

# TRANSCRIPT

June 2017



**A promise for Lee**  
*pg 4*

# ASK THE DIRECTOR

**Q:** At ODOT District 6, we recently acknowledged the fourth anniversary of the death of highway technician Lee Rizor. What is the department doing about work zone awareness?

**A:** "One of ODOT's four critical success factors, the metrics we use to measure our progress as an organization, is safety. We measure how many fatal crashes occur each calendar year in Ohio, how many serious injuries result from crashes on our highways, and the number of total crashes.

In order to protect our most important asset, ODOT's people, we and other transportation and safety agencies educate the general public about how dangerous highway work zones can be both for the public and for our workers. We do this through news conferences, press releases, and public events and social media campaigns.

This summer, ODOT will have up to 1000 highway work zones across the state. Last year, we had 6,100 work zone crashes, including 30 fatalities. In 2015, we had 6,034 work zone crashes with another 30 fatalities.

Both represent the highest number of annual construction work zone crashes in two decades. Drivers and passengers in vehicles are twice as likely as ODOT workers to be the victims. The reason for these primarily rear end crashes is that motorists were following too close to the other vehicle or they weren't paying attention to their driving, or they were speeding.

Work zone awareness is important to the people of ODOT. There will al-

ways be road construction in Ohio as we work to build and maintain one of the finest transportation infrastructure networks in the world. As an organization, we must constantly remind our customers that none of us wants to be THAT driver, who ruins someone's commute, day, or life. Instead, each of us wants to get home safely. In roadway work zones, ODOT people make safety their top priority every day—for drivers as well as themselves."



## OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION 2017 Construction Season Highlights

**\$2.33 BILLION** 2017 TOTAL

**1,098 PROJECTS**

**26 MAJOR PROJECTS** (each more than \$10M)

**191 SAFETY PROJECTS**

**93% PRESERVING THE SYSTEM**

**6,945 MILES OF PAVEMENT**

**7% ENHANCING CAPACITY**

**1,281 BRIDGES**

**\$14 BILLION 6,959 PROJECTS KEEPING OHIO'S ECONOMY MOVING** FROM 2011 TO 2017

## They Wear It Well

'Go Orange Day' is a part of National Work Zone Awareness Week (NWZAW), an annual spring campaign focusing on highway safety. For one day in April, roadway safety professionals across the country were encouraged to wear orange to proudly show their support of their fellow workers. This year some

ODOT members raided their closets and suppressed their natural fashion sense to join in. Consider this evidence if they ever try to deny participation.

PHOTO BY BRUCE HULL, CENTRAL OFFICE



PHOTO BY JUDY PLATO, DISTRICT 3

PHOTO PROVIDED BY JOE MASLACH, DISTRICT 4

PHOTO BY TOM POWELL, DISTRICT 4



# Monday, Monday

Crystal Neelon, District 3

“One Team. One Purpose. One Direction.” It was the mantra introduced last year at District 3’s Annual Meeting. But how can this be accomplished? ODOT is made up of different offices and divisions which must work together; all too often the people in each of these sections are unaware of what others do and how it all ties together.

In April, District 3 began a new program called, “Marvelous Mondays!” One Monday a month, each department makes a visit to one of the county garages. That same day, a group of folks from a different county garage will come and visit a district division. These visits provide an opportunity to meet people from each department and hear more about what it is they do.

“It is very possible to work here for years and never actually meet face-to-face with your colleagues,” said Matt Miller, District 3 Business and Human Resources administrator. “As we learn more about our coworkers and their work, the easier it is for us to develop an appreciation and respect for what they do to help us accomplish our goals.”

Though intended to last an hour, the first few visits have ended up lasting two to three. “Already, we have received great feedback. One long-time ODOT HT told me that he has waited 29 years to see our district facility and all that goes on here,” said Miller.



