

## Pass or fail? Employees grade TxDOT

TxDOT's grades are in. Results from the report cards distributed at October's Transportation Conference have been compiled, and TxDOT employees let the Senior Management Team know what's on their minds.

The report cards sought employees' opinions about how the department fared from Oct. 1, 1993 through Oct. 1, 1994. Respondents graded the performance of the department as a whole as well as their individual work units. Approximately 400 employees submitted comments.

Special offices gave the highest favorable (A's and B's) ratings to both TxDOT and their own work units (48 percent and 73 percent, respectively). Districts gave TxDOT a 44 percent favorable rating and individual units 59 percent. Divisions gave the lowest favorable ratings, with 41 percent and 47 percent. Employees consistently gave higher favorable ratings to their own work units than to the department as a whole.

"Employees appear to be satisfied with what the department accomplished in 1994. Comments regarding successes in 1994 pretty much pattern those ideals that we, the Senior Management Team, have been able to recognize as gains made in the department. We have also been able to validate these successes to some extent by our visits and conversations with department employees, our peers," Executive Director Bill Burnett said. He added that the Senior Management Team is already tackling issues raised by employees.

"I believe we must pay the utmost attention to the desires of the employees as to what the department needs to work on in 1995," he said. What the employees have identified is reflected in the seven major issues identified by the department's management team on Oct. 17, 1994. We spent the majority of our Management Team meeting on Jan. 5, 1995 working on these seven issues [see story, page 10]. While we did not complete these issues to closure, we have set a time schedule to insure that we implement these issues, your concerns."

Burnett thanked employees for responding and said he appreciated their candidness. "I strongly believe that for this department to have any success we must be open, honest and supportive with each other in all forms of our operations, especially communication. I hope all of us at TxDOT have a great 1995 and that we accomplish the improvements that you recommended," he said.

Report card questions and frequent responses follow:

### What is the most positive thing that has happened in TxDOT in the past year?

- Employee participation/empowerment/authority/recognition (11.8%)
- Change/innovative ideas, practices and direction (10.1%)
- Management (9.2%)
- Nothing (8.6%)
- Retirements/hiring procedures/new personnel (8.1%)
- Diversity (5.7%)

**Meredith Whitten**  
Associate Editor

	All		Divisions		Districts		Spec. Ofcs.		Unidentified	
	Dept.	Unit	Dept.	Unit	Dept.	Unit	Dept.	Unit	Dept.	Unit
<b>Managerial environment</b>										
Open and responsive management	3.0	3.4	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.6	3.6	4.0	2.9	3.4
Employee involvement in decision making	2.8	3.2	2.7	2.7	2.8	3.5	3.3	3.9	2.7	3.1
<b>Internal Operations</b>										
Timely purchase of goods and services	2.8	3.2	2.8	3.0	2.9	3.2	3.1	3.7	2.6	3.2
Providing necessary information systems and services	3.0	3.2	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.4	3.1	4.1	2.8	3.3
Classification, benefits, training, human resources processes	2.7	3.1	2.7	2.8	2.8	3.3	3.0	3.7	2.6	2.9
Keeping employees informed about policies and procedures	3.3	3.4	3.2	3.0	3.5	3.6	3.0	3.9	3.2	3.3
<b>Service Orientation</b>										
Responsive customer service (internal and external)	3.3	3.6	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.8	3.5	4.0	3.1	3.5
Becoming a department of transportation	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.3	4.2	3.3	3.5
Providing the transportation needs of Texas	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.6	3.7	4.1	4.1	3.9	3.7	3.8

- Continuous Improvement (CI) (5.2%)
- Opportunities for advancement/promotions (4.9%)
- Politics (4.6%)
- Computers/software/automation (4.3%)

Comments included:

- "The Senior Management Team's sincere effort to empower the employee."
- "Recognizing that there are new ways of doing things and that we need to do these new things for transportation and not just for highways, i.e., moving toward serving our customers' transportation needs in innovative ways."
- "Stressing cultural diversity and actually implementing the action."

### What is your biggest disappointment in TxDOT in the past year?

- Management (9.7%)
- Salary/compensation/benefits (9.5%)
- Civil rights/cultural diversity (8.2%)
- Hiring practices/retirements/new personnel (7.7%)
- Human Resources (6.5%)
- Promotions/classification system (5.7%)
- Morale/stress (4.7%)
- Politics (4.2%)
- Lack of employee participation/empowerment/authority/recognition (4.2%)

Comments included:

- "Lack of raises, promotions and cost of living raises. Also, employee surveys don't seem to do any good, go unnoticed."
- "New ideas and changes were not communicated effectively to all levels. Changes are good, but in order for them to be effective, they must be communicated at every applicable level."
- "TxDOT's continued efforts to take work normally provided by the Highway Department and farm this work out to the private sector. I feel if this continues TxDOT will become so dependent on the private sector we will not be able to stand on our own."

### What is the #1 improvement needed in TxDOT in the next year?

- Management (11.3%)
- Employee participation/empowerment/authority/recognition (10.3%)
- Salary/compensation/benefits (8.3%)
- Civil rights/cultural diversity (5.5%)
- Focus on the job, transportation/less political correctness,

**A report card was distributed at October's Transportation Conference, and also reproduced in November's Transportation News, asking employees to grade the performance of the department as a whole as well as their individual work units. The results are reflected in the chart above and accompanying story. These grades are based on a 5-point scale, in which an A counts 5 points, and an F,**

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# Transportation NEWS

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## Page 4 Little division plays big development role

Some may look at a small airport and see planes as a fun pastime, but when David Fulton and his Aviation Division (AVN) staff look at community airports, they see economic promise and growth. AVN promotes, plans, develops and maintains facilities at general aviation airports throughout Texas. In 1993, Texas was selected as one of seven states to act as Federal Aviation Administration) block grant administrators for airports.

## Page 5 TxDOT sees big drop in lost-time injury rate

TxDOT employees are spending more time on the job. No, they're not giving up their vacation time or working around the clock. Employees are losing less time due to work-related injuries. TxDOT's lost-time injury rate for fiscal year 1994 dropped 11 percent from fiscal year '93, decreasing to a rate of 2.80 lost-time injuries per 100 employees, which exceeds the department goal of 3.23. In 1993, the rate was 3.16.

## Page 6 TxDOT employees offered legal-services plan

This year, nearly 37 percent of TxDOT employees will find themselves in a situation where they would benefit from the services of a lawyer. Yet many won't seek legal help. They may not be able to afford one, or they don't know how to select one qualified to handle their problem. But soon, employees will be able to join a legal-services plan that will provide legal representation for a small monthly fee.

## Page 8 Program enhances state's environment

During the first two Statewide Transportation Enhancement Program calls, the Texas Transportation Commission selected 196 projects for \$141 million in Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 funds. One of the most important considerations was environmental benefits. A few projects stand out as especially innovative in their efforts to preserve and protect the state's environment.

## Page 12 TxDOT turns eyes to U.S., Texas capitols

The 104th U.S. Congress and 74th session of the Texas Legislature convened in January to tackle issues such as balancing the federal budget, crime, workers' compensation and public education. Also on legislators' agendas are issues that may affect transportation in Texas, TxDOT policies and the direction of the department. TxDOT's Legislative Affairs Office monitors the actions of these bodies and analyzes how legislation will affect the department.

## Page 9 CNG refueling station 'wave of future'

As the department's huge fleet of vehicles relies increasingly on alternative fuels for power, a new compressed natural gas station in the Houston District could be the wave of the future for fueling state and private vehicles. The station is the result of an agreement between TxDOT and a private company that operates the station. The compressed natural gas station is located on TxDOT's Houston District property, but open to public use.

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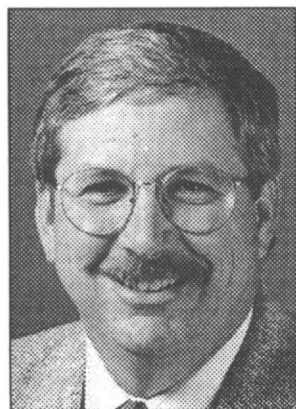
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## Ask Bill



**Q** I understand that former Gov. Ann Richards proclaimed that all state workers be allowed off two hours on Thanksgiving eve. It is my understanding that it was your choice not to follow her proclamation and have all employees work the entire day. If this is true, could you give us a reason for this decision, as being with our families is very important to us.

One of the major issues concerning me is the fact that morale is so strongly emphasized at all levels. Morale does not come from disallowing workers a few hours off, especially if it is mandated by the government. Morale comes from making the workers feel good about themselves and giving them some well-deserved time off.

Thank you for your prompt response in this matter. I hope that you will be able to clear up this misunderstanding for me.

*Edward Maierhofer  
San Antonio District*

**A** *In observance of Thanksgiving,* Texas state employees received two holidays, Nov. 24 and 25. Richards did not issue a proclamation for additional holiday leave on Wednesday, Nov. 23.

I agree that time with family and friends is invaluable to TxDOT employees. Many employees choose to use vacation time to supplement holiday leave and spend additional time with loved ones. However, if employees do not ask for or receive approval for vacation time, they are expected to be at work for the full workday.

High morale in the department comes from taking pride in the jobs we do. I am the first to applaud TxDOT employees for their hard work and exceptional efforts that they perform for the department and the citizens of Texas. We frequently receive comments from the public praising department employees. I believe that, thanks to the work you and your fellow employees do, Texas boasts the finest transportation systems in the nation.

....

**Q** While driving through Kansas on my way to Iowa, I saw the following signs placed just before and right after the required construction signs warning the traveling public of highway construction.

Before construction: GIVE 'EM A BRAKE—KANSAS HIGHWAY WORKERS—SLOW DOWN—GIVE 'EM A BRAKE—KANSAS HIGHWAY WORKERS.

After construction: THANK YOURSELF—GIVE 'EM A BRAKE—KANSAS HIGHWAY WORKERS.

These signs are very catchy and possibly make drivers more alert.

Do we use signs of this type on our major roadways in Texas to supplement the required construction signs? If not, could their use be considered?

I also noticed that grooves were cut into part of the highway shoulders so that when a vehicle goes across the outside line and onto the shoulder, it makes a noise to alert the driver. Do we use these anywhere in Texas? It seems to be a good safety measure.

I asked our district traffic engineer if the Wichita Falls District uses or could use signs and shoulder grooves as describe above, but have not received a reply.

*Shirley Cary  
Wichita Falls District*

**A** TxDOT does not currently use signs such as these. However, members of the Traffic Operations Division recently met with the Associated General Contractors to discuss this issue. Ideas for a "Give 'Em A Brake"-type campaign are in preliminary stages, so I can't give you a time line for the project. But TxDOT is exploring the possibilities.

Using textured shoulders on our highways is a good safety measure. In fact, TxDOT has already begun to implement this program. Highways in the Atlanta, Beaumont, Odessa and San Angelo districts have textured shoulders. TxDOT is also involved in a research study through Texas Tech University to further study the effectiveness of various texturing designs.

Again, thank you for your interest and commitment to the department.

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**Q** Have you or the Senior Management Team considered performance evaluations on supervisors by employees? If so, what conclusions were reached?

My TxDOT supervisors have been great so far. However, in my career I have met some who could have used a good seminar or an attitude adjustment. Supervisors can make or break a workplace. Supervisors are extremely important since they usually set the tone for the group. There are actually supervisors out there who make work such a positive experience that people look forward to showing up for work on Monday morning. On the other hand, there are some unsatisfactory managers who make people dread Monday - and every workday.

The evaluation process could be modeled after the way the TxDOT training center or the universities conduct evaluations. The typical university process goes something like this: Standard questionnaire forms are distributed at the end of each semester and filled out anonymously by all students. The forms are then collected and carried to the administration by a student.

