



The Bridge



A quarterly newsletter from Michigan's Local Technical Assistance Program

Leading from within

The City of Novi Winter Maintenance Advancement Team, which was established less than two years ago to "... help lead the department's winter maintenance efforts" has completely transformed how the City of Novi department of public services approaches challenges and solves problems. "It's about providing a means for everyone to participate in running the operation; not just react to what I or one of the other supervisors suggest," said Matt Wiktorowski, field operations senior manager.

Team members include (left to right) Jerry Orchard, Chuck Fritz, Dean Reid, and Mark Schwartz.



Leadership Development in Public Works

By John Ryyanen, Editor
Center for Technology & Training

City of Novi

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Michigan's Local Technical Assistance Program

The concept of continuous improvement, which is defined as an ongoing effort to improve the performance of an organization, has been around since the industrial revolution. To promote it, hours of presentations have been delivered, hundreds of books have been written, and millions of dollars have been spent. The concept has also birthed several slightly different methodologies and philosophies, including *Lean*, *Kaizen*, *Six Sigma*, *Total Quality Management*, and others.

Results of successful continuous improvement efforts are often almost unbelievable. Management text books are full of case studies that describe failing companies and divisions that suddenly become leaders of an organization or an entire industry after embracing continuous improvement.

A Moment of Inspiration

When Matt Wiktorowski, field operations senior manager in the City of Novi Department of Public Services (DPS), posted a simple 115-word note on a bulletin board near his facility's lunch room in November, 2011, he had no plans to transform his organization; rather, he was simply reacting to a few moments of intense inspiration. "I got the idea and started writing the note at the first Michigan Winter Operations Conference in Midland," he explained. "Listening to the ideas at the conference inspired me to make changes in our winter maintenance practices. It wasn't that we were struggling or failing, I just knew we could do more as a team."

Wiktorowski's idea was to form a group from within the ranks of operators and mechanics to

help drive innovation and improvement in the DPS. "It was important that the group be made up of hands-on operators, because they're closest to the action," he said. "I felt the rest of the crew would be more likely to try new things that were suggested by someone in the trenches with them instead of by me or one of the other supervisors."

Taking the First Steps

The note Wiktorowski posted simply solicited volunteers to "help lead the department's winter maintenance efforts." Within two weeks he had chosen four volunteers, and he officially formed the City of Novi Winter Maintenance Advancement Team. The original team included Jerry Orchard (sign technician), Chuck Fritz (work leader), Dean Reid (heavy equipment operator), and Kevin Roby (light equipment operator). Roby recently left for another position within the DPS; he was replaced by Mark Schwartz, a light equipment operator.

"We have a good mix of seasoned veterans and less experienced crew members involved," Wiktorowski said. "But for this effort, an open mind and a good attitude are as important as experience." For a list of team members, their titles, and their respective years of service, see *Seasoned Veterans and Fresh Faces*, on page 4.

To ensure good support and communication between the new team and the rest of the organization, Wiktorowski arranged for two veteran work leaders, Don Beckley and Gary Reinwand, to serve as mentors to the advancement team.

"With over 70 years of experience between them,

“Public-relations specialists make flower arrangements of the facts, placing them so the wilted and less attractive petals are hidden by sturdy blooms.”

Alan Harrington, Author and Satirist

In 2011, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) initiated an international effort to modernize the definition of public relations, which at the time was last updated in 1982. The effort culminated last year with a crowdsourcing campaign and public vote that produced the following definition: *Public relations is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics.*

Ironically, public opinion of the practice of public relations (PR) is often negative, probably for reasons summed up in Harrington’s quote above

The key to a successful and effective PR effort — one that avoids the obvious appearance of “hiding wilted petals behind sturdy blooms” — is to balance careful communication with a focus on relationship building. Too much emphasis on one or the other will either make the effort look like “spin doctoring,” or it will result in completely losing control of the message.

This issue of *The Bridge* includes two stories that touch on different aspects of good PR, and a third that provides an opportunity to create good PR for every road agency in Michigan.

