

REIMAGINING TXDOT.GOV

A new website design for a new era of TxDOT

Meeting the demands of today's workforce

MARC WILLIAMS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



To meet the needs of our fellow Texans, we at TxDOT must continue to challenge ourselves to do more to attract and retain the talented workforce we need.

Each summer, we welcome an average of 600 - 800 summer hires to our districts and divisions. Many TxDOT employees got their start as a summer hire, and this program is a great way to recruit the next generation of TxDOT talent.

Our engineer-in-training program is another way we're developing our workforce. This program helps engineering assistants become licensed professional engineers through a variety of trainings, job rotations and exam preparation support. Currently, we have more than 400 employees in the program and—if these young engineers are any indication—the future of TxDOT is very bright.

Whatever your role may be, you are a vital part of TxDOT's mission of "Connecting You With Texas." We are an organization that must draw on a diverse array of professionals with different educational, professional, social and cultural backgrounds.

This is where the Employee Resource Groups, or ERGs, come in. ERGs are TxDOT-supported employee groups drawn together by shared characteristics or life experiences. At my request, the ERGs have given me feedback on what we as an agency can do to improve recruiting and retention, career growth and inclusivity. This is a vital step to ensuring "we," meaning TxDOT, fully reflect Texas in who we are and what we do. You can learn more about our ERGs on page 5.

Providing an inclusive place to work also means meeting the needs of all our employees—including people with disabilities.

In February, TxDOT published an updated ADA Self Evaluation and Transition Plan, which we'll use to ensure we're improving accessibility for both employees and the public. In preparing the plan, we evaluated important elements in our public right of way, safety rest areas, travel information centers, TxDOT buildings and websites. Advanced technology tools will help ensure our team effectively plans and tracks accessibility improvements.

We also want to help you develop the knowledge and skills needed to support your growth both now and in the future.

We've increased the number of employees accepted into our competitive tuition assistance program and we're also offering the option for a non-competitive, fully online associate degree program. These successful programs will continue to empower employees to pursue associates, bachelor's and graduate degrees while employed at TxDOT. We also offer a free program to help eligible employees get their GED.

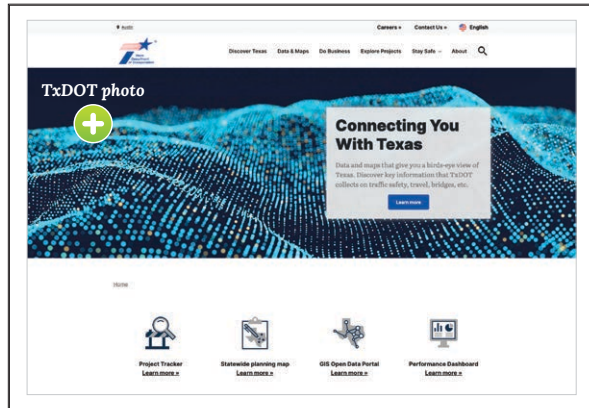
We want to help you build a career you'll be proud of as we collectively serve the people of Texas. That's why we're working hard each day to make our workforce even stronger. ■



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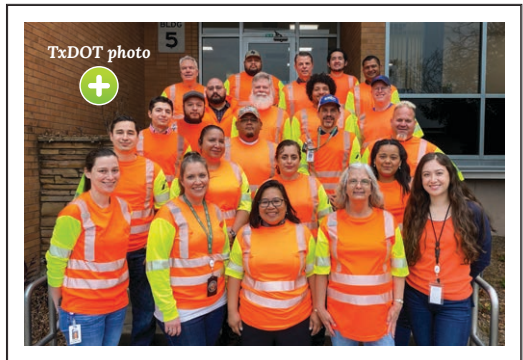
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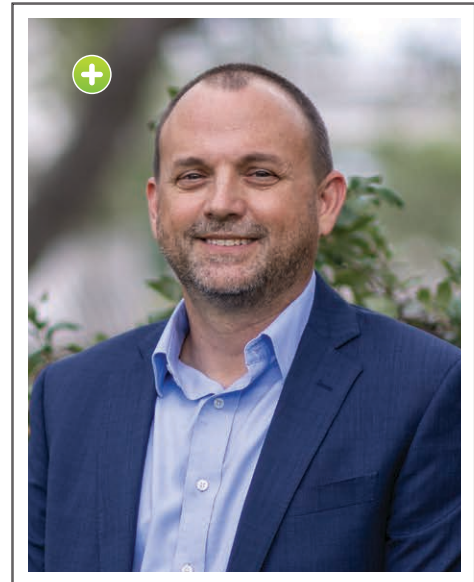
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Preparing now for safe holiday travels

LAREDO DISTRICT

We hear it about this time every year, “Christmas is going to be here before we know it.”

While it may seem early, the Laredo District is already making plans for one of its busiest times of the holiday season. Thousands of people called paisanos travel through Laredo every year heading home to Mexico for the Christmas holidays.

For the past 22 years, the city of Laredo has hosted a Paisano Rest Stop in December to help Mexican citizens returning home from throughout the U.S. and Canada.

This unique bi-national project is offered only in Laredo. The Laredo Convention and Visitors Bureau works with the Mexican Consulate General to set up the rest stop. Many cities, as well as state and federal agencies from both sides of the border, come together to help the paisanos.

TxDOT is one of the agencies assisting at the rest stop with TxDOT maintenance technicians ready to provide assistance wherever needed. Crowds this size with so many unexpected and varied needs take months of preparation.

“Whenever a paisano’s vehicle breaks down, our main priority is to guide them away from the main traffic corridor to ensure their safety,” said Josue Elizondo, maintenance technician with the Laredo District. “We then jump into action to get them back on the road, whether it’s fixing a flat tire, a radiator leak or providing gas if they are running low. We do all we can to get them to the next safest place on their journey.”



Transportation Maintenance Crew Chief Juan Vela Jr. changes a tire at the annual Paisano Rest Stop in Laredo that helps the thousands of travelers going to Mexico for the holidays.

Throughout paisano weekend, more than 7,000 people travel through Laredo and they keep the maintenance technicians busy at the Paisano Rest Stop.

“People have to pack their patience because it is always bumper-to-bumper traffic along the highway heading into Mexico,” said Ignacio Torres, maintenance technician. “We always let them know we are TxDOT employees, to make them feel safe when they are needing help.”

With preparations for the next Paisano Rest Stop underway now, the Laredo District maintenance technicians said they will be ready for any and all safety challenges. This year’s Paisano Rest Stop will be open in Laredo from Dec. 17-20. ■

Send information or any thank-you emails, letters or calls you or your co-workers receive to AskTxDOT@TxDOT.gov so we can recognize TxDOT employee achievements. ■

EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS FOSTER WELCOMING WORKPLACE

In 2018, five TxDOT women recognized that TxDOT had an opportunity to improve the workplace climate. They brought their recommendation to then Executive Director James Bass. In 2019, Bass added the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Section to the Human Resources Division to create a welcoming environment for current and potential TxDOT employees. By 2021, the DEI team had helped launch six TxDOT employee resource groups, or ERGs.

ERGs are organizationally supported employee groups drawn together by shared characteristics or life experiences that are focused on encouraging an exchange of ideas, promoting a greater sense of belonging, and enhancing career and personal development of employees in the workplace. Employees are encouraged to join any group. All ERGs are open to all TxDOT employees.

Asian ERG

“For a long time, I’ve been the only Asian in my district,” said Will McLane, director of operations for the San Angelo District and co-chair of the Asian ERG. “I now have a network of people who understand me and share similar customs, heritage and upbringing.”

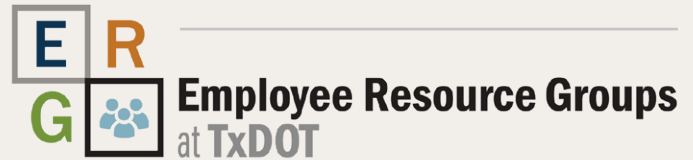
Black Employee Network

“A need was identified for this ERG, so we brought together a community to network, support career growth, mentoring/mentorship, host forums and to safely have sensitive conversations without judgement or fear,” said Robbi Smith, program area manager for the Traffic Safety Division and BEN co-chair.

Connecting TxDOT Women

“It started as something for just women engineers,” said Randee Shields, director of construction for the Childress District and co-chair of CTW. “But when we sat down and started talking, we realized there was a need for this group across the organization.”

It evolved into a network of female TxDOT employees who support each other.



“It’s not just networking, it’s authentic networking,” Shields said. “We build meaningful relationships with each other and build each other up.”

Hispanic Leadership and Advancement

“I joined after the first meeting,” said Kristi Garcia, Tuition Assistance Program administrator for the Human Resources Division, and membership chair for the ERG. “The Hispanic ERG offers a platform for collaboration and engagement. Hispanics make up a large percentage of the workforce, so by sharing ideas and networking we strengthen our voice within the agency.”

