing kids to and from school.
- ♦ They give to people traveling to work and back home to their families.
- ♦ They give to the bulk fuel hauler to get much needed gas and diesel to the truck stops and convenience stores.
- ♦ They give to the traveler or truck driver who needs the fuel to keep moving.
- ♦ They give to that family that wants to get to the ski slopes or have holiday plans.
- ♦ They give to the local grocery store by getting that much needed delivery truck passage so they can keep their shelves stocked.
- ♦ They give to the businesses that need supplies brought in, but also to those businesses that need supplies sent out.
- ♦ They give to the emergency personnel who are needed in case of an accident or that ambulance that needs to transport a patient to another hospital. Bottom line, they give to the entire community by keeping commerce moving.

Then, they also give up. Not give up as in, throw your arms in the air and walk away. But instead, because they are needed out on the road:



During every storm, KDOT snowplow operators across the state work around the clock to clear snow from highways. File photo

- ♦ They give up watching their kids' school program, concert, ballgame and other activities.
- ♦ They give up weekends of the "honey-do list" that needs to get done.
- ♦ They give up that anniversary date they had planned with their loved one.
- ♦ They give up that weekend hunt they had planned for months.
- ♦ They give up Thanksgiving and/or Christmas plans to be with family and friends.
- ♦ They give up spending time with family and being there to open gifts on Christmas Eve and/or Christmas morning.
- ♦ They give up the New Year's get together.
- ♦ They give up the Super Bowl parties.

Bottom line, they give up time with family and friends, time they will never get back.

If I was asked to provide my definition of a KDOT snowplow operator, this is what comes to mind - they give up, to give...

EXIT 53A IN WICHITA

1. Using the Exit

There are no booths on the exit ramp. Just keep driving to reach westbound Kellogg.



2. Have a K-TAG? (or compatible transponder)

NO

YES
That's it! Your trip will show up on your next statement.

If you do not pay the mailed statement within 28 days, a second statement will be mailed as a toll violation—our highest toll rate.

Go to PayKTA.com within 10 days to pay the cash rate.



If you fail to pay online within 10 days, a statement will be mailed at a higher rate.



Learn more:
kturnpike.com/cashless-tolling

KTA tests first cashless exit ramp in Wichita

By Tracy Crockett
District Five

The Kansas Turnpike Authority has its first cashless exit. KDOT was recently invited to help test drive the new ramp, which opened on Feb. 1.

Exit 53A to westbound U.S. 54 in east Wichita will not have a toll booth. Drivers will pay the fee after their trip. KTA Customers will have 10 days to go online, search for their trip using their license plate and pay their toll. K-TAG customers will be billed as usual. If the toll isn't paid within 10 days, a statement will be mailed at a higher rate.

The new Exit 53A on the Kansas Turnpike is part of the East Kellogg expansion project in Wichita, a collaboration between the City of Wichita, KDOT and the KTA. To learn more about the project, click [here](#).



The new cashless exit on the KTA is now open to traffic. Photo by Tracy Crockett, District Five

Super Bowl Sunday message: Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving

KDOT has a message for everyone this Super Bowl Sunday: Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving. Many football fans across the state will enjoy watching the Kansas City Chiefs participate in Super Bowl LV this Sunday, Feb. 7. But the celebration should not involve driving impaired.

"This weekend's Super Bowl gives us a chance to enjoy a great football game and cheer on the Kansas City Chiefs," said Secretary Julie Lorenz. "If you are going to drink, be smart and designate a driver before you begin celebrating. Don't end the day with a ticket, a crash or worse."

The Kansas initiative is part of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's annual campaign.

Impaired driving includes anything that impairs your ability to safely operate a motor vehicle. Impaired driving not only puts your life and the lives of others in danger, but the monetary costs of driving under the influence can have a devastating financial impact.

Law enforcement agencies across the state will be combining resources beginning Friday, Feb. 5, through Sunday, Feb. 7, to detect, arrest and remove impaired drivers.

"Law enforcement is committed to reducing crashes and traffic fatalities," said Kansas Highway Patrol Superintendent Herman Jones. "The Kansas Highway Patrol is proud to partner with other law enforcement agencies across the state in our on-going battle against impaired driving."

The enforcement campaign is funded by a federal grant administered by KDOT. This enforcement campaign reminds motorists to never drive impaired.

