



National Association County Engineers

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**NACE UPDATE**

The almost bi-weekly newsletter for Board members, Committee Chairs, and Members  
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(Note: Sources of information include the AASHTO Journal, NACo staff, Senate and House publications, the Federal Highway Administration, and other association news journals)

**Visit Our Local Roads Matter! Campaign Headquarters**

Our nation's local roads are critical to every facet of our lives. Safe and efficient roads and bridges are necessary for economic vitality, to revitalization, to schools, to trade, to healthcare, to business, in times of crisis, to families and to our overall quality of life. To visit the NACE Local Roads Matter Campaign site visit [http://countyengineers...org/LRM/index.html](http://countyengineers.org/LRM/index.html) or click on the Local Roads Matter button on the left side of this page. A needs assessment brochure is available at the following link [NACE Needs Assessment brochure](#).

**NACE members join county leaders to fight expansion of CWA**

***“Counties support Clean Water Act, but not expansion of federal reach”***

NACE Members David Brand, County Engineer, Madison County, OH and Mark Storey, Public Works Director, Whitman County WA were in the nation's Capital this week along with other elected county commissioners to urge key members of Congress not to support controversial legislation which would needlessly expand the federal reach of Clean Water Act (CWA).

They met with several members of Congress and legislative staff on behalf of the National Association of Counties (NACo) to voice the concerns about The Clean Water Restoration Act (CWRA). NACo and NACE supports the CWA, but believes the CWRA would result in significant negative impacts on local governments and economies without improving protections of the nation's critical water resources. The bill (S.787) was recently passed out of a Senate committee and could be on the Senate floor in the weeks ahead.

“Expanding the federal reach of the Clean Water Act will cost us more in time and money and impede our efforts to maintain our properties, both public and private,” Brand said. “The last thing we need in these difficult economic times is more Washington oversight in Madison County OH. Instead, we need to Restore the Partnership to better serve our common communities.”

The bill aims to change the definition of “waters of the United States.” By removing the word “navigable” from the CWA, waters traditionally under state and local authority would fall under the jurisdiction of the federal government. This would affect a number of current CWA programs and cost counties taxpayer dollars through increased unfunded mandates.

NACo President Don Stapley, supervisor, Maricopa County, Ariz., said that NACo supports CWA provisions that protect wetland habitats and rivers and streams, but does not support federal efforts to change the definition of the Clean Water Act and expand federal authority. “The legislation would drastically expand federal clean water jurisdiction and create significant bureaucratic obstacles and lead to increased costs to counties without necessarily enhancing environmental protections of waterways and wetlands,” Stapley said.

### **Obama Administration Releases Principles for 18-Month Transportation Authorization**

The U.S. DOT has sent to congressional committees a two-page memorandum outlining the administration’s proposal for a temporary 1½-year authorization of federal surface transportation programs, which would last from Oct. 1 of this year to March 2011. Ray LaHood, U.S. transportation secretary, last month asked Congress to delay a full six-year authorization bill until late 2010 or early 2011. (The current legislation, known as “SAFETEA-LU,” expires Sept. 30.) Instead, LaHood has told congressional committees at hearings and in private meetings with key representatives and senators that the administration wants to couple an 18-month authorization measure with interim funding to shore up the Highway Trust fund, which is expected to experience a cash flow shortage as early as next month, according to the Federal Highway Administration. The memo released includes some more information about the secretary’s proposal, though falls short of answering key questions such as where the administration will pay for the \$20 billion in interim Highway Trust Fund revenue. An increase in the federal gasoline and diesel taxes, which brings in the vast majority of trust fund money, has been ruled out by the administration during the current economic recession. Regarding funding, the memo calls for the Highway Trust Fund infusion to be offset by other tax collections over a 10-year period. It notes only that “international tax enforcement” efforts could procure the revenue, but stops short of specifically requesting that funding source. U.S. DOT has requested that Congress provide the trust fund \$20 billion to continue project reimbursements to state transportation departments and transit authorities at currently authorized levels through the second quarter of federal Fiscal Year 2011. “Legislation to address the HTF shortfall should pass before the August recess to avoid disruptions to state cash management for further strain on state budgets,” according to the administration’s memo to Congress. “Although an extension of the HTF is urgent, the administration believes that this opportunity can be used to put in place a limited set of carefully thought-out reforms that can form the basis for further reforms in a full six-year reauthorization.”