LGBTQ+ Coalition

“We saw the value of having an ERG, so LGBTQ+-identified employees can bring their whole selves to work,” said Lois M. Rodriguez, strategic partnerships manager for the Travel Information Division/Texas Highways and the Coalition’s co-chair. “Eventually, the stars aligned, and we kicked off the first official LGBTQ+ Coalition in June 2021 during Pride Month. Education is a key part of making change, so we welcome every opportunity to share information with our allies and co-workers.”

TxDOT Military Veterans ERG

“This group continues that ‘Esprit de Corps’ veterans felt while in the military,” said Marvin Faulcon, talent acquisition specialist for the Human Resources Division and TxDOT Military Veterans ERG co-chair. “It’s an avenue to get together, provide great information, continue taking care of one another, take pride in their previous service and the service they are providing today at TxDOT.”

[Learn more about ERGs on Crossroads.](#) ■

I AM A... TRANSPORTATION LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

AUSTIN DISTRICT



Mark Baker, transportation landscape architect with the Austin District, has been with TxDOT for seven years. He is the only transportation landscape architect in the Austin District and works wherever he is needed. Baker lives in what he refers to as “Pfantastic” Pflugerville with his wife Katie, who is also a landscape architect, their 7-year-old son and their dog. In his spare time, Baker says he enjoys building Lego projects with his son, mountain biking, gardening, home improvements, traveling, sketching, endlessly throwing a ball for his dog and trying to finish his home improvement projects.

WHERE ARE YOU FROM AND WHERE DID YOU GO TO COLLEGE?

I grew up in Pontiac, Illinois and Nashotah, Wisconsin. I received a bachelor’s degree in landscape architecture from the University of Illinois and a second bachelor’s degree in agronomy, or turfgrass management, from the University of Georgia.

DESCRIBE WHAT YOU DO ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS AS A TRANSPORTATION LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT.

I administer and review the planning, designing and construction of pedestrian infrastructure including sidewalks, curb ramps and projects with plant material. I also work closely with American with Disabilities Act consultants and local municipalities. In addition, I’m often working with other TxDOT team members to find solutions to problems with erosion, water quality and pedestrian connectivity.

There’s more to landscape architects than planting trees, flowers and bushes. From day one in the design studio, we are considering people and space.

WHAT DO YOU FIND IS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF YOUR JOB?

What I find most challenging about my job is balancing the public needs with limitations, whether its budgetary, maintenance or safety concerns.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

What I like most about working as a TxDOT transportation landscape architect is the opportunity to have a positive impact on the public, more so than any other position I could hold. Statewide, there are 18 TxDOT transportation landscape architects and I enjoy working with them on many projects. We create safe pedestrian connectivity for those who are the most neglected in the community. We design aesthetically appealing corridors throughout our state for the travelling public. We also get to come up with wild ideas, find others who want to help design them and pitch the ideas to see if they can be built. ■



“

We create safe pedestrian connectivity for those who are the most neglected in the community.

”

MARK BAKER

GET READY

for a new TxDOT.gov

TxDOT will soon launch an updated redesign of its website, [TxDOT.gov](https://www.txdot.gov). More than a year in development, the Reimagine Project is a collaborative rebuilding of the site to focus on customer needs and user experience. The site will debut in late August.

The current website launched in 2012 and is at the end of its life cycle.

“Most websites have a lifespan of about three years,” said Amy Torres, web and digital services branch manager for the Creative Services Section in the Communications Division. “We were really due for a refresh. It would have been impossible to continue building on the existing site, given the changes in architecture, design and technology.”

Site visitors will find a new and cleaner look and feel with vibrant imagery. The design makes generous use of TxDOT’s large image and video library as well as icons to guide people to the information they need.

The new site’s architecture is based on user data collected over many years from TxDOT.gov and reflects the needs of visitors. This user-centric approach is a departure from the current site, which follows a business-based approach and reflects the agency’s internal organization.

“It’s a little bit of shift in content structure but the information is still there,” Torres said. “This evolution to user-centric and data-driven organization is common for most sites. Our data shows us how users interact with TxDOT.gov and is the driving factor in our decision making. People are naturally searching for information based on topics and the new design reflects that.”

The site also uses responsive design for easy viewing on mobile devices with different screen sizes. Responsive design is important because a large percentage of TxDOT.gov visitors are on mobile devices.

Accessibility is another important aspect of the site with an improved experience over the current design. The site is optimized to provide greater accessibility from its launch.

For TxDOT employees managing content on the site, page updates and changes will be easier and quicker.

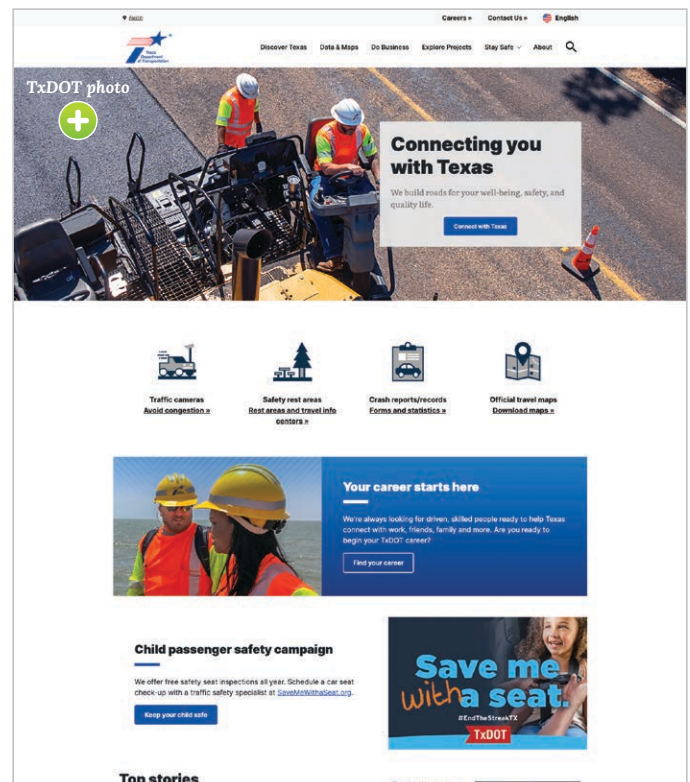
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The ability to make changes on just about everything on the site in just a few clicks is very exciting.

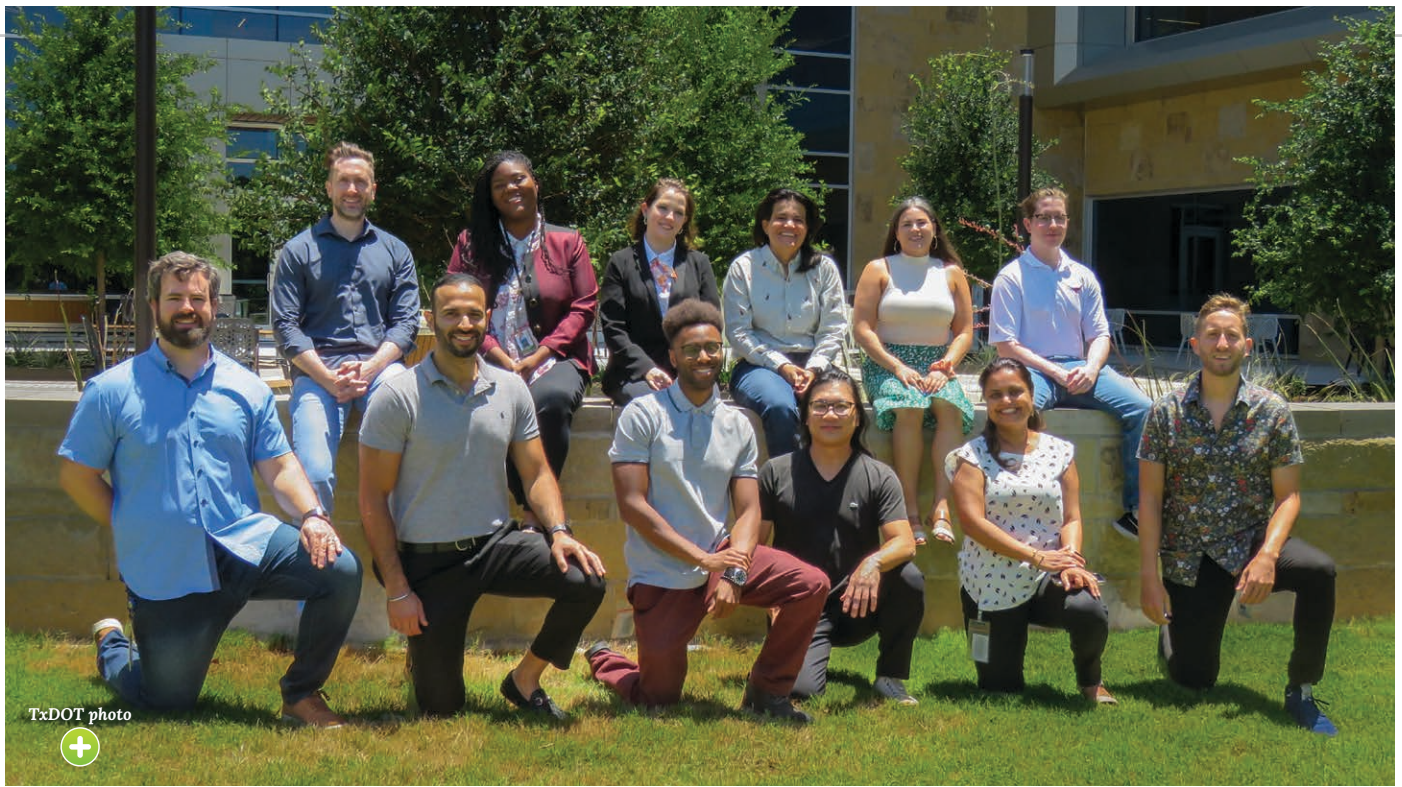
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AMY TORRES

Web And Digital Services Branch Manager



An updated redesign of TxDOT.gov is coming later this year.



