



TECHNOLOGY TALKS
(excerpts from FHWA weekly reports)
Early February Report, 2007

Illinois' 2006 Fatalities Lowest Total in More Than 80 Years: Preliminary traffic crash data from the Illinois DOT indicates that highway-related fatalities in 2006 decreased by about 7 percent from 2005. Provisional figures show 1,270 people died in traffic crashes last year, the lowest number of fatalities since 1924, when 1,065 people were killed.

Indiana: New INDOT Web Site Offers Real-time Indianapolis Travel Information: Now travelers, the media and the public can access the same information the Indiana DOT uses to keep Indianapolis traffic flowing. Motorists can log on to '**TrafficWise**' to see snapshots of area interstates and any traffic tie-ups that might affect them. INDOT's TrafficWise web site is part of an ongoing effort to improve the efficiency and safety of our highways using Intelligent Transportation Systems to help route traffic and reduce congestion and its effects, including accidents and pollution. This also helps maximize use of the existing road network, reducing the need for costly and disruptive road expansion projects in the future. On the Web:
<http://trafficwise.IN.gov>

Iowa: On December 29, 2006, the Iowa DOT issued the report, "Study of Iowa's Current Road Use Tax Funds (RUTF) and Future Road Maintenance and Construction Needs." The report estimates Iowa's public roads system will experience a \$4 billion funding shortfall for its most critical transportation needs over the next 20 years. The report recommends increasing the income to the RUTF by \$200 million annually to meet these critical roadway needs. To view a copy of the report, go to www.iowadot.gov and click on the TIME-21 logo. This will link you to a special web site intended to help educate local governments, community organizations, corridor groups, legislators, and the public about the challenges facing Iowa.

Maine Turnpike Widening to be Slow and Expensive: Widening and updating the 30-mile southern end of the Maine Turnpike took 5 years. The next 9-mile stretch to be widened and modernized is between Scarborough and Falmouth. But the job is expected to take the same amount of time. This stretch is a more complex project with more bridges and intersections. Widening is scheduled to start in 2010. Projected costs are about \$150 million for widening and upgrades to bridges. Portland's MPO concluded that it would be better to widen the turnpike than Interstate 295, which runs through a busier section of Portland.

Nebraska Center-line Rumble Strip Installation Reduces Crashes by 64 %: To improve safety on the State's two-lane rural roads, the Nebraska Department of Roads constructed nearly 28 miles of center-line rumble strips in 2003. Crash data was collected for the three-year periods before and after the project. The evaluation showed that the cross-center-line crash rate decreased by 64 %. While fatal crashes decreased from 3 to 0, the numbers were too small to run a statistical test. However, a 44 percent decrease in the fatal and injury crash rate combined was statistically significant. Furthermore, the property damage only crash rate decreased by 90 %.

Wyoming's First Traffic Summit: On January 23, 2007, the Wyoming DOT sponsored the State's first traffic summit. Over 50 officials from local, state and federal agencies and private industry participated. They discussed solutions to increase driver safety and reduce accidents, and will reconvene in a month to report on progress.

RD&T: FHWA has issued a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) for the **Exploratory Advanced Research Program (EARP)**. The objective is to stimulate research and development in high risk, high payoff projects that address technology and knowledge gaps. FHWA is looking for proposals for research and development projects that could lead to transformational changes and revolutionary advances in highway engineering and intermodal surface transportation in the United States. Approximately \$10 million in FY2007 funds are available to fund multiple projects that will be selected for awards based on technical merit. Interested parties seeking FY2007 funding have been asked to submit short pre-proposals by February 28. Those pre-proposals that are of interest to the FHWA will be asked to submit full proposals for award. It is anticipated that the FHWA may fund multiple projects covering a variety of topic areas; awards are expected to range between \$100,000 and \$3 million, depending on the proposals received. The BAA is officially located on the [FedBizOpps Web site](#). Details for responding to the BAA are included in the [Proposer Information Packet \(PIP\)](#) located on this site.

Long-Term Bridge Performance Program Workshop: The program's first workshop was held on January 9 and 10 in Las Vegas, Nevada. The workshop was organized as a collaborative effort by FHWA, National Science Foundation, and the University of Nevada, Reno. There were 52 workshop participants, including international experts from Japan, Canada, and Switzerland, who provided valuable input to a technical report that will assist in drafting a work plan for the LTBP. The report will also be posted on the LTBP program Web site upon its approval. For more information, contact Dr. Hamid Ghasemi, (202) 493-3042, hamid.ghasemi@fhwa.dot.gov.

Clearview Research: From January 24–26, Carl Andersen, Office of Safety R&D, provided a mini-seminar on the research that led to the approval of 'Clearview' as an alternative font for traffic control signs. The seminar was presented at the American Society of Testing and Materials Standards (ASTM) Committee E12 (Color and Appearance) Meeting in Ft Lauderdale, Florida. It was presented to the ASTM Subcommittee E12.11 (Visual Methods). For more information, contact Carl Andersen, (202) 493-3366, carl.andersen@fhwa.dot.gov.