The cover story summarizes how the City of Novi Department of Public Services implemented a new process for managing and improving their winter operations program. Through strategic communications and careful relationship-building (internally and externally), Matt Wiktorowski and the rest of his team have transformed the way they conduct winter maintenance. The results are dramatic.

Practical Public Relations (see Page 6) provides an overview of how Jerry Byrne at Kent County Road Commission engages with local media outlets to communicate with motorists. Through timely responses to requests, careful delivery of information, and enthusiastic engagement at all times, Byrne and the rest of the staff at Kent County Road Commission have established themselves as media darlings in Southeast Michigan. The story even includes links to two great videos of Jerry in action.

On Page 7 you’ll read about Ottawa County Road Commission’s practice of processing old truck tires for use as cutting edges on their wing plows. The idea earned them a first-place finish in a national innovation competition, and a great deal of good PR. Also on Page 7, you’ll find an invitation to participate in the first annual Michigan LTAP *Great Idea Challenge*, through which you’ll have the opportunity to create good PR for your agency by showcasing innovative ideas or practices.

John D. Rockefeller, an American industrialist and philanthropist, had a healthy view of PR, which he shared somewhat tongue-in-cheek with the following comment:

“Next to doing the right thing, the most important thing is to let people know you are doing the right thing.”

I agree, but with one caution: do it carefully. It’s better for the relationship that way.

The Bridge

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LTAP Steering Committee

The Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) is a nationwide effort financed by the Federal Highway Administration and individual state departments of transportation. It intends to bridge the gap between research and practice by translating the latest state-of-the-art technology in roads, bridges, and public transportation into terms understood by local and county highway or transportation personnel.

The LTAP Steering Committee makes recommendations on, and evaluations of, the activities of the Local Technical Assistance Program.

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The Center for Technology & Training is part of the Michigan Tech Transportation Institute at Michigan Technological University in Houghton, Michigan. The mission of the CTT is to develop technology and software, coordinate training, and conduct research to support the agencies that manage public infrastructure. In support of this mission, the CTT houses Michigan’s Local Technical Assistance Program, which is part of a national effort sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration to help local road agencies manage their roads and bridges. For more information, visit www.MichiganLTAP.org.



Karl Hanson, P.E., County Highway Engineer for Wexford County, is an avid hunter, fisherman, and outdoor enthusiast. He also holds a world record for Inland Atlantic Salmon on two-pound test line. As a happily-married father of three kids, Karl has had to cut back on fishing and hunting, but he still gets out enough to keep from getting the shakes. Here he holds a Steelhead that he caught recently in the Manistee River.

A (True) Fish Story

John Rynnanen, Editor
Center for Technology & Training

Captain Jon Ray – Mangled Fly Media

In 1995, Karl Hanson, County Highway Engineer for Wexford County Road Commission, set a world freshwater angling record while fly fishing in the St. Mary's river in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. But the record book lists Hanson's name only; it doesn't tell the whole story (which is true, by the way).

"I was fishing with a couple of friends in a small aluminum boat just below the power house near the locks in the St. Mary's river," Karl remembers. "It's a popular place for whitefish and Atlantic Salmon."

The boat locks allow cargo ships to navigate the 21-foot difference in water levels between Lake Superior and the lower Great Lakes; as such, it is common to see massive freighters passing through the channel on their way to or from the locks.

"We were careful to stay clear of the shipping lane, and since whitefish typically aren't very big we were using ultra-light tackle." Karl explains. The trio was already having a pretty good day (35 whitefish, two steelhead, and a lake run brown trout) when Karl hooked the eventual record holder. As soon as the fish hit, he could tell it wasn't like the others they caught that day. "It grabbed my fly and headed toward the center of the channel. To keep it from snapping my line I had to let it run, but I was almost out of line so I had to convince my buddy to start the motor and chase it with the boat." Any time the fish slowed Karl was able to gain a little more line on it, but their small boat was nearing the part of the channel frequented by thousand-foot freighters. And there was a ship approaching. "We were beginning to get nervous, but I felt like I was winning the fight; I figured we still had a ways to go before it got dangerous."