Perhaps upper management could look for annual patterns reported to them by the districts. They could look for

the extremes in excellence and in need — rewarding the first and assisting the latter.

The following is a list of suggested evaluation items. Responses could be rated from "I strongly agree" to "I strongly disagree" with a "No opinion" option. My Boss: displays leadership qualities; offers encouragement; shows genuine concern about personal well being, etc.

*Ross D. Shahrok  
Austin District*

**A** A recommendation for the evaluation of supervisors by employees was submitted through the Retooling TxDOT issues and opportunities forum by an employee who recognized that two-way communication and evaluation can enhance our productivity and overall performance. The Retooling Team submitted the issue for review by the Senior Management Team in the fall of 1994.

Since this is a human resources issue, it will be addressed in a process called "Develop and Retain Staff" during the Human Resources Business Process Retooling to begin in February.

In the meantime, I hope that supervisors and employees maintain a two-way avenue of communication to assure quality in our workplace.

....

*The following letter was not signed, but it duplicates requests I have received about TxDOT employees accepting gifts.*

**Q** Should the state accept gifts of magazine subscriptions from companies that it might do business with? Also, if a contract clearly states that the contractor is not to offer gifts to TxDOT employees, are employees required to report any offer of a gift from a contractor even though the gift was not accepted?

**A** This is an area that is confusing to many employees. Since accepting a service or a gift, such as a magazine subscription, could influence a state employee's relationship with a company or contractor, no TxDOT employee should accept such a gift. If TxDOT employees believe they need the magazines, these should be purchased with department funds. As to whether an employee is required to report such an offer, the answer is no. An employee can point out to the company or contractor offering the gift that the department does not accept any gifts, favors or services. It is the responsibility of employees to conduct themselves both on and off duty in a manner that reflects favorably on the department and themselves.

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Got a burning question for Bill? Don't be shy — send it to "Ask Bill," c/o *Transportation News*, Main Office. We will forward it to the man himself and print your question and his response here.

# Little division plays big development role

## AVN marks 50 years of promoting general aviation, community airports

**Bonnie Adams**  
Associate Editor

Economic development is in the air for hundreds of communities statewide in which TxDOT plays a little known role performing a 50-year-old aviation mission that's evolved over the years.

Some may look at a small airport and see planes as a fun pastime, but when David Fulton and his staff look at community airports, they see economic promise and growth. Fulton is director of TxDOT's Aviation Division (AVN) that promotes, plans, develops and maintains safe and modern facilities at general aviation airports throughout Texas.

In 1993, Texas was selected as one of seven states to act as Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) block grant administrators for airports. "Federal and state grant funds flow through the division to 260 general aviation airports throughout the state," Fulton said.

Travelers won't find moving sidewalks, trams or sports bars at the state's general aviation airports, but they will find a fast, convenient way to access Texas communities. Those who live or work in rural areas served by airports can access the rest of Texas or the rest of the world.

Like TxDOT itself, AVN has a long history and has been known by other names. It began as the Texas Aeronautics Commission in 1945 and functioned as a commission until 1989. That's the year the Texas Department of Aviation was created, which then merged with the Texas Department of Highways and Public Transportation in 1991 to become the Texas Department of Transportation.

Fulton said many people view general aviation as a hobby instead of an important multimodal key to growth in Texas.

"This image problem for general aviation airports is similar to the early days of the highway department in promoting travel by what was then a new invention, the automobile. We're trying to overcome misconceptions and get people to view small airports as opportunities to attract business and industry to their area," Fulton said. "The flip side of that is getting business and industry to see the benefits of locating in a community with an airport."

In addition to perceptions of aviation in Texas, there is another very serious

problem. Texas may boast of having the largest air transportation system in the United States with more than 300 public-use airports, but many of them are in dire need of improvements. Their needs reach well beyond available funds so the division must be very selective in prioritizing airport projects.

Safety is a top concern when deciding

Many small Texas airports were once landing fields for military aircraft. Others were originally built for light, single-engine planes. "Now, heavier, more demanding aircraft are landing at these airports, so we're playing catch-up with runway preservation and expansion projects," said Linda Howard, director of planning and programming.



**Aviation Division employees turned out on the tarmac to promote their business with Division Director David Fulton, front right, and Bob Woods, deputy division director, front left.**

what airports get funding for their proposed funding requests.

"TxDOT has supported us with increased funding. We have also significantly strengthened our relationship with the airport owners," Fulton said. The airports with which the division deals are actually owned by communities, not Texas, and the airport sponsor is the chief elected official, such as a mayor or county judge.

Division officials build rapport through face-to-face meetings. "We start at the local level with 21 regional meetings a year to determine the communities' needs and desires. We visit about 100 airports each year to determine what improvements need to be made, keeping safety considerations as our top priority," Fulton said.

Fulton said in some instances, private industries do contribute directly to the improvement of general aviation airports. For example, a company located in a community has a vested interest in the airport and may contribute funds for maintenance and upkeep.

General aviation airports' needs total about \$48.5 million a year, with the FAA funding about \$10 million of that. With an almost \$40-million shortfall, state and local funding will have to fill the gap. The Texas Transportation Commission and the Texas Aviation Advisory Committee are examining ways to secure the necessary funding. The six-member advisory committee helps formulate policy for future development of the Texas aviation system.

The Aviation Division is more than a grants administrator. Educating the public and pilots is also an important part of its mission. "We're working to increase our educational efforts at all levels throughout the state. We have pilot instruction courses and an aviation library of materials available to the public," said Bob Woods, deputy division director.

An example of training, said Woods, are classes in using the proper type of aviation fuel in aircraft. This is critical since "misfueling" with the wrong type can cause a plane to crash.

Another aspect of safety is refresher courses for pilots. AVN has teamed up with the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association's Air Safety Foundation to

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# TxDOT sees big drop in lost-time injury rate

## Exceeding department goal reflects well on employee morale, work ethic

**Meredith Whitten**  
Associate Editor

**T**xDOT employees are spending more time on the job.

No, they're not giving up their vacation time or working around the clock. Employees are losing less time due to work-related injuries.

TxDOT's lost-time injury rate for fiscal year 1994 dropped 11 percent from fiscal year '93, decreasing to a rate of 2.80 lost-time injuries per 100 employees, which exceeds the department goal of 3.23. In 1993, the rate was 3.16. This is the second year of significant decreases in the disabling injury rate and continues the declining trend that started in 1991.

The lost-time injury rate is a key indicator in determining how any organization is doing in controlling on-the-job injuries. The fact that TxDOT employees are losing less time due to work-related injuries can be attributed to several factors. It indicates that the department is helping employees return to work promptly after accidents. It also reflects favorably on employees' morale and work ethics. Finally, it decreases the overall costs of work-related accidents. These accomplishments have resulted in cost savings, increased production and a safer workplace.

A standard formula is used nationally to figure the frequency of injury rate which can be used to show the relative level of injuries among different industries, firms or operations within a single firm. Because a common base and a specific period of time are involved, these rates can help determine both problem areas and progress in preventing work-related injuries.

To calculate an incidence rate of occupational injuries, multiply the number of injuries by a constant figure (200,000), and then divide by the number of hours worked within a given time period.

In 1994, TxDOT employees worked more than 31 million hours. There were 444 on-the-job lost-time injuries reported. An injury is considered a lost-time injury if an employee misses at least one full shift after the incident due to the on-the-job accident and subsequent injury.

While TxDOT does not compare itself to other Texas state agencies, the department does statistically try to keep up with other state DOTs. Of the lost-time rates reported at a recent state DOT safety managers meeting, TxDOT came in fourth behind Wyoming, North Dakota and Colorado.

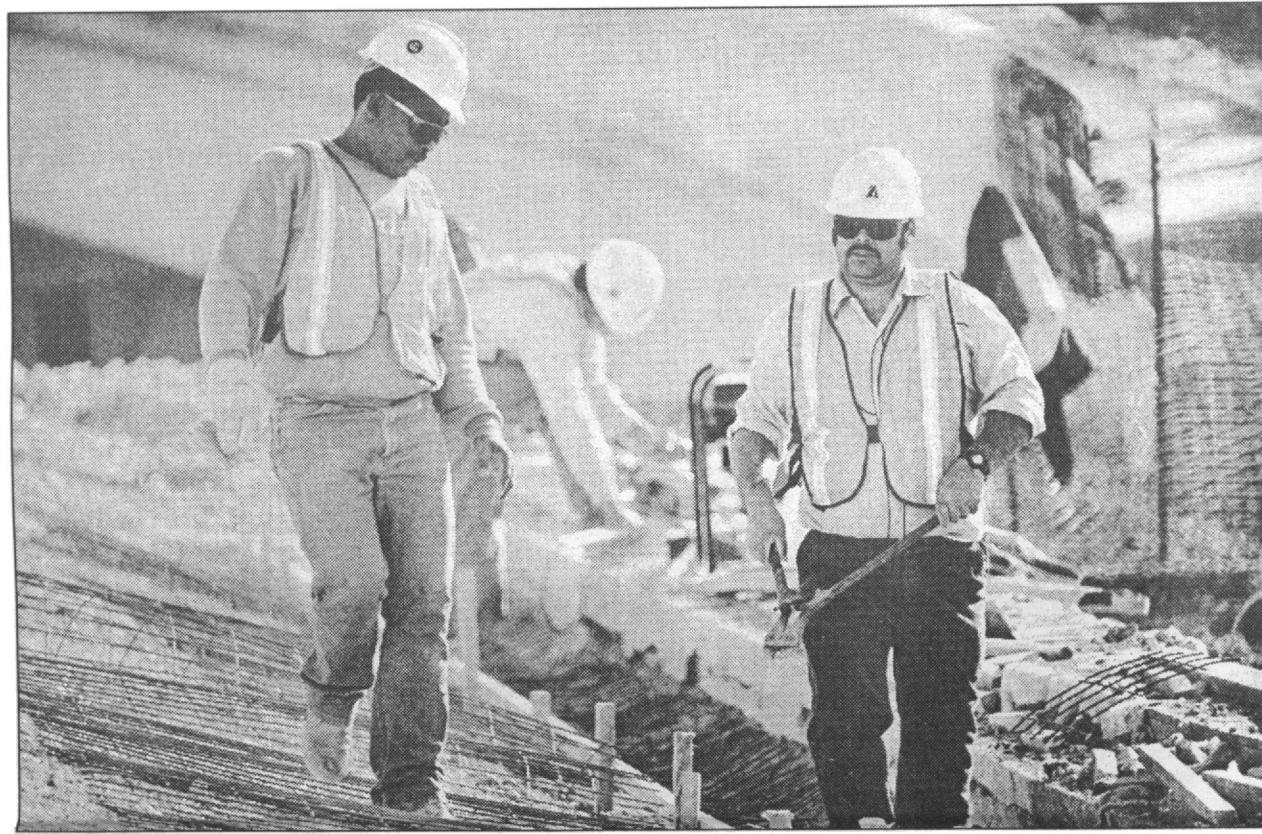
Jerral Wyer, director of safety and industrial hygiene in the Occupational Safety Division, said TxDOT's emphasis on working as a team contributed to the rate's decline. "I think we've seen a decrease in the number of lost-time accidents and frequency rate because of the team concept that has been implemented within the department," he said. "We are finding employees, supervisors, safety coordinators and the Senior Management Team putting more emphasis on safety in

the workplace, and realizing the importance of keeping the employees on the job and healthy. The emphasis on working together up and down the lines and improved communication are why we're seeing a reduction at this point."

Not surprisingly, most of these injuries are field oriented, coming from a con-

zone."