The Web and Digital Services Team with the Communications Division has been working on Project Reimagine for more than a year. Back row: (l to r) Shawn Lloyd, LaCole Fouts, Victoria Blake, Amy Torres, Marissa Lopez and Zach Dollar. Front row: Jason Darnell, Jasdeep Bhasin, Will Wright, Victor Tran, Ekta Vihite and Jake Leggett.

“On the current site, many pages are difficult to change because of coding and the way they’re built,” Torres said. “They require technical resources and a lot of time to update. With the new site, we are moving to Adobe Experience Manager Content Management System which uses a global component library.”

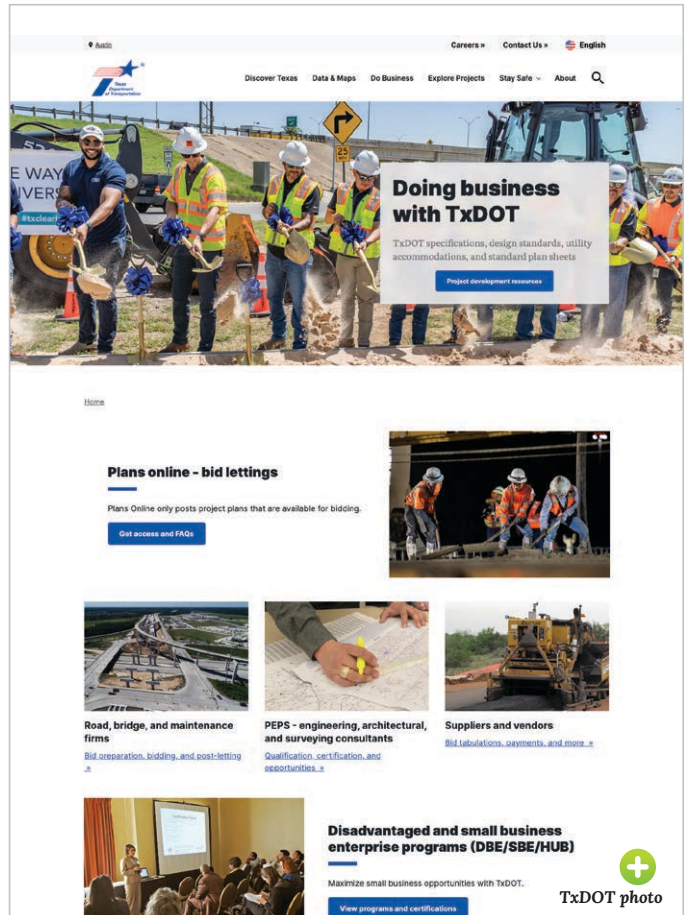
This content management system will make it simpler to build pages without technical assistance. The site will be easier to maintain which will help the content stay fresh.

“The ability to make changes on just about everything on the site in just a few clicks is very exciting,” Torres said. “With our global component strategy, we will also be able to tweak the design going forward fairly easily as needed. It gives us a lot more flexibility.”

The Reimagine Project also includes bringing third-party sites developed in other systems over the years into AEM and applying TxDOT.gov style and branding to them. Now these sites will be standardized and easier to manage as well as compliant to agency guidelines.

One of the efforts that was completed over the past year was updating content on the current site to be more conversational and clearer for users. The Reimagine Project has involved collaborative cross-functional work with multiple groups across the agency.

“The new site will be a big win for the public and TxDOT, allowing us to be efficient and effective in sharing important information and telling the TxDOT story,” Torres said. ■



Site visitors will find a new and cleaner look and feel with vibrant imagery.

FACING THE FIRE:

Brownwood District uses teamwork during widespread wildfires

The Brownwood District faced devastating, deadly wildfires that burned more than 60,000 acres, destroyed homes and lasted for weeks this spring. TxDOT crews assisted emergency services with grit and determination even as they faced hardships.

Dry conditions and strong winds created the perfect conditions for fast-moving and widespread wildfires to develop across the district. By the first week of March, four small fires had burned 154 acres. None of these fires required road closures, but they validated fears that things could get worse in the following weeks. Crews throughout the district readied to support emergency operations.

By mid-March, large wildfires were raging in Brown, Coleman, Comanche and Eastland counties.

The Crews Gap Fire began March 14, near the Runnels/Coleman County line. TxDOT crews from the San Angelo and Brownwood districts manned barricades to close a portion of SH 153 just west of Coleman. The fire grew to 8,100 acres in just a few days' time.

In Eastland County two days later, seven fires began to show extreme fire activity with conditions expected to worsen. The fires began to merge and eventually became the Eastland Complex Fire,



General Maintenance Technicians Mark O'Donnell (left) and Jimmy Coolbaugh operate fuel pods.

burning 54,463 acres. Wildlife, livestock and a total of 142 structures in Eastland County were lost in the massive fire. TxDOT crews assisted throughout the district, making firebreaks, closing several roads and manning barricades as the fires spread.

Brownwood District crews from Eastland, Brown and Comanche Maintenance Sections — along with special jobs crews and fleet operations — assisted the Texas Forest Service with creating firebreaks

The Brownwood District faced devastating, deadly wildfires that burned thousands of acres this spring.

TxDOT photo



(l to r) Brownwood District Safety Officer Rex Miller, Fleet SWOT Specialist Luther Knight and Equipment Operators Mark Ogden and David Gillespie from the Waco District discuss creating firebreaks.

along SH 6 between DeLeon and Gorman. Crews manned fuel pods and provided radio support at high school football stadiums in DeLeon and Eastland, where the command center was located for multiple state and federal agencies. Some firefighters came from as far away as Minnesota and Wisconsin. The Waco and Fort Worth districts provided crewmen and additional bulldozers to help with firebreaks.

On March 17, the fast-moving Kidd Fire devastated the community of Carbon in Eastland County with the loss of approximately 80 homes. Eastland County Sheriff's Deputy Barbara Fenley lost her life while helping with evacuations in the area.

The Eastland County Maintenance Section closed roads and performed traffic control as electrical lines were down across state roads in the area. Eastland County Maintenance Section Supervisor Jeremy Robinson explained that these fires were

personal for the Eastland crews, as they knew so many of the people who lost homes during the fires. One of their own, General Transportation Technician Tyler Justice, lost his home in Carbon.

Justice had been at work, but due to the fire being near his home, he left to check on his family. As he traveled home, he noticed a fire burning toward his friend's home on SH 6. Knowing the family was out of town, Justice stopped to help neighbors move the family's livestock and pets. Then Justice headed home, made sure his wife and stepdaughter were evacuated, moved his horses and did what he could to save his home. Unfortunately, it was destroyed in the fire.

After this devastation, Justice continued to help family members plow fields to make a firebreak to save their homes. He explained that everywhere his family could go for shelter was threatened by fire that night.

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“

I have to brag on our team because they just took care of business. They adapted well as the situations changed.

”

JEREMY ROBINSON

Eastland County
Maintenance Section
Supervisor

“There was nothing I could do about my home,” Justice said. “It was already gone. There was no reason for me to sit around while I could help save other people’s property and livestock”

Robinson explained the difficulty of assisting with such a large complex fire and other fires throughout the district.

“We were constantly moving crews and barriers from place to place as the fires broke out in different parts of the county and spread,” Robinson said. “There were multiple agencies working together, and we had no incidents through the entire operation. I have to brag on our team because they just took care of business. They adapted well as the situations changed.”

In Brown County, the Oak Mott Fire also started March 17, consuming more than 4,030 acres. Three days later, the Ramsey Fire quickly spread in Comanche County and burned a total of 2,090 acres. The communities of May and Blanket were evacuated. Brown and Comanche County crews closed FM 1467 and a portion of FM 3100 as the fire spread. Thankfully, U.S. 183 never closed as residents evacuated the area.