Then, just as Karl began to relax a little bit, the fish took off again. Automatically, Karl's friend on the motor revved it hard and took off after the fish—right into the path of the oncoming freighter.

Moments from getting swamped by the bow wave from the thousand-footer (and with massive ship's horn blowing insistently), Karl's friend killed the motor, Karl pulled hard on the line to bring the fish closer to their boat, and his other friend plunged a landing net into the water where Karl's line disappeared into the blue-green depths. When he pulled the net into the boat, they were surprised to see the bright silver sides of an Atlantic Salmon—a big one. Before celebrating the catch, all three sat down and hung on tight as Karl's friend on the motor goosed the throttle and the boat leaped forward, narrowly missing a disastrous collision.

Karl is still listed in the Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame as a world record holder for Inland Atlantic Salmon. His fish that day weighed eight pounds, nine ounces. He caught it using two-pound test line.

Knowing the story behind Karl's world-record catch almost 20 years ago, it's easier to understand his propensity for thinking on his feet, solving problems creatively, and (sometimes) taking risks. He's been doing this for a long time, and the results of applying such an approach to building and maintaining roads can be seen on the agendas of state-wide conferences, on the pages of publications like this one (see "Unconventional Pavement Maintenance," in the October 2011 issue of *The Bridge*), and all over the roads of Wexford County. ■

Moments from getting swamped by the bow wave from the thousand-footer, Karl's friend killed the motor



Lee Rowe, www.boatnerd.com

Don and Gary help the team with technical and organizational guidance; they're a valuable and respected resource for the advancement team, the crew, and management," Wiktorowski said.

Now What?

To get the team started on the path of continuous improvement, Wiktorowski gave them three resources through which they could acquire advice, information, and inspiration:

- Funding for workshops and conferences in Michigan and other states
- Travel allowance to visit other municipalities to learn from example
- Funding to experiment with new products, materials, and equipment

Wiktorowski also explained to the rest of his crew that the advancement team would be leading the effort, but that everyone should be involved in identifying opportunities for change and improvement. "Basically, I explained that I wanted the team to be an important part of running our operation, but I expected the entire crew to be involved in identifying ways to improve and new things to try," he said.

to the leadership team where it is evaluated in terms of available funding and expected return on investment.

Need Proof? Take a Picture

The first "new thing" the team tried involved pre-wetting salt before spreading it on the roadway. Among winter maintenance professionals, it is widely known that wetting rock salt with chloride, mineral, or agricultural brine before spreading it can dramatically reduce salt usage. But operators are often skeptical of the practice because they are accustomed to a "more is better" approach to salting. To overcome the initial skepticism among Novi operators, the advancement team conducted an experiment to visually compare the effectiveness of spreading dry salt to salt that was pre-wet with salt brine. They then posted photos of actual test results in the lunch room, and encouraged discussion among the crew. "The results of the test were dramatic, but I was more excited about the effect the test had on the rest of the crew," Wiktorowski said. "The advancement team did a great job of conducting the test, gathering results, and then explaining the results.

torque indicators, and Bluetooth® radios for hands-free communication while driving. More expensive improvements included wing plows, ground speed controllers, and Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) systems for some trucks.

"I was impressed with how quickly our operators jumped on board and started suggesting new, more efficient ways of doing things," Wiktorowski said. "The changes to our plow trucks have made a huge difference, not only in the performance and efficiency of the equipment, but also in the morale of the crew." For example, heated wiper blades and air foils on plow trucks have eliminated the need for operators to stop and climb out of the vehicle to clear snow and ice while plowing. Wing plows have cut the time to clear subdivision roads by one third, and ground speed controllers have reduced salt usage significantly.

"Our operators spend long periods of time clearing snow in weather that ordinary motorists try to avoid. It's stressful and difficult, so I like to do whatever I can to make their trucks as comfortable and efficient as possible," Wiktorowski said.

Jerry Orchard and Dean Reid, both veteran plow drivers and advancement team members, appreciate the recent improvements to the plow trucks. "Our new driver-designed trucks are much more efficient, comfortable, and convenient," Orchard said. "The new technology on the trucks has made our jobs a lot safer and easier, which lets us to clear the roads more quickly and thoroughly."