TxDOT's urban districts have done well at maintaining a low frequency rate. For example, the Houston District had a rate of 3.24 lost-time injuries per 100 employees last year. And, Dallas' rate was 3.73, well below the district's goal of 4.40. Some rural districts had outstand-



**TxDOT's lost-time injury rate for fiscal year 1994 dropped 11 percent from fiscal year '93, decreasing to a rate of 2.80 lost-time injuries per 100 employees. Not surprisingly, most of these injuries are field oriented.**

struction or maintenance environment. Many of TxDOT's injuries are strain or sprain-related injuries.

"We are still involved in many operations that are labor intensive. These jobs often include extensive manual material handling such as moving supplies or equipment, and working with heavy equipment," Wyer said. The Occupational Safety Division has emphasized the use of mechanical lifting equipment when and where possible. Improved material handling practices takes a commitment from management to evaluate processes, purchase appropriate mechanical lifting devices, and implement safe operating procedures, he said.

Employees working in metropolitan and urban areas risk increased exposure because of the denser populations and higher traffic flow. TxDOT and its contractors do everything within their control — such as traffic control set up and training — to ensure a safe workplace, but predicting the actions of the public is impossible.

"That is probably our biggest fear," Wyer said. "We can take all the precautions that we know how to take and still have an employee injured if a third party decides to drive through our work

ing rates this past year too. The Yoakum District had the lowest lost-time rate in the state at 0.72. The Brownwood District boasted a rate of 1.08. Eighteen districts met their frequency rate goals.

The Occupational Safety Division emphasized personal accountability, training and safety to prevent injuries during the last year. Supervisors and safety coordinators strive hard to see that all employees wear the required personal protective equipment on the job. In addition, districts and divisions have worked to ensure that new employees are adequately trained before starting work.

Wyer said replacing the many experienced employees who recently retired with a workforce that may not be as experienced poses a challenge for the department. He said TxDOT needs to continue to emphasize the importance of training and keep the message of safety on every employee's mind.

One area in particular that the division concentrated on is summer employees. With summer being the department's peak construction and maintenance season, and summer employees not being as familiar with TxDOT operations, the risk of on-the-job accident increases during this season.

Representatives from the Occupational Safety Division met with supervisors and developed a new employee orientation program. They included what everyone felt was needed to pass onto new

**Please see Injury, Page 17**

# TxDOT employees offered legal-services plan

## Much like a dental plan, representation will be available for a monthly fee

**Jeff Carmack**  
Editor

This year, nearly 37 percent of TxDOT employees will find themselves in a situation where they would benefit from the services of a lawyer. Yet, for whatever reason, many of them won't seek legal help.

They may not be able to afford one, or they don't know how to select one qualified to handle their problem. Some employees simply don't know that a lawyer could help them.

But soon, TxDOT employees can enroll in a legal-services plan that, much like a dental care program, will provide them with legal representation for a small monthly fee.

The Texas Legal Protection Plan Inc. (TLPP), a non-profit corporation established by the State Bar of Texas,

offers legal representation to state employees.

TLPP was set up in 1972 to market and administer group prepaid legal services in the state. It is an open-panel, free-choice-of-attorney plan available to employees and covered dependents, who may choose an attorney from TLPP's participating attorney panel, or any other attorney for covered services.

Coverage for an individual costs \$7.92 per month. Family coverage, which covers the employee, spouse and eligible children, is \$10.23 per month. Premiums are payable by automatic bank draft.

When the services of an outside attorney are engaged, costs are reimbursable up to specific limits.

Coverage includes representation for personal bankruptcy, divorce, adoption, defense for misdemeanor, felony and driving while intoxicated charges, consumer

protection, name changes, and estate planning.

Participants also receive four hours of "preventive" legal services per year. This time might be used to examine contracts or perform other personal legal service.

Also included in the plan is unlimited legal advice over a toll-free telephone hotline.

The plan also covers up to \$10,000 in attorney's fees incurred by state workers charged with criminal offenses in connection with work-related incidents.

Employees can sign up for the plan within 30 days of their hire date or during the annual open enrollment period, which begins in July and is coordinated with other benefits. For information, contact Maria Finch, Human Resources Division, 512.463.9413, or Carla Lerma, TLPP, 512.327.1372 or 800.252.9346.

## Charters give CI teams direction, scope of work, expectations

When a Continuous Improvement team is formed, members receive a Team Charter, which explains the purpose of the team. Following are some answers to frequently asked questions about Team Charters.

### **What is a Continuous Improvement (CI) Team Charter?**

The Team Charter is a document outlining and defining what the CI Team is to accomplish, such as improvement of a product, process or service. The charter contains:

- the purpose of the team, or why the team exists (To study ..., To review ..., To investigate ...);
- authority of the team (what the team is allowed to do, such as contacting subject matter experts from within the department, other state agencies, or external individuals or organizations; coordinating directly with other divisions, districts or special offices);
- names of the team leader, facilitator and team members;
- expected results, or tangible deliverables, as determined by the sponsor; (A report ..., A recommendation ..., An implementation plan ..., An analysis...);
- a time frame with a projected completion date (target date); decisions that have been previously made that effect the team;
- constraints, the scope and boundaries of a team, such as resource limitations (a limit on the amount of money that can be spent for travel and per diem; restrictions on travel, postage, etc.); and
- any known potential problems or barriers.

### **Why is a Team Charter used?**

The team charter is used to legitimize the CI Team. It provides guidance and direction to the team, defines the scope of work and communicates the expectations of the sponsor. It also provides a measure of successful completion by the team. A charter is used when a team meets over a period of time.

### **Who uses a charter?**

The sponsor, team leader, facilitator and team members. The charter is shared with team members and is not a secret document. Team members use it as a guide for their effort in producing the expected result communicated by the sponsor.

### **What does a charter look like?**

The charter is a written document that is prepared by a team sponsor. It contains essential elements that are listed in Question 1.

### **When is a charter prepared?**

The charter is prepared when the sponsor determines that a need for a team exists. Each team member, facilitator and team leader receives copies of the charter before the CI team begins addressing the issue.

### **Who prepares the charter?**

Any member of the TxDOT Management Team has the authority to convene a team and is responsible for creating and distributing the team charter. The team leader, the CI Office and/or the facilitator may assist the sponsor in developing the charter; however, the ultimate responsibility for the charter lies with the sponsor.

## TxDOT wins award for computer, info security excellence

TxDOT recently earned the Computer Security Program of the Year Award for its outstanding achievement in computer and information security program excellence.

William Tompkins, former information security manager with the Information Systems Division, accepted the award on behalf of TxDOT from the Computer Security Institute (CSI) at its Washington, D.C. conference in November.

"External recognition by an organization such as the Computer Security Institute is an honor to TxDOT and a credit to the information security system security branch of the Information Systems Division," said division director Judy Skeen.

Skeen said the department's computer security program raises the awareness of all computer users. She said the department will perform more risk analysis in the future to apply security measures as appropriate.

CSI Director Patrice Rapalus said, "The purpose of giving this award is to recognize, by example, extraordinary achievements in the field and thereby promote excellence in the information security profession. We congratulate Tompkins and his team on creating a program that can serve as a model for other organizations."

The Travel and Information Division video production team produced the Information Security Awareness teleconference in January 1993. The team assembled a 15-minute highlight tape of the teleconference that was shown at the Washington, D.C. conference. The teleconference is part of the department's computer security efforts. It was videotaped and is shown to all new TxDOT employees.

# TxDOT tough on DWI — on and off job

Policy has teeth; employees convicted of two DWI/DUIs will lose job

**Bonnie Adams**  
Associate Editor

There was a time when district engineers used their discretion to reprimand TxDOT employees found guilty of driving while intoxicated or under the influence on the job. That has been replaced with a department policy that shows two-time offenders the door.

The revised DUI/DWI policy went into effect Sept. 1, 1994. "The intent of this policy is to do all that we can to ensure safe driving by all employees who drive for the department," said Cheryl Anderson, assistant section manager for employee relations.

Anderson and several others drafted the policy, which treats on- and off-duty DWI/DUI convictions the same. If an employee is convicted of two DWI/DUIs, on his own time or on the job, he'll lose his TxDOT job. The policy only applies to convictions incurred after Sept. 1, 1994.

"We're not trying to regulate what

employees do on their time off," Anderson said. That's been the major complaint she's heard about the new policy. Right now, convictions would stay on the employee's work record no matter how much time separated the two DUIs. For example, an employee found guilty in December 1994 who has another conviction any time thereafter would be terminated.

Anderson said no one has complained to her about the policy's enforcement during work hours, only off hours.

Bruce Barber, deputy director of the Occupational Safety Division, said this aspect of the policy is under review. If the policy is changed, an employee who goes without a conviction for a certain period of time could have the first incident erased from his TxDOT record.

Barber said the department first established a policy in the 1980s after an employee with a poor driving record was involved in an accident resulting in injury to others. "He had a record as long as your arm," said Barber. No one had

bothered to check his driving record.

That's when TxDOT adopted a point system patterned after that used by its insurance carrier. "We picked that up as our own system to be used with discretion by the district engineer," Barber said. "That caused problems with some of them. Some wanted hard and fast rules."

The new policy is very well-defined and protects employees and the public, as well as the department itself. "The public's trust in the department is critical," Barber said. "What we're trying to do is get the irresponsible drivers off the road."

The policy requires an employee to notify his supervisor within one day of receiving a DUI/DWI conviction. Anderson said that being pulled over for suspicion of drunken driving is not the same as being convicted. A court hands down a conviction.

TxDOT employees who drive for the department have their driving records checked annually. Any unreported convictions will show up then.

## Drunk drivers hurt more than direct victims

**Sharon Fox**  
Dallas District

Has a drunken driver shattered the life of someone you know? One may have and you don't even know it. These are the stories of some Dallas District employees and their encounters with drunk drivers.

My experience with a drunken driver happened when I was in the 7th grade. My friend, David, who was my age, was returning home with his mother and sister after an afternoon of shopping for Christmas presents. He and his sister would take turns riding in the front seat, and it was David's turn.

A car crossed three lanes of traffic and hit their car head-on. David was killed instantly, while his mother and sister survived. When I got to school the next day, everyone was talking about the accident because they had read about it in the paper. I still had a glimmer of hope that it wasn't our David until the principal came over the public-address system and told us the news.

What had happened didn't really hit me until I went to Spanish class later that day and saw his empty chair. I'll never forget the horrible feeling of loss that I experienced at that moment.

Brenda Stefka, Regional Planning Office, also had a good friend killed by a drunk driver.

"In the early '70s, the term 'designated driver' was not heard of," Stefka said. "However, I was always the designated driver when my friends and I went out because I was the only one with a car. As a result, I learned to limit my drinking.

"One night, I was driving us home from one of our favorite nightclubs when I came upon an accident. I noticed

that the car's top, engine and trunk sections had been sheared off. It had run up under a truck."

The next morning, Stefka awoke to a radio announcer listing the names of those killed in the accident. One of them, Gary, had been a very close friend of hers.

"Gary was still in high school," she said. "He and his friends had decided to go clubbing after one of the high school football games. The end result was the accident.

"Three of the four were decapitated," Stefka said. "Gary lost the back of his head in an attempt to bend down in the seat. Now, when I'm driving on east-bound I-30 and I see Grove Hill Cemetery where Gary was buried, I think of him. What a loss. What a waste."

Renee Byars, Hutchins Area Office, has a different story to tell. She doesn't know anyone personally who has been affected by a drunken driver, but she has seen the effects.

"Before I joined TxDOT, I was a law enforcement officer with the sheriff's department," she said. "The nightmares I have about drunk driving are the result of a call we responded to in February 1993.

"We arrived on the scene of what was thought to be a one-car accident on a two-lane highway. The car had been severely damaged on the front end. I went to it and found an unconscious man in the driver's seat with a cut over his eye."

When Byars opened the door to help the man, a liquor bottle fell out.

"Just then, my partner yelled at me to join him," Byars continued. "I ran down into a creek bed and saw a station wagon with two adults and three children."