On March 23, crews began to get a break as light patches of rain helped slow the fires but did not extinguish them. Brownwood District crews were released to “on call” status, after having worked six long days of rotating 12-hour shifts. They were manning barricades, creating firebreaks on private properties, assisting with radio communications and many more important tasks.

TxDOT supplied bulldozers to help with firebreaks.



TxDOT photo





Eastland County General Maintenance Technician Jeff Newman helps to close a portion of FM 2689 near Gorman.

Late in the week, a heavier rain helped firefighters extinguish the fires.

“The district, as a whole, worked well together,” Robinson said. “Safety Officer Rex Miller checked on the crews throughout the operation. Director of Operations Eric Lykins and Transportation Engineer Blake Stembidge coordinated logistics of fuel and fuel pods, light towers and so much more. With their help, I could focus on boots-on-the-ground efforts. Other sections provided staff to man fuel pods. It was a big group effort.”

The support operation was difficult, but everyone involved cooperated.

“I was really proud of our crews and their response to this extremely challenging and rapidly changing event,” Lykins said. “They worked long hours for an extended period, always keeping a positive can-do attitude. This event wasn’t like a winter weather event where you could watch a radar and anticipate your response. We had to rely on radio communications and phone calls to adapt to the changes which our crews handled very efficiently. I have to compliment the divisions for the tremendous support they gave the district during this incident: Maintenance, Traffic, Fleet Operations, Support Services, Procurement, Communications and Financial Management all pitched in to help TxDOT respond. It was truly a team effort. I’m continually impressed with how such a large agency like TxDOT can work together quickly to solve problems.” ■



SCENES FROM Go Orange Day AROUND TxDOT

As part of TxDOT's ongoing efforts to raise awareness about work zone safety, the TxDOT Family wore orange on April 13 for #GoOrangeDay, during National Work Zone Awareness Week. On that day, roadway safety professionals wore orange to support work zone

safety and honor the families of victims who have lost their lives in work zones. In 2021, there were more than 26,000 traffic crashes in these work zones, resulting in 244 deaths, up 33% from 2020. To see many more photos from TxDOT employees, visit the [#GoOrangeDay page on TN+](#).



TxDOT ferry operations in Port Aransas was on board with #GoOrangeDay.



The Construction-Lab Section with the San Antonio District wore their orange in support.



The Houston District headquarters wants everyone to stay aware.



The Orange Area Maintenance Office in the Beaumont District was proud to go orange that day.



Alejandra Bocanegra and Nayely Parra with the Pharr District take a selfie for support.



The Brownwood District Headquarters gets props for their pic.



Wynona Bradley, Tiffany Cloyd and Ashley Johnson with the Human Resources Division line up to show their support.



West Harris Maintenance Supervisor Robert Henry of the Houston District goes orange with the Buc-ee's mascot.



The full force of the Corpus Christi District supported #GoOrangeDay to raise awareness of how important it is to pay attention and drive safely through work zones.



The Lufkin District Maintenance Office wears orange to show support.

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Rafael Riojas, Rebecca Black and Keith Kyle with the Traffic Safety Division in their orange.



William Hite with the Rail Division stays on track for #GoOrangeDay



The Wise Maintenance Crew lived up to their name and wore orange in the Fort Worth District to encourage drivers to be smart in work zones.



The Materials and Tests Division turned out in force to support #GoOrangeDay.



TxDOT photo



Carrizo Area Maintenance Office in the Laredo District.



TxDOT photo



Rock Thurston with the Paris District.



TxDOT photo



Arnulfo Perez with the Right of Way Division.



TxDOT photo



The Amarillo Travel Information Center with the Travel Information Division showed the way for Go Orange Day.



TxDOT photo



Environmental and Advanced Transportation Planning in the Dallas District lined the halls to show their support.



TxDOT photo



Odessa Maintenance made the scene in orange. ■

PRODUCTION SHOP

builds simulator for DPS



TxDOT photo



Daniel Wilson, Clint LaFont (in orange) and Steve Robinson (wearing hat) discuss a plan for cutting the vehicle frame in half to remove the cab.

The Fleet Operations Division Production Shop is known for its excellent craftsmanship within TxDOT, and its reputation has extended beyond the agency. Last fall, the Texas Department of Public Safety, or DPS, approached Production Shop Supervisor Clint LaFont about building a simulator vehicle to conduct demonstrations and training for troopers and other law enforcement partners.

After entering into an interagency contract early this year, the Production Shop got to work cutting, welding and transforming an old DPS cruiser into a vehicle for showcasing and testing new technologies used in the field. It will be staged and placed in the DPS's Public Solutions Center. Agencies from all over the United States will view the unit, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other states' highway patrol troopers.

The simulator will demonstrate new laptops, wireless/Bluetooth technology, new lightbars, new bulletproof windshields and other innovations. DPS troopers and staff from other organizations will be able to see the technology and test its fit and function for use in the field.

One challenge in completing the project was moving the vehicle through a narrow hallway to the room where the work would take place.

"We cut the car in half so it could be rolled down the hallway on two sets of casters and reassembled once inside the room," LaFont said. To reduce the vehicle's weight,

they removed many internal items and lightened some of the suspension components.

The Production Shop finished the project in May and handed the simulator off to DPS to finish it out with some additional features.



TxDOT photo



Daniel Wilson tests the disassembly and reassembly of the DPS simulator vehicle.

"The DPS representative came by and was at times speechless regarding how well it came out," said Fleet Manager Troy Simmons. "To say they were impressed is an understatement. Clint and his crew did a fantastic job. They even made them a special license plate."

DPS will have a formal unveiling of the simulator later this year, where they will recognize the Production Shop employees for their efforts. ■

SETBACKS CAN'T KEEP GARDEN CLUB FROM HIGHWAY CLEANUP

Keeping the La Marque community in Galveston County beautiful and clean has been one of the missions of the La Marque Garden Club for many years. While the club has been around since the 1940s, it joined the Texas Adopt-a-Highway program, or AAH, in 2019 to extend its efforts on one of the state roadways that crosses the city.

The club is made up of volunteers from the local community and led by Club President Vivian Allen. It has about 18 members ranging in age from 57 to 85 years old. Many of the members are longtime friends who enjoy spending time together while making a difference in their community.

Eager to get started with the AAH program, the group set out to do their first cleanup in 2019 but the COVID-19 pandemic prevented them from moving forward.

Then Deanie Barrett, the group's treasurer who first proposed the idea of having the La Marque Garden Club join the AAH program, passed away in early 2021.

"Life in the Garden Club hasn't been the same since we lost Deanie," Allen said.

Still, the group persevered. They continued their work planting and maintaining flowerpots and gardens in La Marque. They eventually organized cleanups for a two-mile stretch of FM 1765 in La Marque as part of the AAH program. In February, the group cleaned up FM 1765. Despite cold temperatures, the La Marque Garden Club picked up a significant amount of trash.

"Groups like the La Marque Garden Club make a huge difference in our community," said Hanna Henderson, Houston District Adopt-a-Highway coordinator. "They really go above and beyond to make a change and do their part to keep Texas beautiful." ■



TxDOT photo



La Marque Garden Club President Vivian Allen with the results of a cleanup on FM 1765. Despite some setbacks, the club has finally been able to join the Adopt-a-Highway program.

Take a hike! Getting outside brings benefits

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic forced many employees to spend time outdoors as businesses and gyms began to close. Those who were used to being cooped up indoors discovered the benefits of being outside, whether that was improved mental health, fresh air, physical activity or just a greater appreciation for the environment.

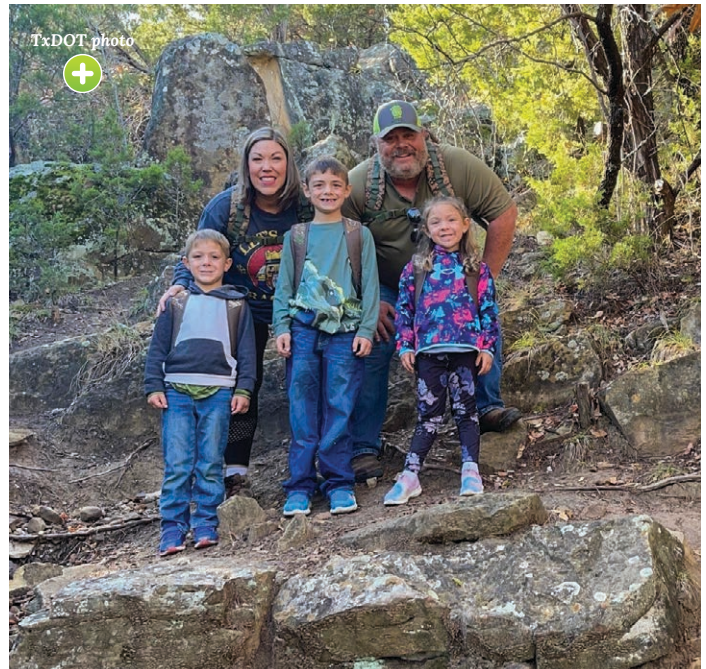
While many people have fallen back into the habit of staying indoors as places have reopened, Right of Way Survey Specialist Richard Gooch with the San Angelo District and his family have stayed committed to reaping the benefits of getting active outside. In fact, Gooch and his wife, Jessica, loved hiking even before they were engaged. Once married, they decided to raise their three children with a love for the outdoors – climbing trees, exploring trails and appreciating nature. For them, hiking is truly a family activity.