Reid especially likes the wing plows. "I wish we would have added wings a long time ago," he said. "They allow us to clear more snow in less time, and they don't beat up the pavement edge and push shoulder gravel like underbody scrapers."

Efficiency improvements as a result of recent changes also extend into the leadership ranks. Roadway Asset Manager Jerry Tremblay is especially pleased with the performance of the trucks that use the AVL system. "With the AVL system, managing a storm event is more efficient; the time to complete post-storm reports has been cut by about 30 percent," he said.

Momentum Shift

Some of the changes—pre-wetting salt, for example—have resulted in dramatic cost savings that are easy to quantify. For example, the average labor cost per snow event for 2007 to 2010 was just over \$8,700, and the

Seasoned Veterans and Fresh Faces

Years of experience for crew members who are involved with the City of Novi *Winter Maintenance Advancement Team* range from 7 to 37. "An open mind and a good attitude are as important as experience," said Matt Wiktorowski, field operations senior manager.

Don Beckley, Work Leader*	36 yrs
Chuck Fritz, Work Leader	23 yrs
Jerry Orchard, Sign Technician	17 yrs
Dean Reid, Heavy Equipment Operator	16 yrs
Mark Schwartz, Light Equipment Operator	7 yrs
Gary Reinwand, Work Leader (retired)*	37 yrs
Jerry Tremblay, Roadway Asset Manager*	37 yrs

* Beckley, Reinwand, and Tremblay serve as advisors for the Advancement Team.

As part of normal operations, members of the advancement team are available to the crew at any time to listen to new ideas and explore suggestions for changes. One member of the team also participates in weekly leadership meetings with Wiktorowski and the rest of the City of Novi DPS leadership team.

When an idea is presented to a member of the advancement team, the team gets together to determine if it is relevant, and to make sure it meets an immediate need for the crew. From there, they send the idea

to the leadership team where it is evaluated in terms of available funding and expected return on investment. It was a catalyst; the process launched the whole idea of innovation and continuous improvement. It helped everyone realize that this approach can have a significant impact on everything we do here."

Simple Changes, Big Results

After the successful salt pre-wetting test, ideas for other changes and improvements were plentiful. Many of the suggestions came from operators, and were fairly simple and inexpensive to implement. These included heated wiper blades, air foils to keep safety strobes clear of snow, lug nut

average salt usage per event for that same period was 228 tons. In the winter of 2011/2012 (after establishing the advancement team and conducting the salt pre-wetting test), the labor cost dropped to \$3,897 per event and the average salt usage per event was 194 tons. “The biggest change I have seen is that the operators now advocate for the use the liquids, and are often concerned that they’re not using enough per ton of dry salt,” Wiktorowski said. “In my experience, major operational changes like pre-wetting are difficult because you have to overcome so much institutional inertia. The pre-wetting test really helped shift the momentum for us.”

As further proof of the momentum shift, Wiktorowski points to a new anti-icing experiment undertaken by the advancement team this winter: liquid-only plow routes. The practice—also referred to as direct liquid application (DLA)—has been used extensively for ice control in regions where temperatures seldom fall below 20 °F. DLA involves spraying salt brine or other anti-icing chemicals directly on the pavement to prevent ice from forming. Compared to ice control using granular salt (even pre-wetted granular salt), DLA requires much less material, which allows crews to treat more lane miles per load. For more information about DLA, see *Guidance for Using Liquids Instead of Granular Salt*, below.

For the City of Novi advancement team, the material and cost savings associated with DLA were not the main reasons they chose to try the new method. Rather, the team was looking for ways to reduce the impact of snow removal on pavements in their subdivisions. Wiktorowski explained that several older subdivision streets are paved using a heavy chip seal over gravel. “There’s no asphalt underneath to provide structural support, so our heavy plow trucks were just beating them up,” he said. “By switching to liquid-only on those routes we’re able to use a one-ton pickup with a 300-gallon tank, which should reduce the wear and tear on the pavement.”