What Byars found was not pretty. One child was decapitated and one died later at the hospital. The mother also died on arrival at the hospital and the father suffered a severe brain injury and never regained consciousness. The third child, an infant, survived without a scratch.

The drunk driver had a broken arm and cut above one eye.

"The worst part is that the baby is left with no family," said Byars. "All because of one person who thought he could drink and drive."

For Jeanne Roddy, Public Information Office, it wasn't a friend or a stranger, but a relative whose life was ended by a drunken driver.

"My brother was killed by a drunk driver last year," said Roddy. "It was 5:30 in the morning and Jack was putting a tarp over the equipment he hauled for his trucking company. All of a sudden someone came out of the blue, hit him

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**TxDOT takes a proactive approach in helping employees with a variety of problems. These may include alcohol, drug or any other problem for which a person may seek counseling. The Employee Assistance Program offers pre-paid, confidential professional services for personal problems and may be reached at 800.888.CARE.**

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Please see Drunk, Page 19

# Program enhances state's environment

## Several innovative projects that preserve, protect attract ISTEA funds

**Karen LeFevre**  
Environmental Affairs Division

During the first two Statewide Transportation Enhancement Program calls held this past year, the Texas Transportation Commission selected 196 projects for \$141 million in Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 funds.

One of the most important considerations—along with social and economic value—was environmental benefits. Many of these benefits are obvious, as in the case of beautification and landscaping projects, projects to preserve Texas' cultural treasures, and providing for non-polluting multimodal transportation facilities. But a few projects stand out as especially innovative in their efforts to preserve and protect the state's environment.

**Water quality** A project in Paris will create a storm water detention and sedimentation pond to collect runoff from a 34-acre drainage basin, reduce the rate of storm water flow entering Pine Creek and reduce pollutant concentrations in out-flow by as much as 50 percent.

This project will also enhance the neighborhood. Native trees, shrubs and ground cover will be planted around the pond's perimeter for further pollution mitigation. The sedimentation pond will serve as urban runoff pollution mitigation during rainy periods. But all year round, it will serve as wildlife habitat and urban greenscape. This project garnered \$171,200 in enhancement program funds.

**Wetlands creation** Houston ranked a water quality project second out of the 38 it proposed. This project is designed to mitigate water pollution due to storm water runoff from a portion of Sam Houston Parkway (Beltway 8) by retrofitting the roadway's existing storm water collection system to capture "floatables" and pass tainted runoff to flow into a wetlands system for filtration. The quality of the water exiting the wetlands system will be enhanced, and benefit not only the environment but also the health and safety of the people who live, fish and play along Greens Bayou.

The wetlands to be created will occupy a portion of a 1,450-acre tract owned by sponsor Harris County Flood Control District, bordered by Beltway 8 to the north. Rerouting part of Beltway 8's drainage into the wetlands will be a key factor in carrying pollutants away from Greens Bayou. Because removal of toxins

is the primary function of the created wetlands, flowering plant species with water purification ability will be planted. To further enhance the project's aesthetic appeal, the wetlands topography will be re-contoured to create a series of swales and islands. These islands will allow for the maximum diversity in wildlife habitat, as well as the introduction of hardwood trees whose form and food production will add another biological stratum to the wetlands system.

Monitoring pollutants in water entering the wetlands from the roadway and checking purified water exiting the wetlands will provide valuable data demonstrating the efficiency of the project. The sponsors for this project — which was funded for \$1.63 million — believe this unique opportunity to enhance water quality through a natural purification system could become a model for mitigating roadway runoff pollution.

**Beautification, wetlands, endangered species and archaeological resources** The plan for Portland's Hike-and-Bike Trail not only allows for bicycle and pedestrian traffic but incorporates aesthetic, environmental, historical, archaeological and preservation aspects.

The trail uses a section of abandoned railway corridor and an old section of US 181. It would begin on Causeway Drive just south of Bayview Drive and connect Portland to the US 181 Nueces Bay Causeway at Indian Point Park, completing the tie to the 17-mile Corpus Christi Bay Trail authorized last April.

The project will restore the area to its scenic and natural setting and protect it from commercial development. Additionally, 14 billboards will be removed. Landscaping with native plants will add to the aesthetic appeal.

This project will also manage storm water runoff from the highway by diverting it to Sunset Lake rather than the two bays that the water currently flows into. This could create additional wetlands on the Corpus Christi Bay side of the old highway section and should provide good mitigation results.

The Portland Hike-and-Bike Trail project will also preserve more than 200 acres of declared wetlands and known Native American campgrounds. Waterfowl—including threatened and endangered species—perch and nest in the shallow wetlands portion of Sunset Lake and Corpus Christi Bay.

The city intends to work with the Texas State Aquarium and the Gregory-Portland School District to develop educational programs about the ecology of the wetlands area. The project aims to protect artifacts and prevent vandalism of archaeological resources of Indian Point Park, a Native American campground at the southern end of the property. This will cost \$1.48 million in enhancement program funding.

**Eco-tourism** Another hike-and-bike trail that promises a myriad of advantages is the Caprock Canyons State Park Trailway project, sponsored by the Texas

Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD).

This 64.25-mile trail in the southeast corner of the Texas Panhandle will convert an abandoned railway corridor into a multi-use transportation facility for bicyclists, pedestrians, hikers, equestrians and the physically challenged. The trail, which will run from 28 miles east of Plainview to Estelline, is linked to the area's road transportation systems in numerous places.

The project will also preserve an important piece of Texas transportation history. The 772-foot Clarity Tunnel—the last operating railroad tunnel in the state—is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. According to the Texas Historical Commission, the entire corridor is also eligible for inclusion. The 1,217 acres of railroad right-of-way, which was donated to TPWD in 1992, will be returned to a natural state using native vegetation. Historic structures and archaeological sites will be protected and reconstruction of historic bridges will use historically correct materials and techniques.

Caprock Canyon State Park's impressive natural setting drew 165,000 visitors in fiscal year 1993. Estimates are that 55,000 more tourists will visit the new trail annually during the three years of construction, and 100,000 once the improvements are completed. This extensive project was awarded \$360,000 in enhancement program funding.

**Scenic land use, wildlife protection** A South Texas project involving innovative land use and wildlife protection is the Boca Chica Scenic Acquisition Project, about 20 miles east of Brownsville. Also sponsored by TPWD, this project seeks to acquire about 1,200 acres of what was once proposed as a 12,400-acre development called Playa del Rio. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service intends to acquire the remaining 10,000 acres as an addition to the Lower Rio Grande National Wildlife Refuge.

The Boca Chica acquisition is adjacent to 1,161 acres that TPWD recently acquired. This land, along with 3,400 more acres that the agency leases from the Texas General Land Office, will constitute a state park, wildlife management area and coastal preserve of nearly 7,000 acres. It stretches from the mouth of the Rio Grande where it enters the Gulf of Mexico northward to the south jetty of the Brownsville Ship Channel at Brazos Santiago Pass.

Plans for the project include a visitors' facility near the end of Texas 4 that will serve as the entrance station for recreational use of Boca Chica beach and as an interpretive center explaining the area's rich and diverse natural resources. Trails will allow visitors to explore the dunes, coastal marshes, salt flats and margins of the South Bay where many bird species abound, including the endangered piping plover. This project, which will protect both valuable natural

**When the Texas Transportation Commission selected 196 projects for \$141 million in Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 funds, one of the most important considerations was environmental benefits**

**Please see Enhancements, Page 16**



# High Flyers go out on limb for new hot mix

## Deadline for submitting nominations for TxDOT's newest award is March 31

**Cheryl Converse**  
Staff writer

Imagine being so sure of an innovation that you'd be willing to risk your credibility for it.

Maghsoud Tahmoressi and Dale Rand of the Materials and Tests Division said they believed they were risking their jobs when they advocated using Coarse Matrix High Binder Asphaltic Concrete.

The pair of young engineers flew in the face of 100-year-old convention when they began urging districts to try the new mix.

"I was ready to leave TxDOT if this didn't work," said the 36-year-old Tahmoressi. "There was risk on a couple of different levels."

Tahmoressi explained that although the department took a risk on the new mix, he and the 32-year-old Rand took personal risks as well, including putting their credibility on the line.

The rewards were worth it. Besides receiving the first High Flyer Award from TxDOT, these risk-takers developed a product which can save taxpayers millions of dollars. Texas spends anywhere from \$25 to \$40 a ton for hot mix, but a lot of it segregates, develops ruts and cracks quickly. In the laboratory, the new mix did not segregate and it resisted rutting. But getting people to try the new technology was a difficult task.

More department employees will get a chance to join Tahmoressi and Rand in the ranks of High Flyer. Assistant Executive Director Bobbie Templeton's office will send out applications for the 1995 High Flyer Award soon. Deadline for nomination submissions is March 31.

Rand said it was generally acknowledged that conventional hot-mix segregates and develops ruts. It was such a concern that about three years ago, TxDOT was trying to find a way to measure segregation. That prompted Tahmoressi and Rand to look for a solution to the hot mix segregation instead.

"We all knew we had a problem with hot mix," Rand said. "But still, it was a hard thing to look at someone who's been laying this stuff for 30 years and tell them it could be better, especially when you're as young as I am. Also, Texas is known nationwide for having the best highways. So, here I am telling an old hand that the successful way he's been doing something for several decades is not the best way to do it."

But that's what Tahmoressi and Rand did. After getting encouragement from then-Associate Executive Director for Field Operations Roger Welch former Materials and Test Division Director Billy Neeley, the pair started talking with the folks in the districts.

"We had a lot of faith in the theory, so it wasn't as difficult for us to ask others to put their behind this new product," Tahmoressi said.

Rand said, "Because this is a new mix, we were basically asking the district to spend their construction or maintenance

funds on something that worked well in the laboratories. But, we had never laid any of it down in a real-life situation.

"Hot-mix has been around since the 1800s and is still basically the same type of mix. What we proposed was something that not only looked different but also acted differently, and, it had never been tested outside the laboratory" Tahmoressi said.

Unlike conventional hot mix, the new mix relies on coarse aggregate to carry traffic load. The load is transferred vertically when the stones make contact with each other.

"We basically went to every single district and told them that there was a better way to design hot mix," he said. "The concept and the technology behind our theory was sound enough that most everyone agreed. They all said that's the way you ought to do it, but nobody wanted to be the first one to do it."

After a year of receiving Tahmoressi's sales calls, the Austin District agreed to try it on a project—a 200-ton overlay on a highway in Pflugerville. "I think the construction engineer gave up. He got tired of listening to me and sacrificed the job so that I'd shut up. I'm pretty sure they thought that they'd have to go back there the next day, pick it up and replace it with the conventional mix," Tahmoressi said.

"This was his (Tahmoressi's) baby and he promoted it, but he didn't want to over promote it without getting some down. He called us frequently. Sometimes even twice a day. I guess you can say he wore us down and we decided to go ahead with a job," Austin District Construction Engineer Terry Jackson said.

Both Tahmoressi and Rand agreed there was another level of risk: without a district willing to take a chance and risk failure, use of the mix would have stayed in the laboratory.

It seems that three years later, the new mix is holding up well. Well enough, that the district has used it on two other jobs. Jackson said it was too early to tell if the new mix will save money when it comes to maintenance, but he is looking forward to using more of it.

Tahmoressi said several other states and two Canadian provinces have asked about the new mix. "Now that we have some field results, the mix is selling itself. We hear tales about contractors who are doing field changes in their city and county jobs so that they can use the

mix," Tahmoressi said.

Rand said the success of the mix belongs to TxDOT because without the widespread support they received, the mix could not have been developed.