### **GAO Report Examines Highway Trust Fund Solvency**

Testifying at a House Ways and Means subcommittee hearing last on transportation revenue, the Government Accountability Office provided graphic information on the condition of the Highway Trust Fund and also basic details about how it works. Current estimates are that the Highway Trust Fund needs \$5 billion to \$7 billion to pay states for all obligations through September, the end of the federal fiscal year. Another \$8 billion to \$10 billion is needed for Fiscal Year 2010 unless a new revenue source is enacted or current spending levels are slashed. The trust fund could experience cash flow shortages as soon as next month, according to the U.S. DOT. Phillip Herr, GAO director of physical infrastructure issues, noted that the trust fund is the principal mechanism for funding federal highway programs, channeling about \$33 billion in highway user taxes to states. Those funds support highway, safety, and transit programs. The balance of the Highway Trust Fund has been declining, Herr said, because outlays under the

2005 surface transportation authorization act known as “SAFETEA-LU” have exceeded revenue. The trust fund previously had a large balance, but that has been drawn down dramatically in recent years as spending levels exceeded revenue. Last fall, Congress transferred \$8 billion of general revenue to the Highway Trust Fund to continue timely reimbursements to states for federally authorized road projects. Herr noted that even if Highway Trust Fund receipts had been as high as projected in the SAFETEA-LU act, the balance of the trust fund would have been drawn down from \$10.8 billion to only \$400 million by Sept. 30 (the end of federal Fiscal Year 2009), when the legislation expires. But those projections proved to be too high as the nation’s economic recession since December 2007 has led to fewer truck sales and less motor fuel being purchased.

### **“On a Crash Course” Report Issued by Transportation Construction Coalition**

While considerable research has been conducted over the past 50 years quantifying the significant roles motor vehicle design, drunk and drugged driving, speeding and non-use of seatbelts play as factors in the number, severity and economic costs of motor vehicle crashes in the United States, this is the first national study in many years to examine the role and consequences of another major factor in these tragic incidences—the physical condition of U.S. roadways. The study finds that the cost and severity of crashes where roadway conditions are a factor “greatly exceeds the cost and severity of crashes where alcohol or speeding was involved, or the cost of non-use of seatbelts.” To view the report visit the Transportation Construction Coalition website at <http://www.transportationconstructioncoalition.org/>

Among the study’s key findings:

- Roadway condition is a contributing factor in more than half—52.7 percent—of the nearly 42,000 American deaths resulting from motor vehicle crashes each year and 38 percent of the non-fatal injuries. In terms of crash outcome severity, it is the single most lethal contributing factor—greater than speeding, alcohol or non-use of seat belts.
- Motor vehicle crashes in which roadway condition is a contributing factor cost the U.S. economy more than \$217 billion each year. That is more than three-and-one-half times the amount of money government at all levels is investing annually in roadway capital improvements—\$59 billion, according to the Federal Highway Administration. This societal cost includes \$20 billion in medical costs; \$46 billion in productivity costs; \$52 billion in property damage and other resource costs; and \$99 billion in monetized quality of life costs.
- American businesses are paying an estimated \$22 billion of the annual economic cost of motor vehicle crashes involving their employees in which roadway condition is a contributing factor. This includes almost \$10 billion a year in health-related fringe benefit expenses for insurance (\$6.0 billion) workers’ compensation claims (\$1.2 billion), sick leave (\$1.7 billion) and Social Security (\$920 million). These crashes cost government (taxpayers) at all levels \$12.3 billion.

### **Visit the FHWA Local and Rural Roads Safety Program Website**

[http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/local\\_rural/](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/local_rural/)

This website hosts a wealth of information for County Road professionals to assist them in crafting and implementing safety programs in their counties. It is worth a visit to view the many guides and publications, statistics, and policies that are available.

### **FHWA Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Self Assessment Web Conference**

Thursday, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at 2:00 p.m. Eastern. Please join a panel discussion on the Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Self Assessment (SA) at a Web conference on Thursday, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at 2:00 p.m. Eastern. Panelists will present a discussion of the TIM SA process, success stories and best practices, cumulative results of the survey, the role in strategic performance metric measurements, and potentially new criteria to capture incident performance collection activities. In addition, FHWA will present a demonstration of the new TIM Self Assessment automated tool. For more information and to register, click on the following link:

[https://www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/resources/webconference/web\\_conf\\_learner\\_reg.aspx?webConfID=17432](https://www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/resources/webconference/web_conf_learner_reg.aspx?webConfID=17432)

### **DOT & NHTSA Traffic Safety Statistics**

The DOT and NHTSA has released promising statistics regarding the reduction in traffic fatalities nationwide. View the below links to see how your states and counties are doing.

<http://www.dot.gov/affairs/2009/dot9309.htm>

Go to the last paragraph click on ...”....For more detailed individual state data, click [here.](#)”

<http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/departments/nrd-30/ncsa/STSI/USA%20WEB%20REPORT.HTM>

Go all the way to the bottom of the page and click on data for individual counties...btw you can also view crash location map on Google.

### **Join us September 21-23, 2009 in Orlando for the Southeast Road Safety Audit (RSA) Forum and Road Safety Audits for Local Governments Workshop**

The Southeast Road Safety Audit (RSA) Forum and Road Safety Audits for Local Governments Workshop are Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)-sponsored events held in conjunction with Florida's quarterly Community Traffic Safety Team (CTST) Coalition Meeting which is supported by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). The first 100 registrants for the Southeast Road Safety Audit Forum will receive an RSA t-shirt and RSA tote bag.