Internal Public Relations

To help City of Novi decision-makers understand and appreciate the changes and improvements in the field operations area, the advancement team organized a tour for elected officials and staff from the city manager’s office. The tour consisted of an overview of the brine-making batch plant and 15,000-gallon tank farm for brine storage; a presentation to explain the difference between steel, carbide, and ceramic plow blades; and an overview of recent improve-



The City of Novi Winter Maintenance Advancement Team added wing plows to their trucks last year. “The wings allow us to clear more snow in less time, and they don’t beat up the pavement edge and push shoulder gravel like underbody scrapers,” said Dean Reid, plow operator and advancement team member.

City of Novi

ments on the plow trucks. To finish off the tour, attendees drove a plow truck through a short obstacle course. “We organized the tour to help our leaders understand some of the unseen details of our work so they’re more comfortable talking about winter operations with residents,” Wiktorowski explained. “We also thought it would be good to give them some experience with what we do so they understand what we’re talking about when we advocate for change.”

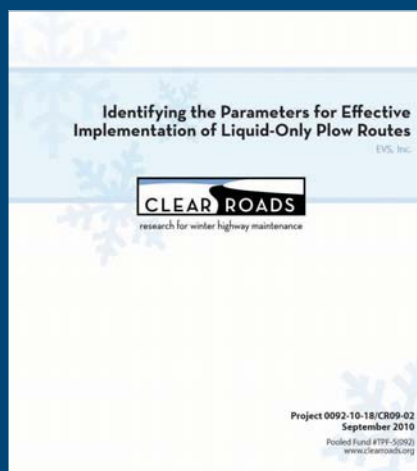
Change and Growth

Leadership expert John C. Maxwell says that “Change is inevitable, growth is optional,” and he asserts that exceptional leadership is the key to growing through change. In the field of winter operations, shrinking budgets and expanding expectations are ushering in new materials, techniques, and

technologies at a staggering rate. The City of Novi Winter Maintenance Advancement Team is a great example of how exceptional leadership can encourage healthy growth in response to inevitable change. “Every member of my crew wants to make a difference,” Wiktorowski said. “The advancement team is all about providing a means for everyone to participate in running the operation—not just react to what I or one of the other supervisors suggest. Teams make the difference, not the individual.”

Wiktorowski credits Pearson Clay (City Manager) and Rob Hayes (Director of Public Services) for creating a work environment where continuous improvement is the norm. “Both leaders support continuous education; they constantly challenge us to find ways to improve what we do without reducing service levels.” ■

Guidance for Using Liquids Instead of Granular Salt



A September 2010 project completed through the Clear Roads pooled fund study provides guidance on the use of liquid-only plow routes for snow and ice removal. Resources, which are available on the Clear Roads web site (see below), include:

- Final Report
- Quick Reference Guide
- Slide Presentation
- Report Brief
- Article in September 2011 issue of Roads & Bridges Magazine

clearroads.org/research-projects/09-02liquid-only.html

Practical Public Relations

Shaughn Kern, Technical Writer
Center for Technology & Training

Tacked to a bulletin board in the break room of WZZM Channel 13 in Grand Rapids is a running tally that shows how many times their reporters have interviewed Jerry Byrne, director of maintenance and local construction for Kent County Road Commission (CRC). Turn on WOOD TV 8 in Southwest Michigan and you might see Jerry explaining difficulties faced by snowplow drivers during a winter storm. The interview goes a step further when the reporters are given keys to plow trucks and are invited to navigate the massive vehicles through a driving course delineated by construction barrels and orange cones (see “Must-see TV,” below). Through their interaction with Byrne (and their time behind the wheel) the reporters gain first-hand understanding of work done by road commission employees, which enables them to more effectively inform the public of weather-related issues when necessary.

Engaging Without Overwhelming

Byrne’s near-celebrity status on local TV and radio is a result of his road commission’s energetic but measured approach to engaging with the public through local media. Staff members at Kent CRC enthusiastically and knowledgeably respond to all calls from the media. But they don’t actively seek contact unless there is a significant reason to do so, such as inclement weather or a major construction project. By waiting for major issues instead of notifying the media of every little thing that is going on, Kent CRC staff members maintain quality relationships without the risk of information overload or event fatigue.