"One of the biggest hurdles for me was early on in this project. I had to decide if this is something I should be doing—developing new mixes. Our job here is to control the quality of materials. We make sure they're up to department



Griff Smith, TRV

**Maghsoud Tahmoressi and Dale Rand earned the TxDOT's first High Flyer Award with Coarse Matrix High Binder Asphaltic Concrete, that resists rutting and segregation better than conventional hot mix.**

specs. What we were doing in our spare time was coming up with something that was totally new. I don't know that we could have been so innovative if we hadn't had a wide basis of support," Rand said.

TxDOT has a history of supporting innovations, as witnessed by Jon Underwood, Director of the Research and Technology Transfer Office.

"Our program has been one that allows the universities to attract the best talent possible to solve our problems. That allows us to be the recognized leader of transportation research in the United States and definitely one of the transportation research leaders in the world," he said.

"The High Flyer Award serves as an icon for that consistency. We've always had high flyers in the department, but have never formally recognized them. This encourages our employees to try innovations—be it from within or without our program," Underwood said.

The award is open to all department employees who have put into place an innovation that furthers the department mission. Each division, district and special office may submit one entry. Entries from all department disciplines are welcomed. Award winners are recognized in October at the Transportation Conference.

# Teams address issues facing department

**Bonnie Adams**  
Associate Editor

Employees throughout the department may benefit from seven broad issues that the Senior Management Team (SMT) is now considering. The Jan. 4-5 meeting let SMT members meet with division directors, office heads and district engineers to address issues affecting employees and how they perform their jobs.

The group was divided into seven issue teams of nine members each. Each team included an SMT member, a designated leader and seven other participants. The issues discussed affect both internal and external customers.

Issue team leaders include Frank Smith, Budget and Finance Division Director; Tom Word, P.E., Corpus Christi District Engineer; Luis Ramirez, P.E., Laredo District Engineer; Diane Wacker, Information Resource Manager; Larry Zatopek, General Services Division Director; Jerry Dike, Vehicle Titles and Registration Division Director; and Carl Utley, P.E., Lubbock District Engineer.

Zatopek's team is examining how to bring empowerment and accountability to optimum decision-making.

"It's a matter of bringing decision making to the appropriate level, about handling something at the lowest level at which significant value is added," he said.

This concept embodies the point of diminishing returns, that point after which additional time and energy may be spent on something without making it significantly better. For example, if an employee is capable of making a decision at his level without involving someone higher up, he should be empowered to do so.

Zatopek explained that his team's job is to define empowerment and develop a policy action plan that TxDOT can apply to its workforce.

Word leads the issue team examining initiatives to support TxDOT's effort to become a true department of transportation. "There's a lot of significance to the name change the department underwent. It suggests a transition from a highway department to an agency that uses all the modes of transportation available," Word said.

"Our team's goal is to identify ways we can [evaluate] all the different transportation modes as a way of doing business, not as an exception to the rule," he said. Word said all TxDOT employees need to think in terms of multimodal and intermodal transportation, but "we're not quite there yet."

Smith heads the team examining the assessment of policy and program effects before they are implemented. "We think our findings will assist senior management in making their decisions on policy if they know up front what the impacts are," Smith explained. This could include logistics, finances and personnel.

Smith said studying effects before approving policies will allow for more informed decision-making. Those affect-

According to Utley, withholding information from employees or the perception of doing so is just such a barrier.

Another team is concerned with employee morale. "Morale is the feeling and attitude we have about the organization in which we work and that leads to behavior and productivity," said team leader Dike. He said two surveys will help TxDOT determine workers' morale. The first one was the Report Card issued at the Transportation Conference, to which about 400 employees replied. The second, a survey of organizational excellence administered by the University of Texas School of Social Work, has been conducted every other year for the past decade and offers a look at how morale has changed over that period. About 4,000 surveys have been returned, and

the team is awaiting results to more accurately define morale levels. "Is morale a problem? Maybe. Is it a big problem? We need to see the survey results to determine that," said Dike. "In any case, we want to improve morale because it is so important to all our employees. Anything we can do will help all of us and the department."

Bringing continuity and stability to the human resources area is the

job of Wacker's team, which she says is a sounding board for retooling the human resources area. She's pleased with the Human Resources Division's pro-active support of this effort. "They recognize the need for some changes," Wacker said.

"There's been a lot of changes in the recent past in Human Resources. This issue is important because Human Resources and our people are our biggest assets in the department, so it's important that we get policies out so we can treat employees consistently throughout the agency," Wacker said.

"We're looking at some specific policies," she continued. "The big thing we want to do is look at existing policies and procedures and restructure the mechanisms that we use — the policy manual so that it's customer friendly. It's not realistic to think we're going to solve all the problems overnight. We don't want to rush some things," she said.

Though each issue team is addressing a separate issue, they are all interconnected and affect both department employees and the agency's external customers.



**Jerry Dike, left, Judy Skeen and Geoff Appold took part in the issue team examining TxDOT employee morale.**

ed could also have input on proposed policies. "We thought it could save a good bit of time in the long run and increase the credibility of policymakers," Smith said.

Ramirez is team leader of the group examining policies and procedures that districts and divisions follow. Ramirez said some policies were only meant to be guidelines, but instead are strictly enforced. His team's job is to determine where some policies originated and how they can be streamlined, or in some cases eliminated, so employees aren't following rules that are no longer useful.

Ramirez's team ranked policies as having strong, medium, or weak effect on TxDOT employees so senior management could concentrate on those having the greatest impact.

Utley's team is studying communication in promoting a true management team in which members support each other at all levels.

"Communication is a difficult issue, to say the least," Utley said. He said open and honest two-way communication is necessary to get to the root of problems. Utley's team is identifying and defining barriers to communication that can be eliminated "to all of our benefit."

# Pass or fail? Employees grade TxDOT

Continued from Page 1

- social engineering (5.0%)
- Morale (4.8%)
- Computers/software/automation (4.5%)
- Change (4.3%)
- Training, including management training (4.0%)
- Hiring practices/retirements/new personnel (4.0%)
- Focus on the job, transportation/less political correctness, social engineering (5.0%)

Comments included:

- "Remember that all 14,000 employees make up the Department. Get back 'family' attitude."
- "Providing necessary information systems together with the requisite support for mainframe computer operations. I don't think all the department's business can be, or should be, handled on PCs."
- "Policy should be made at the top because you see the big picture from up there. Procedure is made at middle levels in order to adapt the policy to different functional areas. Decisions based on the policy and proce-

cedure should be made at the lowest reasonable level. That's where the rubber meets the road; that's where the department deals with its customers."

**Additional comments.**

- Management (16.3%)
- Change (12.5%)
- Miscellaneous (8.7%)
- Salaries/compensation/benefits (7.5%)
- Morale (7.1%)
- Transportation/modes/TxDOT (5.4%)
- Civil rights/cultural diversity (5.0%)
- Focus on the job, transportation/less political correctness, social engineering (5.0%)
- Relations and roles between Austin (administration, divisions, special offices)/districts/area offices (3.7%)
- Politics (3.7%)
- Classification system (3.7%)
- Employee participation/empowerment/authority/recognition (3.7%)
- Hiring procedures/new personnel (3.7%)

Comments included:

- "It is obvious that the SMT is trying to 'walk the talk.' Keep up the good

work. Make more visits to the division to talk to the 'worker bees.'"

- "We must plan our move into the 21st century. Within TxDOT, we should formalize relations between our statewide planning and strategic planning as well as these plans with retooling and CI. These plans and efforts are 'talking' now and this must continue and become stronger as we move on."
- "We are reducing TxDOT's workforce and are increasing our workload. More and more is expected with no additional compensation or help. Well, since we can't get our work done completely with the staff we currently have, I guess we'll have to contract what we can't accomplish whether it cost more to contract or not. We are shooting ourselves in the foot. This type of thinking will lead to a lower quality product, at a higher cost, for the public who is counting on us for their transportation needs. Oh well ... as long as we are reducing our workforce."

## Management Services analyzes alphabet soup

Following is an analysis of grade frequencies provided by the Management Services Office.

### Managerial Environment

#### Open and responsive management:

More than twice as many respondents gave their unit an A as gave the overall department A's. The estimation of the overall department was about the same for both divisions and districts. However, district personnel viewed their own work units as excellent at almost triple the frequency that division and special office personnel reported. Special offices were rated as excellent at four times the frequency as divisions.

#### Employee involvement in decision making:

For TxDOT overall, there were more than twice as many F's as A's given; there were exactly the same frequency of A's and F's for the respondents' own work units. Divisions and districts had similar views of TxDOT. However, there were major differences in how they viewed their own units; districts gave many more A's and fewer F's than divisions and special offices gave their operations very high ratings.

### Internal Operations

#### Timely purchase of goods and services:

TxDOT overall was given three times more F's as A's for this; people gave their

own unit about the same number of each; districts and divisions and special offices viewed the department similarly. There was a much higher frequency of district personnel viewing their unit as excellent than for divisions.

#### Providing necessary information systems and services:

The department overall received about twice as many ratings of "very poor" in this area as "excellent." Districts and divisions differed only in evaluating their own units, with fewer high marks and more poor marks for divisions than for districts; special offices gave their work units a high percentage of A's.

#### Classification, benefits, training and other human resources processes:

TxDOT was rated as "very poor" in this area, with three times the frequency of "excellent," with district and divisions in general agreement. As for the prior two questions, districts were viewed more favorably by their personnel than divisions, which had an especially high percentage of F's.

#### Keeping employees informed about policies and procedures:

Districts and divisions had an unusually great difference of opinion in how the department is performing this, with districts rating TxDOT as "excellent" twice as often as division personnel. As before, they differed greatly in how they viewed their own operations in a pattern similar to the prior three issues, with special offices having high ratings for this.

### Service Orientation

#### Responsive customer service (internal and external):

Respondents rated their own operations as "excellent" at about twice the frequency as they did the department as a whole; special offices and districts viewed TxDOT as excellent more often than did divisions. In regard to their own units, divisions rated "very poor" at almost four times the frequency of districts.

#### Becoming a department of transportation:

Department wide, about twice as many respondents gave their own units an A as an F, with special offices again getting a high frequency of A's. Districts and divisions were in general agreement both about their own operations and the department.

#### Providing for the transportation needs of Texas:

TxDOT personnel gave generally high marks for this, both for the department and their work unit; they gave their own units rating of "excellent" at more than seven times the frequency as for "very poor," with overall department ratings only a little below this. District personnel gave their operations A's twice as often as did district personnel; districts received F's at one-tenth the frequency of divisions.

# Lufkin District pair saves family from floods

## Motorist ignores warning, drives car into rain-swollen San Jacinto River

**Jimmie Styles**  
Lufkin District

A driver's unwillingness to follow directions turned into a life-or-death situation for two Lufkin District employees and another employee's son during the floods of October.

Maintenance Technicians Jimmy Capers and Randy Pierce were in the right place at the right time during the October floods. They were flagging traffic at "road closed" signs on the San Jacinto River Bridge on Farm-to-Market Road 945 in San Jacinto County as heavy thunderstorms were dumping between 11 and 25 inches of rain in the area. Maintenance crews worked all over the county that day, closing roads and warning residents and drivers that rivers and streams were on the rise.

Capers and Pierce watched the menacing water rise quickly above the fence line. They waved at a driver, cautioning him that the road was closed. The man ignored the warning and drove around the barricade into rushing water. The car was immediately swept off the road into the fast-moving river.

Caper said that he and Pierce saw the vehicle, which also contained two small children, start to sink. The adult occupants crawled out the window and were desperately trying to pull the children from the car. As the older children held on to branches above the roof of the car, the adults clung to smaller children and screamed for help.

Capers ran to his truck and called the maintenance office to request help. As the car sank out of sight, Capers and Pierce grabbed a rope from their truck and headed out into the waist-deep water on the centerline of the road. The water was so deep and swift that the two had to return to higher ground to wait for others to help in the rescue.