#### **Southeast Road Safety Audit Forum**

<http://t2.ce.ufl.edu/workshops.asp?workshop=RSAF<http://t.ymlp39.com/ebhadaesmakaesebagausbb/click.php>>

The Forum will focus on common emphasis areas among the states including current progress, RSA success stories from around the country, and ways to advance implementation of RSAs in the southeast region. This Forum will also serve as a peer exchange among the participating states to facilitate discussion and highlight successful RSA programs and policies. A small registration fee of \$75 covers materials, breaks and breakfast. RSA Forum topics include:

- . An Overview of RSAs
- . Implementation of RSAs in Florida
- . State and Local RSA Programs
- . RSA Findings, Pedestrian RSAs
- . Engaging Law Enforcement in RSAs

. RSA Conversation Circles

See full agenda at

<http://t2.ce.ufl.edu/workshops/agendas/RSAF.pdf>

Road Safety Audits for Local Governments Workshop

<http://t2.ce.ufl.edu/workshops.asp?workshop=RSA1>

This free, optional workshop requires separate registration and immediately follows the Coalition and Forum. The workshop introduces local road agency professionals to RSAs as an effective tool to reduce injuries and fatalities. The training includes basic road safety audit concepts, risk and safety, common issues, and demonstrates how low cost safety improvements can be implemented quickly on any road network. Participants will gain experience in conducting a Road Safety Audit. Road Safety Audit Forum Schedule

Register for one or both events by clicking on the links above or by calling 352.273.1675. For information about the Community Traffic Safety Team (CTST) Coalition to be held Monday morning prior to the start of the SE RSA Forum, contact Sheryl Bradley at 407.246.2814.

### **Traffic Safety Education for Nonengineers**

The recent Public Roads magazine published by FHWA has an informative article on this program being accomplished in Michigan. You can view the article at

<http://www.tfhrc.gov/pubrds/09june/05.htm>

### **FHWA Announces New Highway Safety Courses**

*New ATSSA Courses (7/2/09)*

- [Traffic Control Design Specialist© – 2 day course](#)  
This course is for individuals charged with the evaluation, development and implementation of a traffic control plan (TCP). The intended audiences are engineers and/or anyone responsible for designing a TCP. Previous work zone experience is not required. Topics include introduction to work zone safety, applicable standards and guidelines, fundamental principles of temporary traffic control, human factors, the component parts of a traffic control zone, traffic control devices, constructability, and development of a transportation management plan (TMP). Students will breakout into small groups for hands-on exercises. A certification program is available for this course. For those individuals, who are already TCS certified, a one-day TCDS course is available.
- [Urban Work Zone Design© – 2 day course](#)  
This course addresses “urban” work zones, particularly the enhancements and considerations (“substantive safety”) necessary to address work zones in urban environments. These environments may involve restricted spaces, lack of space for buffer spaces, parking issues, limited sight distance, business access and pedestrians and bicyclist considerations, etc. The course will address instances when standards cannot be met and how to address these situations. Freeways will not be covered in this course.

This course is intended for work zone designers and traffic control supervisors who may work in urban environments.

#### **New National Highway Institute (NHI) Safety Courses (6/29/09)**

- [FHWA-NHI-380088 Improving Safety of Horizontal Curves](#)
- [FHWA-NHI-380089 Designing for Pedestrian Safety](#)
- [FHWA-NHI-380090 Developing a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan](#)
- [FHWA-NHI-380091 Planning and Designing for Pedestrian Safety](#)
- [FHWA-NHI-380093 Application of Crash Reduction Factors \(CRF\)](#)
- [FHWA-NHI-380094 Science of Crash Reduction Factors](#)

#### **Guidelines for Dowel Alignment in Concrete Pavements**

TRB's National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Report 637: Guidelines for Dowel Alignment in Concrete Pavements examines the effects of dowel misalignment on concrete pavement performance, and highlights measures for reducing misalignment and its adverse effect. [\[More\]](#)

#### **Transportation Statistics Annual Report 2008**

The Bureau of Transportation Statistics, a part of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Research and Innovative Technology Administration, has released its annual statistical report on the U.S. transportation system. The report includes information on the system's physical components, safety record, economic performance, energy use, and environmental impacts. [\[More\]](#)

#### **Pedestrian Forum - Summer 2009**

The latest edition of the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) Pedestrian Forum Newsletter is now available. The newsletter highlights efforts by the FHWA and its partners to improve the safety of walking and bicycling as a mode of transportation. [\[More\]](#)

#### **Draft Model Performance Measures for State Traffic Record Systems Issue Paper Available for Review and Comment**

The Governors Highway Safety Association has issue a draft issue paper on performance measures for traffic record systems in which they desire feedback and comments. You can access this issue paper at [www.ghsa.org](http://www.ghsa.org) and click on "What's New" item for this report.