“The kids each carry their own supplies, such as backpack, water and flashlights, and are learning how to navigate trails,” Gooch said. “Not only is being outdoors and hiking great for our physical health but connecting it all back to a larger educational experience for the kids has been awesome. They can identify various plants, animal tracks and geological formations. They have learned basic survival skills. The outdoors is truly our favorite classroom.”

The family frequently visits San Angelo State Park for their hikes.

“With the park only a few miles from our house, we often take our kids for a hike of three to four miles. We are truly lucky to have a state park in our backyard,” Gooch said.

While everyone might not have a park so close, getting outside more often can start with small steps like taking an evening walk in the neighborhood, working on the lawn or garden, participating in a community trash pick-up event or exploring a new local or state park each month. The many health benefits of these small steps can be amazing.



Jessica and Richard Gooch frequently enjoy hiking with their three children, (l to r) Hayes, Warren and Clara.

According to the American Psychological Association, spending time outdoors has been linked to improved attention, lower stress, better mood, reduced risk of psychiatric disorders and even upticks in empathy and cooperation.

Find information about outdoor activities at the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department’s website, tpwd.texas.gov, or visit HikingProject.com. ■



Contact your local Wellness Program Coordinator to learn about the wellness program and start your journey today!

WHERE AM I?

Here is a photo depicting an identifiable landmark you may have seen in your travels around Texas. If you think you know what this is a photo of or know where it was taken, send an email to TNideas@txdot.gov. Deadline for submissions is July 20.



Identified:



Congratulations to our first identifier Hector Siller (PHR). Last edition's photo featured the state marker at Lake Texoma on old highway 75. Others identifying the photo were Meredith Worthen (ENV) and Joseph Hagler (LFK). ■

UPCOMING TxDOT EVENTS

July 4
INDEPENDENCE DAY
(All agencies closed)

July 12*
**TEXAS TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION MEETING**

August 30*
**TEXAS TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION MEETING**

*Meeting takes place on Tuesday rather than Thursday.

THE FUTURE OF MOBILITY HOLDS exciting possibilities



Ash Duong with the Houston District is a drone enthusiast who speaks to students and others about the Future of Mobility.

An electric vertical take-off and landing aircraft, or eVTOL, can hover, take off and land vertically without relying on a runway and could potentially be used as taxis.

I imagine this: It's a sunny day and you are standing in your front yard waiting for a drone to deliver your groceries. Or you drive from Houston to Austin while napping behind the wheel. Or you order a flying taxi as easily as the four-wheel kind.

Self-driving vehicles, flying taxis, drones, electric vehicles and machine learning may seem futuristic, but they are all emerging technologies. Many are already here today in some form. Known as the "Future of Mobility," these amazing creations will continue to become more prevalent and reshape our lives.

Planning now for the Future of Mobility is a must and TxDOT is looking decades ahead and reimagining infrastructure. How can the agency better understand the role that mobility provides for economic and societal development? How can mobility solve today's greatest challenges of equity, sustainability, resilience, automation and more? There are no clear answers today, but TxDOT is working to develop a vision of what a successful future with these mobilities could look like one day.

Ash Duong, engineering assistant in the Houston District, is a drone enthusiast who spends much of his time sharing and building the conversation around the Future of Mobility.

From high school students and summer interns to senior TxDOT leaders in Houston and across the state,

Duong works to educate and promote communication on the Future of Mobility. So far, he has spoken to more than 600 people at all levels, roles and ages.

Duong is president of the Houston engineer assistant group, which recently hosted presentations for district employees by two companies, Nuro and Waymo. Both are heavily involved in the testing of self-driving delivery vehicles.

Nuro is testing deliveries for Dominos, CVS, Kroger and several other companies. Waymo is currently testing self-driving trucks on I-45 from Houston to Dallas. The presentations allowed employees to see firsthand how these technologies operate.

"This knowledge will help TxDOT understand the role our infrastructure plays in advancing emerging technologies," Duong said. "These innovative technologies are rife with opportunities. I believe they will be the greatest watershed moment of my generation."

He says it won't be long before a self-driving 18-wheeler is commonplace.

"Texas is a hotbed for emerging technology testing. We should all be aware of what is happening right here in our backyards," Duong said. "TxDOT is reaching across industries such as tech, automotive, IT, education, business, policy and more to collaborate and set the vision towards what the future will be." ■

Clarence Traylor Jr.

BEAUMONT DISTRICT

Clarence Traylor Jr.

TRANSPORTATION MAINTENANCE CREW CHIEF

Clarence Traylor Jr., transportation maintenance crew chief for the Beaumont District, started with TxDOT in 2018 as a maintenance technician. In his position, he enjoyed the training classes TxDOT provided him operating Gradalls, Bobcats, rollers and iron wheels. In January, he became crew chief. Traylor enjoys restoring old cars, attending car shows, farming, canning and spending time with his wife, Nikisha, and their three children and two grandchildren.



TxDOT photo



What is your favorite food?

Bluebell Buttered Pecan Ice Cream. I could eat it morning, noon and night. The price has gone up, but I don't care. Other brands just don't taste the same.

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would it be?

I have traveled outside of Texas only once, when I went to Oklahoma boot camp for the National Guard. I would love to go to the Bahamas, and my wife wants to go on a cruise.

What's your favorite thing about your position?

I enjoy riding the roads. I know the roads. I like to ride the road as if I'm the public, feeling the bumps, feeling where it's not smooth and looking for cracks. I also enjoy the challenge of getting the right material the right shape and making sure it's level.

What are you most proud of at work?

I'm most proud of my team and what we accomplish when we work together.

Is there something about you people might be surprised to know?

The older I get, the more I want to grow my own food. That's why I learned to farm and can. I grow my own corn, cucumbers and tomatoes.

What are some types of events you like to attend?

I enjoy going to cattle auctions and have eight heifers and one bull. I also restore cars and go to car shows.

What is your favorite thing to do?

My favorite thing to do right now is spend time with my grandson, who lives with us while his mother works in nursing in another state. He's 3 years old, but you'd think he's 30. He's so smart. He loves to go fishing with "Paw Paw." He loves to do just about anything I do.

What don't you do?

I don't watch a lot of TV, but if I do, it's football, basketball or westerns. ■

All Across TxDOT

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

SAN ANTONIO DISTRICT

NEX Central Project breaks ground in San Antonio District



The San Antonio District broke ground on the \$1.5 billion I-35 Northeast Expansion, or NEX, Central Project in May: (l to r) Fernando Reyes with VIA Metropolitan Transit, Felix Martin with Alamo NEX Construction, Jose Carlos Esteban with Webber, Angel Luis Sanchez with Ferrovial Construction, Sen. Donna Campbell, Texas Transportation Commission Chairman J. Bruce Bugg Jr., Sen. Jose Menendez, San Antonio District Engineer Gina Gallegos, Reps. John Kuempel, Steve Allison, Elizabeth “Liz” Campos and Barbara Gervin-Hawkins.

The San Antonio District, along with state and local officials, commemorated the start of construction of the \$1.5 billion I-35 Northeast Expansion, or NEX, Central Project on May 11.

The Texas Clear Lanes ceremony was led by Texas Transportation Commission Chairman J. Bruce Bugg Jr., who was joined by San Antonio District Engineer Gina Gallegos; Sens. Donna Campbell and José Menéndez; Reps. John Kuempel, Barbara Gervin-Hawkins, Steve Allison and Elizabeth “Liz” Campos; and VIA Metropolitan Transit Chairman Fernando Reyes.

“I-35 is one of the most congested roadways in Texas,” Bugg said. “This will improve safety and mobility, address the anticipated growth in traffic and reduce travel time for drivers.”

The I-35 NEX Central project from I-410 N to FM 3009 will add capacity with new elevated lanes, including high-occupancy-vehicle lanes, and will provide flyovers to I-410 North and Loop 1604 West.

“We would not be here today without the support of our partners, stakeholders and community members,” Gallegos said. “We look forward to continuing that partnership throughout the project’s duration.”

I-35 NEX Central is the first of three expansion projects along a 20-mile stretch of I-35 from just north of AT&T Center Parkway to FM 1103.