How pavement gets evaluated for preservation work



A mill and overlay project on U.S. 183 in Rush County was part of pavement preservation. Photo by Neisha Vetter, District Five

By Tim Potter
District Five

Each year, KDOT district staffs recommend sections of highways for preservation ranging from a chip seal to a mill and overlay.

Without getting too detailed or technical, how do they decide which roadway should get the work first? District Five Engineer Brent Terstriep explained:

District Five starts with a condition survey report. It contains data collected by equipment on a special KDOT van that travels over roadway measuring factors like faulting, rutting and cracking. The report rates the level of deterioration measured by the van.

District Five area engineers provide a list of highways

to be considered for preservation work. Then Terstriep, Construction and Materials Engineer Nick Squires and each area engineer get into vehicles and drive over the pavement. They look closely at the surface for cracking and other signs of distress, where water can penetrate and keep deteriorating road materials. Sometimes, they can feel the roughness just driving over it and hearing a “thump, thump, thump” of the tires.

A chip seal might be enough to preserve some pavement. Rougher pavement might need a mill and overlay.

They check records to see what work has been done on a given section in the past. The past can provide clues. Sometimes, they check core samples.

After all the evaluation, they narrow down the list and submit it to headquarters for a final decision.

New, updated websites help keep people informed

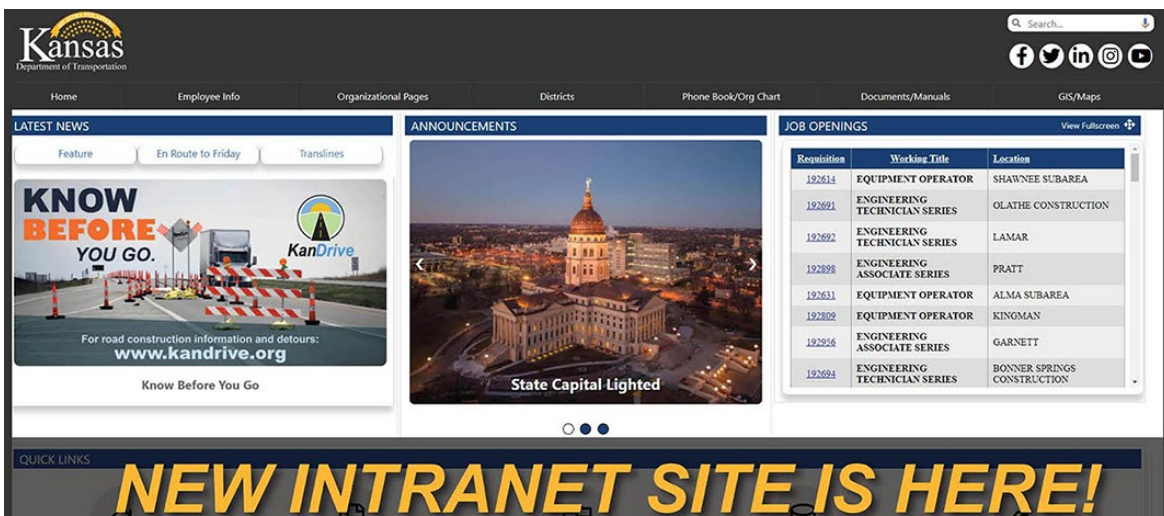
KDOT's intranet website was recently updated, and in addition, a new website launched for the Eisenhower Legacy Transportation (IKE) Program. Both sites will keep employees informed on a variety of issues.

The IKE site has up-to-date information for both employees and the public about projects and the overall transportation program.

Check out the IKE website [here](#).

The KDOT intranet has been redesigned and includes several new additions, including a features section, latest news and announcements, job openings and quick links.

The existing intranet homepage bookmark should still work, but others may need to be changed.



2021
Annual Report

TRANSPORTATION IN KANSAS
A year in review
Published January 2021

KDOT is committed to keeping Kansas moving and sharing our progress. The 2021 Annual Report is now available to download!

36 pages of content

2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Turner Diagonal Interchange

Patching and Sealing Projects

Asphalt Resurfacing

Both the 2021 Annual Report and 2021 Annual Report Appendix are available on the KDOT internet. Both links are at the top right of the Publications and Report page [here](#).