# A PROMISE

Breanna Badanes, District 6

**LEE RIZOR WAS STRUCK AND KILLED WHILE WORKING BEHIND THE GUARDRAIL** along Interstate 71 in Delaware County. The incident happened four years ago April 22. And each year the date has been a somber day of remembrance for Lee’s coworkers. On its four-year anniversary, District 6’s Health and Safety Committee planned a special way to honor Lee: with a public event at the rest areas to educate drivers about Ohio’s Move Over law. Training Officer Lauren Fitzpatrick worked with Lee in Delaware County at the time of the fatal accident.

“The previous three years have been a very sad time for us,” she said, “it’s almost like we go straight back to the morning we lost Lee. So I wanted something positive to come from losing him.”

In memory of their fallen comrade, ODOT-ers spent all of April 21 on both sides of I-71 in the rest areas south of the U.S. 36 interchange handing out keychains and “Move Over” information cards and asking drivers to sign a Promise Banner. Within the first couple of hours, both banners were covered with signatures of drivers promising to move over or slow down for roadside workers.

“If we save just one life of a roadside worker with this awareness event, it’s a success,” said Fitzpatrick. “We’re out here to make sure friends and coworkers get home safely each day.”

Ohio’s Move Over law was passed in 2004, but was expanded in 2013 after Lee’s death to include construction and maintenance vehicles in addition to law enforcement and emergency responders.

According to Fitzpatrick, the best part of the event was engaging the public about the Move Over law.

“Many of the drivers we talked to didn’t know it applied to all flashing lights, so it was great to be there to answer their questions.”



PHOTOS BY NANCY BURTON & BRIANNA BADANES, DISTRICT 6

# FOR LEE

# The Engineers of Tomorrow

Amanda McFarland, District 12

Science, technology, engineering and math are not usually the favorite subjects of most middle school students. A recent documentary, Dream Big: Engineer Our World, has been helping to change that. Shown in the massive IMAX format, the film features stories of engineers pushing the limits when creating and designing structures of the future.

The Great Lakes Science Center in Cleveland opened its doors to 200 Cleveland Municipal School District middle school students to view the film and participate in hands-on activities focused on the engineering profession. District 12 LPA Coordinator Natalie Conley received information about volunteering at the event and gathered a few coworkers to take part.

“Women in Transportation organized the event to encourage students to think critically and we support that,” said Conley.

Conley, Jessica Chio, Julie Meyer and Cassandra Stevens—all engineers in District 12—led the Bobsled Racers design challenge. Students were tasked with building a bobsled out of a plastic travel soap case, pipe cleaners, plastic straws, AA batteries and fabric strips. After the students were organized into teams, the engineers challenged them to consider what would make the sled faster or slower, or how the weight should be distributed. Experiences like these are necessary to help promote the importance of engineering to today’s students.

“One student stood back for a while and just watched,” said Conley. “After we handed the student materials to build the bobsled, they began to participate and stayed at our station for the entire session. It was fun!”

# IT'S A

Matt Bruning, Central Office



An OHGO camera catches the moment a tornado strikes an electrical transformer near Dayton.

Over the years, ODOT traffic cameras have captured tanker explosions, heavy snow, blinding rain, dramatic crashes and other amazing images on and along Ohio highways. A tornado rampage can now be added to that list.

The evening of May 24 saw thunderstorms explode across southwest Ohio. While most storms track from west to east, this system moved south to northwest. The system produced six tornadoes between 8 p.m. and 10:15 p.m.—the most in a single day in Ohio in the past five years, according to the National Weather Service.

One of the tornadoes was captured on the OHGO camera at Interstate 70 and Interstate 675 near Dayton. The twister dropped from the sky after crossing I-70, packing winds of 100 MPH. It hit several power transformers and buildings in Park Layne.

Several large sections of drainage pipe from an ODOT work zone on State Route 235 were tossed around by the storm, some of the sections landing inside a motorcycle shop. The images

from the traffic camera immediately went viral online and were played by news outlets around the country.