San Jacinto County Deputy Sheriff Mike Mallon and two citizens drove up and got to work. Mallon tied a rope to his waist and entered the nine-foot deep water. The other four rescuers battled the rising water and held the rope while Mallon retrieved each victim from the tree branches. Mallon carried the victims to shallower water, then hoisted them onto the backs of the other rescuers who were still holding the rope.

One of the victims started swimming toward Mallon but yelled that he couldn't make it through the swift water. Mallon grabbed him by the shirt and held onto him as Capers and the others pulled him in.

Capers swam out into deeper water to help the exhausted Mallon rescue the last two victims. The rescuers then carried the victims to high ground on their backs.

Capers said he was completely exhausted by the ordeal. "People need to understand that when they are warned of swift water, we mean swift water," he said. "The raging water was pulling at those kids, and I knew they wouldn't be able to hold on very long. The water was

so forceful, I wondered if we would get them out." He said that he was glad to be on hand to help with the rescue.

Mallon cited Capers and Pierce for their bravery in entering the deep flood waters, endangering their own lives to help save seven people, including children. Mallon said that when he came on the scene, he didn't realize that the vehicle was submerged.

"I didn't know that the adults were on the roof of the car holding onto tree branches, until after the ordeal," he said. He also said that one or two people couldn't possibly have saved that many people by themselves. "It took the solid strength and determination of the whole bunch working together to get those people out of the water," he said.

While discussing the rescue with Mallon and the others who came to their the rescue, Capers discovered that Mallon is also a member of the TxDOT family. Mallon's mother, Barbara, is an administrative technician in the Construction and Maintenance Division in Austin.

"I was fearful for him when I first heard he was involved in the rescue. I'm very proud. He's been a wonderful son," said Barbara Mallon.

Capers and Pierce continued working after the dangerous rescue. Along with other San Jacinto County maintenance crews, they worked tirelessly for three days and nights, assisting flood victims and maintaining the open roads during the flood.

## TxDOT turns eyes to U.S., Texas capitols

**Laura A. Flores**  
Legislative Affairs Office

The 104th U.S. Congress and 74th session of the Texas Legislature convened in their respective capitols in January to tackle issues such as balancing the federal budget, crime, workers' compensation and public education. Also on legislators' agendas are transportation-related issues that may affect transportation in Texas, TxDOT policies and the direction of the department.

TxDOT's Legislative Affairs Office (LAO) monitors the actions of these bodies and analyzes how their legislation will affect the department and its operations.

The LAO coordinates the analysis of proposed legislation and regulations for a department-wide response and serves as the point of contact for inquiries from, and responses to, lawmakers and their staffs. There are many possibilities for federal and state legislation to affect TxDOT.

### Federal Issues

**ISTEA:** In the U.S. Congress, the American Association of State Highways and Transportation Officials

(AASHTO) and its newly-elected Vice President Bill Burnett, TxDOT's executive director, are monitoring the reauthorization of federal surface transportation legislation. This issue is important because of the restructuring of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) and the effect it will have on the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). ISTEA authorized approximately \$155 billion for surface trans-

portation, highway safety, transit, federal motor carrier programs and transportation research for fiscal years 1992 through 1997. As the legislation enters its fourth year, efforts are under way to identify areas of revision and development for the reauthorization of ISTEA in 1996 or 1997. Burnett will play a critical role in this reauthorization effort in his role as chairman of the 50-state AASHTO effort to help shape the next ISTEA.

**NHS:** LAO's Federal Legislative Section is tracking the designation of the National Highway System (NHS). The NHS will serve as both the principal transportation conduit for the movement of people and goods throughout the United States and as the critical link between the United States and major trading partners worldwide. If the NHS is not designated by Sept. 30, 1995, Texas will lose \$440 million annually in the NHS program and Interstate Maintenance program funds.

**Appropriations Act:** Another issue on the federal horizon is the FY '96 USDOT and related agencies appropriations act. This annual legislation sets the ceiling on federal funds that

### When a lawmaker calls ...

- Employees are asked to report issues relevant to TxDOT to the LAO. Legislators are trying to make decisions about TxDOT's future and a misunderstood answer could lead to actions that could change the way the department operates. If you receive a policy question, contact the LAO at 512.463.6086.

- Communicate in simple, plain language. Remember that some of our operational terminology is foreign to people outside the department.

- Assure the lawmaker or his staff that you will find the answer right away. LAO will help you or make sure a proper solution is found.

- Whether a policy question or a routine request, an employee should always follow up with the legislator to make sure his or her concerns have been addressed. That's just good customer service.

Please see LAO, Page 16

## Just another day on the job becomes life-or-death situation for two Humble employees

**Trudy Schreiner**  
Houston District

While there were many TxDOT employees who worked long hours to help ensure the safety of the public during fall flooding and after, some just happened to be at the right place at the right time in helping to save lives.

On Monday, Oct. 17, Peach Creek, near US 59-Eastex Freeway, was out of its banks. Residents of the flooded Creekwood subdivision were trying to evacuate but could not get across the relief bridge at the creek. Maintenance Technicians Alan Moreau and Earl Stafford of the Humble Maintenance section were doing their usual sign work on US 59 before they came to close the flooded bridge.

"We got to the west side of the freeway when we saw a car stopped in the middle of the road," Moreau said. "As we got closer, I could see the driver frantically pointing to something in the creek at the northbound bridge. Then the car took off, heading for the crossover to the northbound service road. That's when we saw the first guy in the creek holding

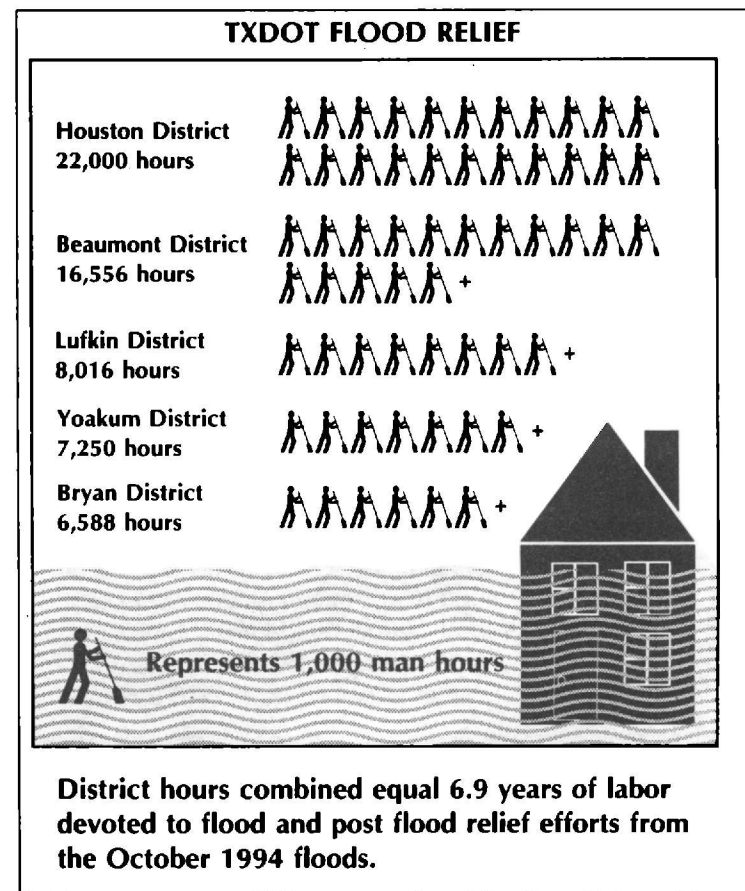
on to a bridge pillar under the freeway."

They followed the car to the next crossover and headed to the spot where they had seen the stranded man. "We had to stop on the freeway so we could drop the cable from the winch down to him," Stafford said. Moreau worked the winch while Stafford watched for traffic and helped guide the cable to the man waiting in the water below.

During the rescue, they saw another man sitting on a canoe on the west side of the freeway, but before they could rescue him, their attention was drawn to a third man, struggling against the rushing current and clinging to the frontage road bridge.

"There were people yelling at us to come over to the service road because there was another man in the water," said Moreau. After rescuing the first man, who collapsed from exhaustion as soon as he was safely brought onto the road, the pair immediately pulled the second man to safety.

"After we got the second man out, we had to get over to the southbound mainlanes to help the man in the canoe," Stafford said. By this time, Patton Village police officers Stoney England, Debbie



Rivera and Greg Lagoy arrived. They stopped freeway traffic while Moreau and Stafford rescued the remaining victim stranded in the canoe.

Although both men modestly deny their actions were anything other than routine, the three men they fished out of Peach Creek are probably more grateful than most people for the actions of a "routine" TxDOT sign crew.

## New campaign features unsung Texas heroes

**Bonnie Adams**  
Associate Editor

If you're old enough to remember Burma Shave roadside signs, the Childress District's "Real Texans" campaign will strike a familiar chord. It's an innovative twist on an old, but successful, marketing concept.

Real Texans is a recycling/anti-litter program that uses a series of signs to appeal to Texans' natural pride in their state. The series says "Real Texans...Don't Trash...Texas Highways" and is patterned after the popular ad campaign of the 1930s.

The goal is to encourage travelers to stop at designated spots to use litter and recycling barrels. They can take a break from driving and read historical information about some notable but often overlooked Texans.

"We are getting some people's attention. We have noticed that people do separate their trash to some degree," District Engineer Will Parks said.

For the dedication ceremony on Oct. 22, the Childress District enlisted the help of "real Texan" Florene Miller Watson of Borger to launch the program. Watson, a member of the Womens Air Force Service Pilots (WASPs) of World War II, took part in a ceremony at the inaugural test site along US 287, two miles west of Estelline in Hall County.

Watson unveiled a sign explaining the history of the WASPs who flew non-

combat missions during World War II. The women trained at Avenger Field in Sweetwater and often landed at the Childress Army Airfield.

A ceremony was also held at what is now the Childress Municipal Airport. Parks said, "Few people are aware that a WASP detachment was assigned to this historic training base during the war. Women aviators made an important contribution here in Childress during the 1940s."

Real Texans was an idea developed by Sterling Brooks, former district public information officer.

"The program is designed specifically to reduce litter on Texas highways. A second aspect of the program is to encourage motorists in Texas to become involved in recycling. The third aspect is safety and the fourth is history," Brooks said.

Parks said another Real Texans site may be developed in the district. "We've



got one other site that we'd like to incorporate into a park, but it will probably be about a year before that happens, due to construction," Parks said. The proposed site is south of Guthrie on US 83.

If this pilot program is successful, other sites could be placed along Texas highways in other districts. Each location will offer travelers a different history lesson and the chance to pitch in and recycle what could otherwise be roadway litter.

**The Childress District's "Real Texans" campaign encourages motorists to take a break, recycle their litter and learn something about notable but often overlooked Texans.**

# CNG refueling station 'wave of future'

**Bonnie Adams**  
Associate Editor

As the department's huge fleet of vehicles relies increasingly on alternative fuels for power, a new compressed natural gas station in the Houston District could be the wave of the future for fueling state and private vehicles.

The station, which opened in October, is the result of a unique agreement between TxDOT and a private company that operates the station. Glenn Hagler, equipment purchasing manager with the General Services Division, says, "This kind of arrangement has never been done before, that I know of."

The compressed natural gas (CNG) station is located on TxDOT's Houston

Lenert Kurtz, Houston District equipment superintendent, said, "It saves us a lot of staff hours of driving to get fuel. It's convenient and when it's convenient, it's cheaper." The Houston station will accommodate two customers at a time. Kurtz said over half of the 180 vehicles at the district office run on CNG and more are to be converted.

He said this station can be used as a "cookie cutter" after which to pattern future TxDOT alternative fuel stations.