26th Annual

KDOT Transportation Safety Conference

Hyatt Regency Wichita • Wichita, Kansas • **Save the Date: April 20 & 21, 2021**

April 19: Pre-conference sessions • April 20 & 21: Conference plenary and concurrent sessions



To register, click here - lpe.ku.edu/transportation-safety

Annual Transportation Safety Conference will take place virtually

The annual Transportation Safety Conference on April 20 and 21 provides valuable information for state and local government officials, engineers, safety advocates, law enforcement personnel, court professionals, EMT and EMS workers, educators and counselors, special interest group representatives and more.

The conference will be held virtually, as a live online

event. Keynote and breakout sessions cover injury control, law enforcement, youth issues, roadway safety, medical marijuana and public safety, older driver issues, children in vehicles and more. Several networking breaks allow attendees to meet and talk with speakers, colleagues and vendors in the virtual exhibit hall.

For more information, click [here](#).

Oregon continues rolling out alternatives to gas tax

According to an article in Better Roads magazine, Oregon continues to lead the nation in rolling out alternatives to the gas tax, with a new experiment planned for its OReGO pay-per-mile system.

The state has been experimenting with OReGO since 2015, when it became the first state to roll out a road charge, according to the Oregon Department of Transportation. Volunteer participants are charged 1.8 cents per mile, which goes directly to the State

Highway Fund. The drivers receive a gas-tax credit to offset the road charge. Drivers of electric or hybrid vehicles can get a reduction in state registration fees for participating.

The latest expansion follows a federal grant enabling ODOT to recruit Portland area drivers for the Local Road Usage Charge Pilot. The pilot will begin after the recruitment ends in February and will continue through late summer, ODOT says. For more details, click [here](#).



Numerous crews responded as a large portion of Kansas received snow in late January. District Three crews worked for nearly three solid days clearing snow from that winter storm. Top left, KHP Trooper Tod Hileman caught the Hays crew in action on I-70. Above, Nolan Roth of KAKE news shared this photo from Russell on Jan. 26. At left, freezing fog made for a winter wonderland at the District Three headquarters on Jan. 29. Photo by Lisa Mussman, District Three.

District Six employee Larry Kjellberg took this photo on K-4 west of U.S. 283. The storm started as rain in the area, then followed by about 6-8 inches of snow.



Trivia!

Cherries -

1. How many varieties of sweet and tart cherries are there?
2. What state grows the most sweet cherries in the U.S.? Which state grows the most tart cherries?
3. Which President had a bad encounter with cherries?
4. How many cherries does an average tree produce?
5. What country leads in cherry production?
6. Who are Bing cherries named after?

Kudos

To James Roudybush (District Two),

As I was driving to work this morning in the dark, on a snowy, foggy Kansas highway, I felt compelled to send you guys a note.

So I was driving north on K-14 from Beloit to Mankato, then west on U.S. 36 to Smith Center, trying to keep my little car on the road, and I was reminded again about what a great job our KDOT workers are doing to keep the roads safe for their customers. Despite a recent severe weather event, the snow was completely plowed back and the pavement was dry, the road signs were all in their places and highly visible, and the highway lines were bright and highly reflective, even in the fog. It goes without saying that the bridges and pavement are also in decent condition. I really think that KDOT is a rare example of the taxpayers getting their money's worth.

We are really gratified that you and your dedicated workers know what is important and focus on keeping things safe for the traveling public. We recognize your tireless efforts and thank you for your service!

Mark A. Eilert,
Applequist Manufacturing

From the northwest Kansas Facebook page -

I just want you guys to know what a great job you do. I know in many cases your efforts go unnoticed. In today's world it is so easy to take for granted the amenities that you all provide until we need them.

I cannot commend you enough for a job well done. Keeping the interstate safe and clean is a thankless job when you're surrounded by ungrateful and impatient people.

Thank you again!

Trivia answers

1. More than 1,000, but only about 20 varieties are used in commercial production.
2. Washington grows about 62 percent of the sweet cherries. Michigan grows more than half of the country's tart cherries.
3. President Zachary Taylor enjoyed a glass of milk and a bowl of cherries on July 4, 1850. He developed severe stomach pains and died four days later. Experts speculate there may have been Salmonella in one of them.
4. About 7,000.
5. Since 1990, it's Turkey.
6. An orchard foreman named Ah Bing who helped develop a dark red variety in the late 19th century near Milwaukie, Ore.