Fortunately, no injuries were reported from any of the events.



The storm tossed drainage pipes from a construction site on State Route 235 into a nearby motorcycle shop. No one was injured.

## FAIR VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

The Ohio State Fair will be held from July 26 to August 6, and ODOT will be represented with an indoor display centered on the OHGO online app and its uses. Central Office is looking for volunteers to cover the display for the length of the fair's run. Volunteers can serve either an eight-hour or four-hour shift, handing out information, talking to visitors, running a distracted driving simulator and handling clean up. The hours working at the fair will be swapped for normal work hours.

Those interested can learn more from an ODOT messenger distributed this month. They can also contact Volunteer Coordinator Caraline Griffith via e-mail or at: 614-644-8336.



JULY 26 - AUG. 6, 2017

# Partners in SAFETY

Becky Giauque, District 11

During the month of April, also known as National Distracted Driver Awareness Month, District 11 counties teamed up with local sheriffs and Ohio State Highway Patrol posts to educate and encourage safe driving among teens. Using distracted driving simulators, six of District 11's seven counties either attended events at area malls or toured high schools with the OSHP during the month-long campaign.

"Driving isn't a game," said OSHP Lt. Joe Fetty from the Wintersville post. "You have to pay attention, and there are far too many distractions in a car for young drivers. We live in a society where everything revolves around the phone... People are distracted all the time. If you take your vision or concentration off your vehicle for one second, it can become total devastation."

In 2013, Ohio law enforcement agencies reported 62 deaths, 762 serious injuries, and 17,594 crashes attributed to distracted driving. Many more crashes go unreported each year, because it can be difficult to prove distraction in a crash. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 11 percent of all drivers under the age of 20 involved in fatal crashes were reported as distracted at the time of the crash. The efforts of ODOT and the OSHP were focused on getting the message to young drivers.

"We want to reach students at the critical stage," said Fetty, "when they are just learning to drive a car. They don't need other distractions."



Tuscarawas County HTs Randy Billman and Chad Smith worked to help bring awareness to dangers of distracted driving. PHOTO BY DAVE GAZER, DISTRICT 11.



EXCELLENCE IN  
GOVERNMENT

# WHO'S SNOOPING?

**Mandi Dillon, District 7**

Bridge inspectors are used to looking at things from a different angle. Literally. With thousands of bridges to look after, they have to be able to see every corner and crevice. Special vehicles known as "snoopers" allow inspectors to get up close and personal, granting access to portions of the bridge that are difficult to inspect otherwise.

The truck provides a platform that allows them to complete hands on inspections at a variety of heights and angles, minus the climbing. Ohio has 43,412 bridges that span over ten feet. Of those, 14,095 are maintained and inspected by ODOT annually, even though the federal requirement is every two years.

"We definitely go above and beyond when it comes to bridge inspection," says District 7 Bridge Engineer Lee Eilerman, "We exceed the minimum requirements for sure."

The snoopers are used to analyze a variety of bridges ranging from culverts that are ten inches wide to major bridges that span over 1,000 feet long or 81,000 square feet. State bridge inspectors make sure any deficiencies are reported so repairs can be scheduled and completed in a timely manner. The department also keeps a running history of the bridge so employees know what work has been done in the past.

## TRANSCRIPT

*Transcript* is produced by the Ohio Department of Transportation Division of Communications. Please direct comments or inquiries to [Transcript@transportation.ohio.gov](mailto:Transcript@transportation.ohio.gov)

[www.transportation.ohio.gov](http://www.transportation.ohio.gov)  
[www.OHGO.com](http://www.OHGO.com)

**OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**  
1980 W. BROAD ST. • COLUMBUS, OHIO 43223  
Phone: 614-466-7170 • Fax: 614-644-8662

John R. Kasich, Governor

Jerry Wray, Director

ODOT IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER and PROVIDER OF SERVICES

PHOTO BY STEVE FRY, DISTRICT 7