Hagler said TxDOT will seek bids for two more stations, one northwest and one in LaMarque, south of Houston. He said the arrangement benefits the company because there are lower initial start-up costs and the amount paid to TxDOT is contingent on the amount of CNG sold.

As of September, there were about 70 public CNG refueling stations in Texas. Few retail outlets have CNG available for sale to the public.

This latest TxDOT innovation isn't surprising to Hagler because the department has led the way in alternative fuel vehicles (AFV's) among other Texas agencies and other states' departments of transportation. "We're helping to lead the way in alternative fuel use," said Hagler, "Everyone knows

we're into it in a big way." The Texas Legislature passed clean air legislation in 1989. Also known as Texas Senate Bill 740, it required 30 percent of an agency's vehicle fleet to be able to operate on alternative fuels by Sept. 1, 1994. TxDOT surpassed this with a 31.5 percent total.

The next mandated goal is 50 percent of the fleet by Sept. 1, 1996 and 90 percent by 1998. Hagler said SB 740 put Texas about two years ahead of California. He said that since TxDOT owns about 40 percent of all state vehicles it has been a leader in alternative fuel compliance. "Our visibility is unbelievable," he said.

TxDOT has shared its alternative fuel experience on the state, national and international level. Don Lewis, alternative fuels coordinator, attended a conference in Toronto in October to present the initiation and implementation of the TxDOT alternative fuel program.

"We've also worked with Lackland, Kelly and Randolph air force bases in San Antonio. They're now coming under the requirement of the Federal Fleet Conversion Task Force," Hagler said. That will affect federal vehicle fleets such as the Air Force's.

Hagler and Lewis met with Randolph AFB officials in July to discuss proposed alternative fuel conversion specifications

and a station on base. That station will be adjacent to federal property, but TxDOT vehicles will have access.

"We shared everything we knew with them. We're planning on being a good customer," Hagler said. Air Force Maj. John Courtney is the chief of the fuels management branch for Headquarters Air Education and Training Command, Randolph AFB. He said Lackland plans to convert 70 vehicles to CNG in the near future, which has created a need for a refueling station. Courtney said TxDOT provided him with vehicle conversion specifications which he used to modify his specifications.

He expects the CNG station to open next spring. "I think it will be wonderfully successful," Courtney said. TxDOT vehicles and the general public will have access to the 24-hour facility.

At October's Texas Transportation Commission meeting, TxDOT received the Propane Superstar Award from the Texas Railroad Commission for its use of propane in its vehicle fleet. Propane or liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) is an alternative fuel but isn't the same as CNG. Hagler explained that CNG is the alternative fuel of choice for Environmental Protection Agency non-attainment areas such as Houston due to its inherent potential to reduce low level ozone or smog. CNG also benefits the Texas economy.

Carlton Bell, General Land Office executive assistant for alternative fuels, said the number of alternative fuel vehicles has dramatically increased in Texas. He estimated there are about 4,000 CNG vehicles and 30,000 propane vehicles registered throughout the state in the private and public sectors.

In 1996, the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) will evaluate the effects of the alternative fuel program in state entities and make recommendations based on that evaluation.

Hagler sees a bright future for alternative fuels in the department, but remembers when it was a fledgling effort. The one car converted in 1988 from gas to CNG has grown to 860 CNG and 2,080 LPG vehicles, plus an advancement in conversion technology.

All department vehicles converted to alternative fuels have been light-duty and medium trucks and sedans. Hagler said there's a limited variety of new AFVs and the variety is expected to increase in the next few years. In the meantime, TxDOT continues to convert existing vehicles to alternative fuels.

As the department's AFVs increase to 90 percent of the fleet by 1998, the demand for refueling stations will also increase. The Houston station and those that are planned are just the beginning in an effort to ensure those vehicles have a place to fuel up.



Gay Shackelford, TRV

**Glenn Hagler said the Right of Way, Maintenance and General Services divisions worked together to make the Houston CNG station a reality.**

District property. Hagler said the department moved a fence so the station would be outside the confines of the property and open to public use.

The station is a self-serve facility at which customers use a card to activate the pump. Only CNG is sold at the location which has no additional amenities such as a convenience store or regular gasoline.

Hagler said the Right of Way, Maintenance, and General Services divisions worked together to make the station a reality. "We're getting the benefits. We get to fill up right outside the gate," Hagler said. The station is open to others with CNG vehicles.

"We're not placing these stations in competition with the private sector; we are placing them to complement the existing infrastructure," he said. TxDOT receives a royalty on each gallon equivalent of CNG sold at the station to non-departmental vehicles. That's how the company, American Natural Gas, will pay its lease on the station.

# New tool makes setting sign posts easier, safer

**Rodger Clements, P.E.**  
Wichita Falls District

While the world may not beat a path to his door, a Wichita Falls District maintenance tech has developed a better, safer way to install sign post anchors.

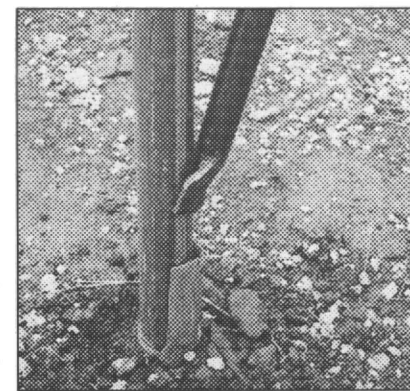
Jim L. Keck, a signman in the Wichita Falls District, believes the current technique of using a hammer to drive retaining wedges into what's called a POZ-LOK stub is not only dangerous, but ineffective. Installing the system with a hammer requires the worker's hands, knees, and face to be very close to the hammer's point of impact. Glancing blows are common due to the shape of the POZ-LOK wedge and to its low-to-the-ground position.

Keck fabricated a combination wedge driver/tamp bar as an alternative tool to install the POZ-LOK signpost anchor system. The wedge driver/tamp bar allows the worker to stand upright with hands and face away from dangerous glancing blows and flying steel fragments.

The contour of the wedge-driver head secures it to the post and allows the worker to use more force to drive the wedge into position. To finish the job, the



**Jesse Kiney, Wichita Falls District, Demonstrates an alternative tool to install the POZ-LOK signpost anchor system. The wedge driver/tamp bar allows the worker to stand upright with hands and face away from dangerous glancing blows and flying steel fragments. The contour of the wedge-driver head secures it to the post and allows the worker to use more force to drive the wedge into position.**



worker uses the opposite end of the wedge driver/tamp bar to pack the loosened soil, providing a more permanent,

plumb signpost installation. *Reprinted from Technical Quarterly.*

## District/Division news

### Yoakum District slates golf tourney

The Yoakum District will hold a golf tournament March 2 at the Yoakum Golf Course. The scramble tournament is open to all full-time employees and retirees. A meal will follow the tournament. For more information, call Bob Arlitt, 512.293. or Al Flessner, 512.293.4337.

*Courtesy of Yoakum District*

### Public transportation conference set

TxDOT employees are invited to attend the Texas Public Transportation Conference March 8-10 at Austin's Hyatt Regency. The conference agenda, speakers' list and registration materials are available by calling the Public Transportation Division at 512.416.2812. Deadline for registration is March 1.

The three-day conference brings together a large cross section of the state's public transportation industry.

TxDOT's Public Transportation Division is one of several hosts for the three-day conference. Some of the topics to be covered include employee trip reduction, new vehicle technologies, creating quality service, media and marketing, and contracting and procurement.

### Gonzales maintenance gets new digs

The Yoakum District's Gonzales Maintenance Office recently moved to a new state-of-the-art facility.

The new shop features nine truck stalls, a wash rack, a storage room and restroom facilities for disabled persons.

The new facility also features an enclosed room containing an air compressor for noise reduction and a sediment pit to contain wash rack runoff. *Courtesy of Yoakum District*

### Hot water tested as herbicide

Sometimes getting in hot water can be a good thing. The Odessa District's Pecos Maintenance Section is testing the use of hot water as a herbicide. If it works, it will make environmental sense because it will cut down on the need for chemical herbicides. The idea is still in the beginning stages and testing will resume when the growing season starts.

Maintenance Section Supervisor Larry Levario said an asphalt heating unit is used to heat the water. "We think that we have had some promising results. We're going to test it again next summer," Levario said.

*Courtesy of Odessa District's News at Six*

## Aviation

Continued from Page 4

teach instructor pilot refresher clinics.

Both entities had offered the courses on their own, but this joint effort allows the division to hold more classes.

"We want communities with airports to come to us with any questions and concerns and we want to promote aviation and educate the public. In other words, the Aviation Division is more than a funding agency for general aviation airports in Texas though that is our number one priority. Our staff is our greatest resource, one that's committed to serving the general aviation needs of Texans and those who do business in our state," Fulton said.

"Sure there's a limited amount of grant money, but we're working to increase funding sources to meet more needs and help airports support the socio-economic goals of their communities and Texas as a whole," Fulton said. "Afterall, these airports are a part of not only a state aviation network, but a global network as well."

## Enhancements

Continued from Page 8

areas of Texas and endangered species was awarded \$1 million in the first enhancement program call.

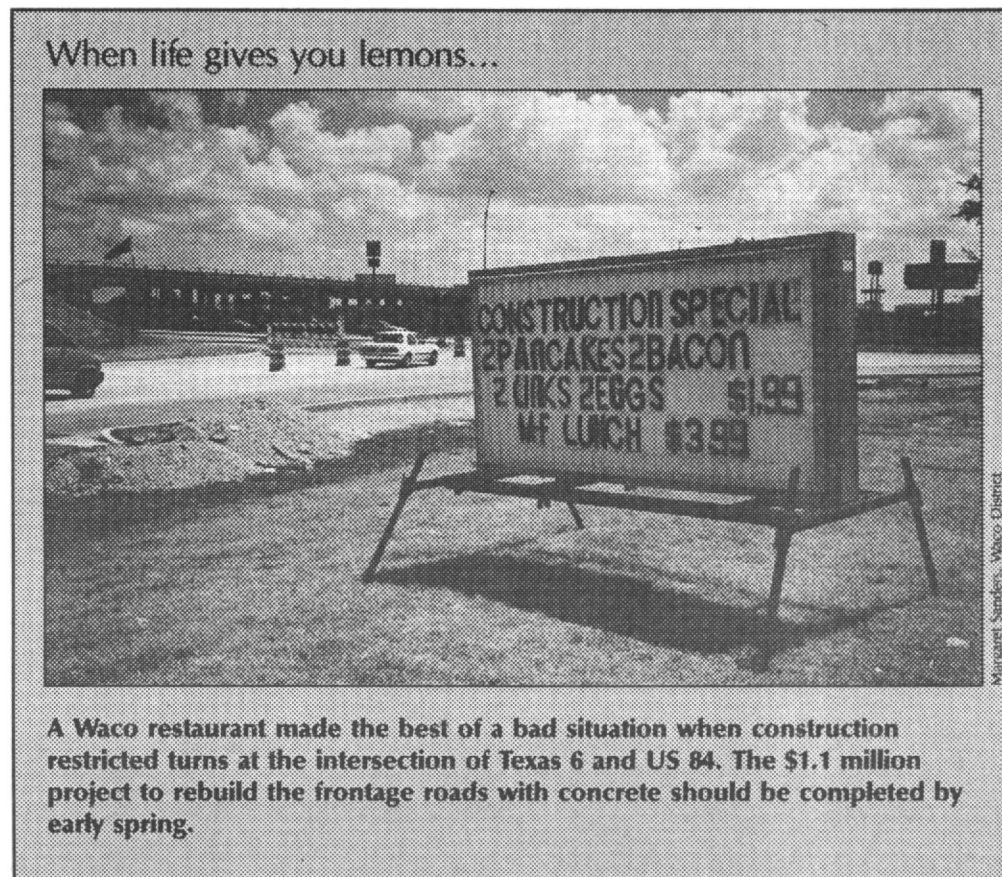
Perhaps the most comprehensive TPWD-sponsored project is the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail, which was funded during the first program call last April. This project will connect 55 known birding sites in South and Southeast Texas. As ultimately planned, the trail would stretch for 500 miles, encompassing parts of the Big Thicket and the Gulf Coast, finally reaching Bentsen State Park in the Rio Grande Valley.