Must-see TV: Jerry Byrne talking roads



Byrne talks about winter driving conditions and invites media representatives and elected officials to drive plow trucks during the 2012 Michigan Snow Plow “Roadeo,” hosted by the City of Kentwood Department of Public Services.

VIDEO: www.MichiganLTAP.org/woodtv



Byrne provides a good mix of technical details and practical advice as he explains what motorists can expect on the road as temperatures rise and the spring thaw begins.

VIDEO: www.MichiganLTAP.org/wzzmtv

In addition to providing answers to the questions asked, staff members specifically focus on covering three important topics:

- Standard operational details of Kent CRC
- What motorists can expect from changing conditions
- How motorists should change their driving habits

Just the Facts

In order to quickly and consistently communicate operational details about Kent CRC operations, reference documents are easily accessible for any road commission employee who might need them. For example, a document titled “2012-13 Winter Maintenance Facts” provides a reference list of key road commission statistics, including miles of road maintained, number of employees, details about the vehicle fleet and associated equipment, winter budget overview, and prices and quantities of salt

“... you need the media as much as they need you.
They’re your partners; take good care of them.”

Jerry Byrne – Kent County Road Commission

and sand on hand. Having a summary of statistics available enables staff members to accurately communicate big-picture information and also discuss details such as the cost of replacement grader blades (\$138.00 per set), and hours worked during snow events (90 plow operators during the day, 30 at night rotating on 12-hour shifts).

Other Kent CRC documents contain more explicit instructions and information for communicating with specific constituents. For example, Kent CRC sends out storm summaries to townships so they can address their residents directly if asked to do so. These summaries include how much snow has fallen over a period of time (*12+ inches in the past 12 hours...*); status of snow removal efforts (*crews worked around the clock to clear state trunk lines and county primaries...*); current plans (*continue to clean up the major roads and attempt to get to the county roads and sub divisions...*); other details such as policies about damage to roadside assets like mailboxes and sprinkler heads; and contact information for local assistance.

Taking Good Care

When asked what advice he would give to a road agency looking to boost rapport with the media and motoring public, Byrne replied quickly with a simple four-part suggestion. “Be available, be honest, have the person with the most complete knowledge of the situation respond, and make sure everyone in the organization tells the same story,” he said. “Most importantly understand that you need the media as much as they need you. They’re your partners; take good care of them.”

Keeping the public informed in this way is not easy. According to Byrne, the biggest challenge is taking the time to respond to every interview request. “During a winter storm, we sometimes do five interviews in a single shift,” Byrne said. For each one you have to drop whatever you’re doing, collect the information you need, and then calmly and patiently answer questions. It’s not convenient, but it’s worth the effort.

While it’s difficult to quantify the exact impact of these media relations efforts, Byrne has seen a significant decrease in phone calls from the public during winter storms, and has seen a more proactive approach to reporting among local media outlets when a storm hits. “It’s neat when you see a meteorologist give a weather report about a cold snap, and then explain salt use at low temperatures,” he said. “When we can educate our friends in the media, and help them convince motorists to leave early, slow down, and be more respectful of the plows, it makes our job much easier.” ■

Wing Plow Cutting Edge from Old Truck Tires

Belle Wirtanen, Technical Writing Intern
Center for Technology & Training

Ottawa County Road Commission (OCRC) is using old truck tires to decrease costs and increase performance of the wing plows on their plow trucks. The road commission first started using wings in 2006 to enable operators to move more snow in less time. The wings worked great on both state trunk lines and local streets, but the steel cutting edges wore down quickly, were expensive to replace, and frequently caught on manhole covers, sewer grates, and other urban roadway features.

Employees from the OCRC North Holland Garage devised an economical and operator-friendly solution using old tire treads as cutting edges on their seven-foot wings. The result: an inexpensive, durable cutting edge that lasts longer, costs less, and is more forgiving than many commercially-available products.