Alamo NEX Construction LLC has already begun preliminary work on the project, including geotechnical drilling and utility potholing. The project is anticipated to be completed in 2027. ■



TN Magazine honored with two awards

TxDOT’s own TN Magazine was honored with two awards for excellence this spring. The magazine won first place in the Blue Pencil and Gold Screen Awards in the Print - Magazine Category. The Blue Pencil and Gold Screen Awards are presented by the National Association of Government Communicators. They recognize superior government communication products and those who produce them. TN also received the Award of Excellence in the 2022 Communicator Awards in the Employee Publication - Magazine Category. The Communicator Awards annually recognize excellence, effectiveness and innovation across all areas of communication, and it is the leading international awards program honoring talent in this highly competitive field. ■

ODESSA DISTRICT

Loop 250 opens in Odessa District

The Odessa District was proud to commemorate a major milestone with a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the opening of the Loop 250 overpass at County Road 1140 in Midland. The project also extended the main lanes of Loop 250 from County Road 1150 to Business I-20.

The ribbon-cutting in April served a dual purpose. It also marked the opening a few weeks earlier of a double overpass spanning County Road 1150 and County Road 60. That project also built main lanes on that section of Loop 250.



Midland Mayor Patrick Payton (left) and former Odessa District Engineer Lauren Garduno cut the ribbon on a Loop 250 overpass in Midland.

Loop 250 was originally created by an August 1977 minute order that designated a 17-mile stretch for the future home of Loop 250. Construction on the first projects began in the early 1980s. Some 40 years in the making, the loop is now almost complete. Only one interchange at Todd Road needs an overpass and main lanes to complete the Midland loop.

Both recent projects were completed sooner than originally planned thanks to several transportation partners, including the Permian Basin Metropolitan Planning Organization, the city of Midland and Midland Development Corporation.

Jones Brothers Dirt & Paving of Odessa was the contractor for both projects. ■

AUSTIN DISTRICT

Stassney Campus opens in Austin

The new Stassney Campus opened in Austin in May. Designed as a workplace for the future, the campus is the new home for divisions with offices previously at the Riverside Campus and other locations throughout Austin. It is designed to provide a welcoming, efficiency-oriented environment to facilitate collaboration, excellence and continued success. ■



The Stassney Campus, the new home for more than 30 TxDOT divisions, opened in Austin in May.

Lykins is new district engineer in Odessa

Eric Lykins became the new district engineer for the Odessa District in June. Lykins oversees the planning, design, construction and maintenance for the district. Lykins is a graduate of Texas Tech University. He began his TxDOT career in 1998 in the Brownwood District. ■

TxDOT places second in Get Fit Texas! Challenge

TxDOT came in second in the 2022 Get Fit Texas! Challenge, a statewide agency competition that provides state employees with an opportunity to get active. More than 5,000 TxDOT employees met the goal of being active for at least 6 weeks out of 10. TxDOT finished behind the Texas Department of Public Safety in its agency size category. ■

Traffic Safety Division brings home awards

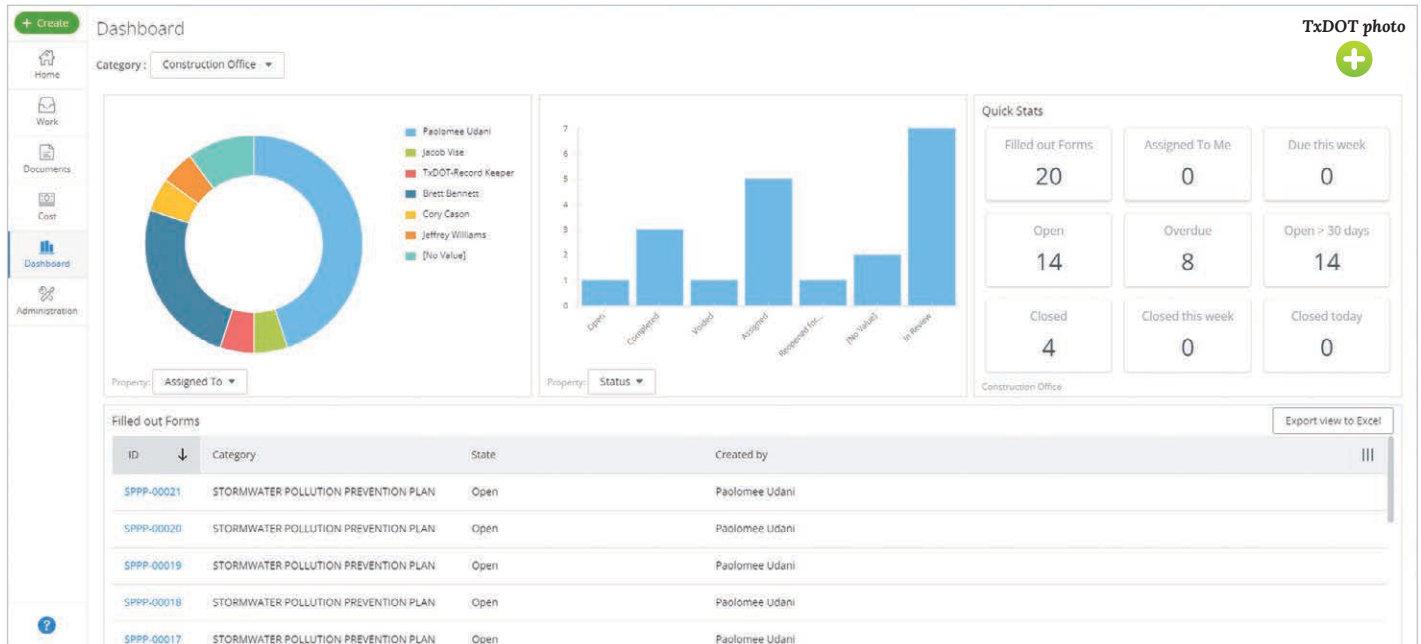
Two safety campaigns from the Traffic Safety Division were honored in the Blue Pencil and Gold Screen Awards from the National Association of Government Communicators. The “Pictures” public service announcement from the Look Twice for Motorcycles campaign took second place in the Video – Public Service Announcement Short category. The Texas Safe Routes to School Toolkit received an Award of Excellence in the K-12 Education Program category. ■

Connecting TxDOT Women Employee Resource Group launches Facebook page

The Connecting TxDOT Women Employee Resource Group recently launched the CTW Networking Facebook page. The page is designed to facilitate networking events and establish better communication, connections and comradery. All TxDOT women are invited to be a part of the group. Those wanting to join the group can click the “join group” link on the page at facebook.com/groups/ctwernetworking. ■

TxDOT TESTS

construction management tool and app



SYNCHRO displays the status of forms for construction projects.

There really is an app for everything, even construction management.

On April 1, the Marshall Area Office in Harris County started piloting two management tools for the bridge replacement project on I-20 at U.S. 59 in Marshall. One is SYNCHRO Control, a web-based project management tool for construction, and the other is SYNCHRO Field, a mobile app that connects to SYNCHRO Control.

So far, the project team have used the SYNCHRO tools to create forms for stormwater pollution prevention plan inspections, labor interviews, driveway calculations, requests for information and more with ease.

“It’s a simple and easy-to-use interface,” said Jason Duncan, deputy director of the Construction Division. “The entries begin on a phone or tablet out in the field. Then the form is assigned to another user for review and/or audit. When done, the form is generated into a PDF that looks the same as the TxDOT forms we’re used to seeing.”

Paperless and form-full

In addition to eliminating paper, the application also cuts down on extra steps, like saving forms as PDFs – which can be done in the application – and email traffic, since users can import pictures, attach GIS maps and add detailed audit trails directly into the form or document. There’s also a helpful dashboard that displays the status of all forms, including which forms are in which TxDOT employee’s, or contractor’s, court.

The project team hopes to complete the pilot in August of this year. If the pilot goes as expected, it’s hoped that all TxDOT districts will be able to use SYNCHRO Control and Field to manage construction starting in October.

Anyone interested in using SYNCHRO Control and Field to manage constructions forms and documents should contact Jason Duncan at Jason.Duncan@txdot.gov. Learn more about SYNCHRO on the [Construction Division page on Crossroads](#). ■

CLICK IT OR TICKET TURNS 20



The Traffic Safety Division marks 20 years of Click It or Ticket in Texas: (l to r) Tracie Mendez, Letty von Rossum, Michael Chacon, Carol Campa and Jessica Son.

No matter the type of vehicle, one of the safest choices drivers and passengers make is to buckle up. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Click It or Ticket campaign in Texas. The national campaign focuses on educating drivers and passengers on the importance of always wearing a seat belt.

To mark this important milestone, events were conducted across the state and enforcement efforts were increased. In Austin, a news conference was held on the grounds of the state capitol.

“Over the past 20 years, the campaign that is a partnership between TxDOT and law enforcement has saved 6,972 lives, prevented 120,000 serious injuries and resulted in \$26.3 billion in economic savings,” said Traffic Safety Division Director Michael Chacon.

According to the Traffic Safety Division, 2021 had 3,507 vehicle crashes in Texas where unbuckled drivers received fatal or serious injuries. Wearing a seat belt reduces the risk of dying in a crash by 45% for people in the front seat of passenger cars. For those in pickup trucks, seat belts reduce this risk by 60%.

Nationwide, making the choice to not buckle up is contributing to an alarming number of deaths. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration numbers show nearly half of the 37,000 victims killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2017 were not wearing their seat belts.

An estimated 2,549 people could have made it home to their families if they had buckled up.

“Since its launch in 2002, the Texas Click It or Ticket campaign has saved nearly 7,000 lives, but even one death due to not wearing a seat belt is too many,” Executive Director Marc Williams said. “We are proud of the work we’ve done over the decades and the countless hours put in by our law enforcement partners. But there are still far too many preventable deaths on Texas roads.”

There is some good news. According to NHTSA numbers, more people are choosing to use their seat belts. Only 10% of Americans used seatbelts in 1980. Through general awareness and education, national seat belt use was at 90% by 2019.

This year during the annual Click It or Ticket campaign in late May and early June, Texas officers and deputies stepped up enforcement of the state’s seat belt and child car seat laws. Texas law requires everyone in a vehicle to be properly secured in the front or back seat or face fines and fees up to \$200. Children younger than eight years old must be restrained in a child safety seat or booster seat unless they meet the height requirement. If a child isn’t secured, the driver faces fines of up to \$250.

The [Click It or Ticket campaign](#) reminds everyone the proof is in the numbers. Seat belts saves lives, so always buckle up. ■

MILESTONES

MAY SERVICE AWARDS

ABILENE

- 10 Sherry K. Gass
Ryan R. Sayles
- 5 Pat Garcia

AMARILLO

- 35 Kenneth R. Petr
- 20 Terrel L. Bell
Leslie C. Harms

ATLANTA

- 25 Timothy D. Berry
- 15 James P. Ennis
- 5 Kenneth D. Altman
Michael E. Lightsey
Caleb D. Young

AUSTIN

- 10 William T. Brudnick
Jeffrey D. Goertz
Jerry N. McNair
Kelly D. Wills
- 5 Eduardo Garcia
Avery A. Loveday
Michael Salmela

AVIATION

- 20 Amy D. Foster

BEAUMONT

- 5 Sharon M. Durham
Kevin Emerson
Madison M. Floyd
Chad E. Tuter

BROWNWOOD

- 20 Andrew C. Chisholm

BRYAN

- 30 Steve B. Higgins
Neal R. Riddle
- 15 Lisa R. Cole
Melissa D. Hatton
- 10 Jason W. Schulze
- 5 Roy L. Haynes
Steven W. Stone

CHILDRESS

- 20 Joe L. Bejar
- 10 Derek E. Shields
Robert A. Spillers
- 5 Stephen R. Hart
Nathan D. Mason

CONTRACT SERVICES

- 25 Joseph D. Maupin

CORPUS CHRISTI

- 5 Dennis Babb
Thomas Reininger

DALLAS

- 30 Kimberly A. McFadden
- 25 Dennis R. Whitson II
- 20 Jeffrey A. Bush
Mohammad H. Khoshkar

Charles A. Neal
Tamelia J. Spillman
Mohammad Yahyazadeh

- 15 Sederick D. Flowers
Gutema T. Gebrial
Luis M. Mendoza
Gregory C. Nix

- 10 Branden W. Barnett
Amir M. Shammet
Lisa M. Sierra

- 5 Zachary T. Ferguson
Lloyd Laney
Adam Smith

DESIGN

- 20 Max L. Proctor Jr.

EL PASO

- 30 Carlos C. Mendoza Jr.
- 25 Eduardo Armendariz
Alberto Lara
Christopher J. Weber
- 20 Rebecca L. Pinto
- 5 Aaron G. Carrasco

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

- 15 Jonathan C. Putnam

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- 10 Kayzia D. Sykes

FLEET OPERATIONS

- 35 Wesley R. Price
- 25 Donald R. Wilson
- 20 Christopher J. Sustaita
- 10 Jeremy D. Hughes
Archie G. Jameson

FORT WORTH

- 35 Robert P. Glidewell
Jeffrey L. Hulseley
- 30 Anette M. Moss
Bradley K. Tate
- 25 Bryan G. Anderson
Terrance B. Sanders
- 10 Daniel S. Poole
Francis A. Smith
- 5 Timothy Crow
Marc A. Salinaz

GENERAL COUNSEL

- 10 James R. Bailey

HOUSTON

- 30 James H. Mims IV
- 25 Cheryl D. Johnson
Odell Richardson
- 20 Matthew M. Connelly
- 5 Jay Dylla
Teresa M. Hess
Kelly J. Kline

Christopher Manson
Leonardo Parra
Michael Reed
Michael L. Williams
James A. Yanas

HUMAN RESOURCES

- 15 Susan M. Smith

LAREDO

- 30 Mauro Galvan Jr.
- 20 Marisa Ramirez
- 15 Gerardo Araujo
Carlos E. Cavazos
Arnoldo Martinez
Jesus D. Montes
Oscar M. Ozuna Jr.
- 5 Eduardo Nava Jr.

LUBBOCK

- 15 Rutilo J. Deleon
- 5 Zachary Zeiler

LUFKIN

- 30 Jennifer N. Hightower
- 20 Victor W. McBride
- 10 Mike Burkhalter
Elizabeth A. Ortego
Benjamin W. Sanders

MATERIALS AND TESTS

- 15 Joe Guerra

ODESSA

- 30 James L. Jenkins
- 25 Zane R. Honeyfield
Juan J. Rodriguez
- 15 Adriana Geiger
- 10 Juan A. Galan
Araceli P. Rodriguez
- 5 Roy D. Butler
John Coronado
Eric D. Heard
Christopher A. Walter

PARIS

- 20 Joseph E. Williams
- 5 Stanley Bailey
Nicholas Hammonds
Harrison D. Smith

PHARR

- 5 Yahaira M. Marroquin
Cinthya B. Reyes

PROCUREMENT

- 25 Jo Maxine Carden

PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING PROCUREMENT SERVICES

- 15 John J. Mosaffa

PROJECT FINANCE, DEBT AND STRATEGIC CONTRACTS

- 10 Benjamin H. Asher

RAIL

- 30 Richard Polansky

RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY IMPLEMENTATION

- 10 Barbara J. Cisneros

RIGHT OF WAY

- 15 Wayne B. Robinson
- 5 April Morin

SAN ANGELO

- 10 David A. Lewis
Isaac I. Sanchez

SAN ANTONIO

- 35 Melissa L. Bernal
- 20 Edward V. Cruz
- 15 Arnoldo Benavides
- 10 Raymond F. Brooks
Donnie W. Ervin
- 5 Richard R. Cash

SUPPORT SERVICES

- 15 Katherine M. Powlledge

TOLL OPERATIONS

- 10 Greg M. Crowe
- 5 Lin Zhou

TRAFFIC SAFETY

- 15 John T. Harper

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING

- 35 Margaret D. Thurin

TRAVEL INFORMATION

- 25 Kimberly L. Allen

TYLER

- 30 Royce K. Traylor
- 10 Freddie R. Morris Jr.
James A. O'Steen
- 5 Justin L. Gatlin

WACO

- 35 Monte L. Kohring
- 20 Chi Chung Chau
- 10 Sterling K. Copeland
Andrew W. Haferkamp
Stanley M. Swiatek
- 5 Mark L. Cunningham

WICHITA FALLS

- 15 Randal C. Coltharp

YOAKUM

- 25 David Sternadel
- 10 Clayton T. Gibson
Richard J. Synatschk
- 5 Alan M. Buehring
Jeffrey B. Kalina



JUNE SERVICE AWARDS

ABILENE

5 Robert B. Higgins

ATLANTA

20 Jason R. Dupree
15 Dennis M. Heller
10 Robby S. Allen
Jeddrick E. Peters
5 Matthew Boyd

AUSTIN

30 Chad A. Nutt
25 Robert G. Guydosh
Shelby S. Sultemeier
20 Joseph M. Ingracia
15 Charles A. Roberts
10 Quinn R. Janek
Bradley W. Shepard
5 Levi Washburn

BEAUMONT

30 Henry K. Horn

BROWNWOOD

15 Jason T. Owen
10 Philip Stevens
Brayden K. Tiemann

BRYAN

25 Jean J. Feng
5 Brandon P. Keltgen

CHILDRESS

25 Carlos I. Lozano
David O. Newbrough
10 Matthew J. Herbstritt

COMMUNICATIONS

20 Jason E. Hranicky

CONTRACT SERVICES

10 Daniel R. Bolden

CORPUS CHRISTI

25 Richard E. Tuttle Jr.
5 Daniel R. Rowland III

DALLAS

35 Norman C. Erickson
30 Carlos E. Scott
25 David A. Estep
20 Marjorie H. Bentz
Eric L. Fitzgerald
15 Jae Baag
10 Scott L. Black
Keithen L. Hudgens
Grace Lo

EL PASO

30 Rolando E. Hernandez
20 Juan C. Martinez
15 Juergen L. Dressen
Salvador Perez
5 Raul Miranda

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

20 Anthony C. Horne
15 Stirling J. Robertson
10 Nicolle F. Kord

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

15 Littny-Anne M. Payne
10 Irene Lee

FLEET OPERATIONS

10 Peter T. Gallegos
Joe R. Markowski

FORT WORTH

30 Timothy S. Shuler
15 Rayappu A. Jeyakumar
Oswaldo Lopez
10 Daniel J. Drouillard

HOUSTON

30 Richard C. Knoblock
Elworth J. Wilcox Jr.
25 Roland Lozano
20 Kenneth D. Townsend
15 Hamoon Bahrami
Sylvester L. Daniels
Laurence J. Dano
10 James C. Elliott
5 Cullen D. Harris
Roberto Macias Jr.
Terry L. Sloss Jr.