Savings from Both Directions

Cost-savings was an immediate benefit, from both the purchasing and the disposal side of the OCRC operation. According to OCRC Supervisor of Equipment Randy Nagelkirk, the cost for the rubber cutting edge is about \$38 per truck, not including the labor required to process the tires and mount them on the wing plow. “The cost is for the mounting bolts and the retaining bar, which is typically an old steel cutting edge,” Nagelkirk explained. “Our mechanics are able to cut the tires and attach the treads to

the wings in-house.” The cost for commercially-available products ranges from \$102 to \$1,400. The road commission also saves \$10 per tire on disposal costs.

In addition to costing less, the rubber cutting edge flexes and bends around common urban roadway features, which provides a safer, more comfortable ride for drivers and also protects the equipment and infrastructure. “One of our drivers using a wing with a steel edge recently hooked the edge of a driveway,” Nagelkirk said. “The wing tore right off the truck and wrecked the understructure and mounting brackets. If we would have had the rubber edge, it probably would have saved the whole thing.”

For complete details about how OCRC mechanics process old tires and attach them to their wing plows, see “Repurposing truck tires as wing plow cutting edges,” below.

National Recognition

OCRC’s innovation won first place in the 2012 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) technology innovation competition, which is called the *Build a Better Mousetrap Competition*. The idea originally won a County Road Association of Michigan (CRAM) best-practices award. “After talking it over with CRAM and Ottawa CRC, we decided to enter the idea in the national competition,” said John Ryyanen, technical writer and training coordinator at the Center for Technology and Training (CTT) at Michigan Technological University. “It was the first time an agency from Michigan participated, so we were excited when Ottawa won.”

For detailed descriptions of all entries in the competition, go to: www.MichiganLTAP.org/Bridge_26-4.



Repurposing Truck Tires as Wing Plow Cutting Edges

The Center for Technology & Training worked with the Ottawa County Road Commission & Training to create an instruction sheet for repurposing truck tires for use as wing plow cutting edges. The document is available for download from the Michigan LTAP web site:

www.MichiganLTAP.org/Bridge_26-4

Do you have a great idea?

To encourage the sharing of best practices and innovative ideas among road agencies, Michigan’s LTAP is coordinating the first annual *Great Ideas Challenge* this spring and summer. Entries in the CRAM “Best Practices” and “CRAMmy” competition will automatically be considered for the *Great Ideas Challenge*. The effort is also open to all state, county, municipal, and township road agencies in Michigan. First, second, and third place winners will be chosen among all entries, and the first place winner will automatically be entered into the 2013 National Build a Better Mousetrap Competition.

Entry forms, entry deadlines, prizes, and other details are available at: www.MichiganLTAP.org/GreatIdeas



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The Bridge

Bridging the gap between research and practice since 1986

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Michigan's Local Technical Assistance Program

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Upcoming Events

(details at www.MichiganLTAP.org)

Workshops and Conferences

Non-Destructive Testing of Highway Bridge Assets

March 28 – Lansing

Safety Analysis Using the AASHTO
Highway Safety Manual

April 2-3 – Kalamazoo

April 16-17 – Dearborn

April 30-May 1 – Saginaw

Constructing Pedestrian Facilities for Accessibility

April 17 – Okemos

2013 Asset Management Conference

May 8 – East Lansing

Oct 24 – Escanaba

2013 Michigan Winter Operations Conference

Oct 16-17 – Gaylord

Webinars

What's new in Roadsoft 7.6

March 25 – 10:00 to 11:30 AM



Congratulations

Ryan Whiteherse, chair of the 2013 Michigan County Engineers' Workshop (CEW) planning committee, presented the Urban and Rural Engineer of the Year awards during the CEW banquet on February 13 in Sault Ste. Marie. Whiteherse also recognized retiree Bob Bessonon for nearly 29 years of service to Houghton County Road Commission.



Urban Engineer of the Year
Craig Atwood, P.E.
Allegan County Road Commission

Rural Engineer of the Year
Karl Hanson, P.E.
Wexford County Road Commission