LAREDO

20 Jimmy Lozano
15 Humberto Gonzalez Jr.

LUBBOCK

15 Gary F. Moore
5 Oscar Calzada
Steve Robles
William Sellers
Severiano K. Sisneros
Joshua Tomlinson

LUFKIN

5 Shelby Ellison

MAINTENANCE

15 Mark Johnson

MATERIALS AND TESTS

35 Denise V. Maldonado

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY

5 Ginna Hughes

ODESSA

15 Henry L. Wilkerson
10 Robert J. Paynter
5 James R. Hunt

PARIS

10 Wesley N. Mankins
5 Kenyattia P. Jackson
Frances M. Posey

PHARR

25 Melba R. Schaus
Humberto Uresti
20 Ricardo R. Bravo
15 Jesus C. Gonzalez
10 Nolan D. Nicolas
William S. Parsons

PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING PROCUREMENT SERVICES

10 Laura J. Eichner
Roy Gonzales

SAN ANGELO

10 Paul D. Cantrell
Stewart D. Jameson
Justin A. Pullin

SAN ANTONIO

25 Jerome M. Boado
20 Dale W. Damerau
David Howard
10 Mark Morquecho

SUPPORT SERVICES

30 Tracey Spradling
10 Larry L. Maynard

TRAFFIC SAFETY

15 Jianming Ma

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING

15 Cody A. Lewis

TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS

15 Amanda R. Allen
Nicole G. Coronado
10 Janice M. Hillenmeyer

TYLER

25 Jose C. Rodriguez
5 Carson R. Hollis
Rolando Mendez

WACO

10 Tyler W. Patterson

WICHITA FALLS

30 Linda G. Tamplin
25 Bobby S. Watkins
20 William C. Ulbig
10 Jeremy P. Childs
5 Myles E. Hrnccirik

YOAKUM DISTRICT

25 Richard D. Canik
10 Timothy J. O'Neill
5 Benjamin S. Svoboda Jr.

MILESTONES

MARCH RETIREE REPORT

AMARILLO

15 Christoph W. Schwerzenbach

AVIATION

14 James G. Lafuente

BRIDGE

20 Robert E. King Jr.

BROWNWOOD

14 Armando A. Garcia

CORPUS CHRISTI

16 Eugenio Alfaro

DALLAS

37 Rhonda A. Simmelink

30 James P. Deleon

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

37 Gail A. Quimby

27 Vicki S. Dickerson

FLEET OPERATIONS

28 Thomas D. Moore

FORT WORTH

22 Gary G. Cline

HOUSTON

26 Mark E. Thomson

25 Arya Chatterjee

22 Donald R. Heimann

David L. Hempy

16 Joey V. Duncan

HUMAN RESOURCES

22 Nidia Gonzalez

LAREDO

29 Rogelio P. Benavides

24 Joel U. Sanchez

MATERIALS AND TESTS

28 Aida J. Guzman-Crawford

PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING PROCUREMENT SERVICES

15 Marivel R. Morales

PHARR

21 Ronald N. Reyes

SAN ANTONIO

20 David Zimmerman

19 Esequiel M. Moncada

SUPPORT SERVICES

17 Laura L. Johannsen

TRAVEL INFORMATION

11 Allen Wayne Phillips

10 Garland M. Wiggins

WACO

27 Betsy F. Pittman

YOAKUM

29 Darrell W. Gajewski

APRIL RETIREE REPORT

ADMINISTRATION

24 Yolanda Guerra Surita

ATLANTA

39 Henry L. Murray Jr.

34 Stephen B. Metcalf

AUSTIN

10 Thomas Robert Benz

24 Gregory S. Mills

BEAUMONT

28 Bruce A. Myrick

BROWNWOOD

10 Gary L. Driskill

CORPUS CHRISTI

19 Bobby L. Lewis

DALLAS

16 Arvell R. Crawford

21 Antonino Fernandez

DESIGN

20 Jonathan W. Martin

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

30 Kysha M. Holland

FORT WORTH

19 David A. Peugh

LAREDO

22 Sergio Reyna

LUBBOCK

17 Leonel L. Reyes

16 Margie Cedillo

RAIL

14 Don R. Traylor

TYLER

20 Gilbert Arteaga

WACO

20 Chad C. Blansit

WICHITA FALLS

29 Rodolfo Leal Jr.

IN MEMORIAM

AMARILLO

David Branin

General Transportation Technician

Date of Death: 4/18/2022

Years of Service: 8

Randy Perez

General Transportation Technician

Date of Death: 5/25/2022

Time of Service: 4 months

BROWNWOOD

Tommy Greer

Shop Foreman

Date of Death: 5/12/2022

Years of Service: 29

Retired: 1999

HOUSTON

Andrew Mao

District Advanced

Transportation Plan Director

Date of Death: 5/3/2022

Years of Service: 15

ODESSA

William Millican

General Transportation Technician

Date of Death: 4/25/2022

Time of Service: 3 months

PHARR

Nestor Garza

Inspector

Date of Death: 2/2/2022

Years of Service: 30

Retired: 2008

SAN ANTONIO

John Heye

Plan Reviewer

Date of Death: 4/12/2022

Years of Service: 32

TYLER

Sergio Valentin

Transportation Engineer Specialist

Date of Death: 4/15/2022

Years of Service: 1

INSIDE JOE JONAS' Don't mess with Texas® PSA



Joe Jonas drags an iconic Don't mess with Texas trash barrel while filming the latest PSA.

Everything is bigger in Texas and in the hilarious new Don't mess with Texas **PSAs** singer, songwriter and actor Joe Jonas finds lassoing litter may be his biggest challenge yet.

The show-stopping PSAs feature the former Westlake, Texas, resident taking an over-the-top approach to keeping Texas roadways free of litter, and inspiring a whole office of people to join him in the effort.

As the newest celebrity to partner with Don't mess with Texas, the second-born Jonas Brother appears in PSAs running on TV, radio and digital platforms across the state. The aim is to have the campaign resonate with Texans—young and old—and result in litter being properly disposed of in a trash can each and every time.

“Joe understands the pride that we have in our state

and in keeping it clean for everyone to enjoy its beauty, now and in the future” said Becky Ozuna, administrator for the Don't mess with Texas campaign. “We are thrilled to have Joe join us in bringing attention to our litter-free message through his comedic talent and timing.”

As the new face of Don't mess with Texas, Jonas joins the likes of other Texas celebrities who have lent their support to the campaign including George Strait, Willie Nelson, Black Pumas, Eva Longoria, Erykah Badu, the Randy Rogers Band, Las Fenix, Grupo Fantasma and Oscar winner and Minister of Culture/Matthew McConaughey.

Don't mess with Texas has been educating Texans about litter prevention since 1986. The program includes a grassroots partnership with Keep Texas Beautiful, annual “Trash-Off” community litter pick-up events and the Adopt-a-Highway volunteer program. ■

EMPLOYEES CHIME IN

If you could have any superpower, what would it be and why?

LUBBOCK DISTRICT



DAVID OROSCO
BRIDGE MAINTENANCE CREW
EQUIPMENT OPERATOR

“My 12-year-old son, Jacob, has a condition that causes severe joint pain, so my superpower would be the ability to heal him and others. To take his pain away, so he could live his best life.” ■

SAN ANGELO DISTRICT



WILL MCLANE
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

“Time travel. TxDOT has a 2035 goal of reducing roadway fatalities by half. With time travel, we would meet that goal today by buckling seatbelts. This year our district has had 16 fatalities. All but one was unrestrained. These tragedies affect our families and our extended TxDOT family.” ■

WACO DISTRICT



NOEL SPAAR
TRANSPORTATION ENGINEER

“There are many superpowers that come to mind, but if I had to choose one it would be flying. It'd be awesome to soar above the trees, up to the tallest mountains and not be limited to planes when traveling.” ■

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