The project would unify existing and potential Texas coastal birding sites into a single cohesive—and more marketable—unit. The highway system that skirts the entire length of the Texas coasts offers a unique opportunity to link these sites into an eco-tourist attraction that will appeal to birding enthusiasts from around the world.

The establishment of the trail will involve demarcation of each site with a universally recognized sign, development of a map and an interpretive trail guide, enhancement and expansion of wildlife habitats around some existing sites, and acquisition of properties along specific stretches of the Texas coast where sites may be lacking.

The project's first phase, which received \$400,000 in enhancement funding, will concentrate on the central Texas coast—an area already well-known to birders. In fact, studies show that Texas is now the number one bird-watching destination in the United States and that eco-tourists spent \$800 million in 1991 on wild viewing activities. The Rockport-Fulton area is a birding hot spot, boasting 500 bird species on record, including swarms of hummingbirds. It's also the winter home for the endangered whooping crane. From late October to March, between 75,000 and 100,000 tourists flock to see migratory birds at the Aransas Wildlife Refuge, boosting the local economy.

The Coastal Birding Trail project will enhance sites as wildlife habitat and will include the planting of native species attractive to birds and wildlife. This project has received and will continue to need a great deal of community support to maintain the trail sites, but the result of all the effort will both enrich the traveler's experience of the Texas coast and enhance the environment of the people, plants and animals who share it.



## LAO

Continued from Page 12

may be obligated during FY '96 for aviation, highways, highway safety grants, railroads and public transit.

### State Issues

**Overweight trucks:** During the 71st legislative session, the department was authorized to issue permits for vehicles exceeding the maximum weight allowed under state law. This permit allows 84,000-pound vehicles almost unlimited use of the state's highway system regardless of the capacity of any given highway to handle that type of load. Studies have documented significant and costly damage from these overweight vehicles to the highway system.

**Placement of windshield registration stickers:** Windshield registration stickers are required to be placed directly above the state safety inspection sticker. However, some motorists already have other stickers in this location. Also, not all vehicles have a windshield. Modifying the current statute to allow a windshield registration sticker to be placed near the safety inspection sticker and exempting certain vehicles from the requirement to have a sticker will help the public with vehicle registration.

**Aviation funding:** TxDOT's Texas Aeronautical Facilities Plan identifies more than \$48 million in annual general aviation facilities construction and development needs. The department currently receives \$18 million annually in federal and state assistance for general aviation airport development. Without additional funds, Texas will continue to miss economic development opportunities associated with a safe, reliable general aviation airport system.

**Maintenance contract awards:** Current law requires that all highway-related contracts entered into by the department, including routine maintenance, must be awarded by the Texas Transportation Commission. Generally, it takes 90-120

days to award routine maintenance contracts. Amending the state law to authorize the department's executive director or his designee to award these routine maintenance contracts will speed up the process.

### Expanding the research program:

State law provides that the department may contract only with the University of Texas and the Texas A&M Systems for highway-related research without first entering into an interagency agreement. As statutes are now written, TxDOT may contract with other state-funded universities, but must first enter into an interagency agreement with those universities. Allowing TxDOT to contract with all state-funded universities without entering an interagency agreement would increase the number of universities TxDOT could contract with to perform this research.

The status of state legislation filed that affects TxDOT is available in Arbiter. LAO and the Information Systems Division teamed up to make this information available. The remote disc on Arbiter, LAO\FINAL\DOCS, contains a DOCUMENTS and a STATUS directory.

Coby Chase, LAO director, said TxDOT employees statewide are essential in keeping in touch with TxDOT's customers. The day-to-day contact many employees maintain with local, state and federal lawmakers helps the department, as well as the legislators, stay abreast of local issues and concerns.

"Lawmakers are simply trying to make government work for the people who elected them," Chase said. "We as a department should always make sure that it does just that."



# Service Awards

## January

### Abilene

**30 years**  
Louis F. Young  
**25 years**  
Donald E. Davis  
J. C. Phariss Jr.  
**5 years**  
Joe P. Clark  
John M. McIntire  
Gregg G. Stamper

### Amarillo

**20 years**  
Garry L. Cathey  
**15 years**  
Sammy J. Harris Jr.  
**10 years**  
Randal O. Clark  
Melvin L. Lowe  
**5 years**  
Johnny A. Andrada  
Toby D. Bagwell  
Tommy D. Davis  
Terry A. Nix  
Leon D. Vogler

### Atlanta

**30 years**  
William G. Latham  
Jimmie L. Minton  
Joe B. Robinson  
**25 years**  
Tommy P. Bynum  
**15 years**  
Stevie E. Rawls  
**10 years**  
Clifton R. Forsyth  
Willie T. Jones  
**5 years**  
Sedric M. Gaston  
Lisa D. Greene

### Austin

**30 years**  
William C. Garbade  
**25 years**  
Gary W. Comer  
**15 years**  
Gary J. Dunman  
James W. Wilkerson  
Wyette P. Williams  
**10 years**  
Ronald C. Houston  
Jeffery A. Mezger  
**5 years**  
Claud W. Armstrong  
Juan J. Mora  
Edwin D. Staats

### Beaumont

**20 years**  
Alda G. Jones  
**15 years**  
Clyde O. Baker  
Steven R. Templeton  
**10 years**  
Lucille L. Henry  
William K. Swearingen Jr.  
**5 years**  
Marvin L. Morgan Sr.  
Paul A. Smith  
David K. Tatum Jr.

### Brownwood

**30 years**  
James R. Willen  
**15 years**  
Clarkie G. Dellis  
Robert K. Pearce Jr.  
**10 years**  
Tammy M. Weiser

### Bryan

**35 years**  
Elaine C. Gregg  
**30 years**  
Wayne Bosse  
**25 years**  
James H. Liner  
Leo E. Maresh  
Lonny G. Traweek  
James H. Williams Jr.  
**20 years**  
Juan B. Pineda  
**15 years**  
Manuel V. Aguillon  
**10 years**  
Thomas J. Kennon  
**5 years**  
Lester E. Melcher

## Childress

**10 years**  
Billy L. Dill  
**5 years**  
Marcia M. Cox

## Corpus Christi

**30 years**  
Frank R. Mims  
**20 years**  
Carmela P. Garza  
**10 years**  
Roberto Cantu Jr.  
Thomas De La Portilla  
Jimmy G. Rutkowski  
Manuel G. Vela  
**5 years**  
Mary A. Pinon

## Dallas

**30 years**  
Michael D. Allison  
L. D. Aplin Jr.  
Thomas A. Christian  
Donald P. Green  
**25 years**  
Dennis D. Emerson  
Nevil G. Moore Jr.  
**20 years**  
Mickey R. Matthews  
**15 years**  
Walter Williams  
Arvel L. Worley Jr.  
**10 years**  
Kenneth Barger  
John A. Debner  
H.S. Hall  
James J. Monroe  
William J. Pierce  
Rena H. Taylor  
Mary C. Velez  
**5 years**  
Melanie B. Young  
Darvin D. Brinkley  
Ricky D. Hallett  
Dennis W. Pratt  
Ronald J. Sullivan

## El Paso

**25 years**  
Donaciano Fuentez  
**15 years**  
Leopoldo Betancourt  
George C. McGuire Jr.  
Jimmy R. Roe  
Martin D. Sandate  
**10 years**  
Adrian Valencia  
**5 years**  
Fernando M. Arellano  
Lee B. Ford

## Fort Worth

**30 years**  
Tim E. Eads Jr.  
Eddie E. Raby  
**25 years**  
John E. Bailey  
Ronald R. Baker  
David L. Clapp  
Ronald O. Newman  
Barbara S. Stills  
Alan L. Walters  
Lee W. Yates  
**15 years**  
Jimmy W. Banner  
Wendell L. Barrett  
Charles B. Hale  
William R. Henry Jr.  
Donald H. Hudson  
Agustin J. Martinez  
Danny W. Meek  
Lisa R. Stone  
**10 years**  
Albert H. Durant  
Donna C. Hickey  
Albert C. Ray  
John M. Rossion

## Houston

**30 years**  
Guadalupe G. Benavides  
Larry W. Pflughaupt  
**25 years**  
Willie S. Cross  
Ruben Martinez  
**20 years**  
Sharla C. Bridges  
Henry L. Davis  
Charles E. Gaskin Jr.  
Carl W. Ramert  
Ronald J. Tryner  
**15 years**  
Sherry A. Barina  
Jose M. Gonzalez Jr.  
Brian L. Hohle  
**10 years**  
William P. Babbington  
Mark F. Bathe  
Billy J. Beavers  
William R. Chappell  
George S. Fan  
Willie Jackson Jr.  
Henry R. Norris Jr.  
Ambrose L. Pilgrim  
Franklin C. Watling  
Ricky W. Williams  
**5 years**  
Elie J. Alkhoury  
Peggy S. Goff  
Todd D. Hebert  
Kellie M. Leitko  
Ronald M. Mueller  
Jerold H. Nall Jr.  
James E. Orange Jr.  
Michael N. Redmond  
William E. Repschleger  
Sandra L. Rials  
Thomas R. Schuenemann

## Laredo

**5 years**  
Daniel Cantu  
Oscar Mendoza  
Roberto Perez

## Lubbock

**30 years**  
Leonard J. Albus Jr.  
David L. Rich  
**20 years**  
Edward W. Alexander  
Charles L. Bolton  
Leo J. Durbin  
Higinio Vasquez Jr.  
**15 years**  
Chris D. Cunningham  
Jimmy B. Schwartz  
**10 years**  
Juan Escobedo  
**5 years**  
Richard C. Walbrick

## Lufkin

**15 years**  
Stephen R. Allen  
**10 years**  
Anna H. Seelbach

## Paris

**30 years**  
Linda V. Thurman  
**25 years**  
Jimmy A. Hall  
**10 years**  
Stephen M. Barackman  
**5 years**  
Anna L. Spencer

## Pharr

**25 years**  
Noe R. Rodriguez  
**15 years**  
Behrooz Badiozzamani  
Maria H. Carranza  
Lorenzo Leal  
**10 years**  
Alberto Quintanilla  
**5 years**  
Eduardo Blanco  
Roberto R. Deleon  
Sergio Garcia

## San Angelo

**15 years**  
Manuel G. Rendon  
Joe M. Rodriguez

## San Antonio

**30 years**  
Robert L. McCulloch  
**25 years**  
Gilbert G. Gavia  
Patrick H. Mezzetti  
**15 years**  
Richard S. Butler  
**10 years**  
Lawrence R. Coyle  
Andrew A. Szabo  
**5 years**  
Robert A. Goslin  
David G. Hanson  
John P. Heye  
Eric E. House  
Richard D. Nix  
Joe A. Yanas

## Tyler

**25 years**  
Gary L. Mathis  
**20 years**  
Lawrence R. Gates  
**15 years**  
Rita K. Sitton  
**10 years**  
Gordon B. Graham Sr.  
Michael T. Schneider  
Donna T. Travis  
**5 years**  
Carter W. Clark Jr.

## Waco

**25 years**  
Ronald E. Koester  
**15 years**  
Jerry E. Handy  
**10 years**  
Marti L. Kirkfield  
Jerry L. McAdams  
Kathleen H. Smith

## Wichita Falls

**25 years**  
J. P. Coffelt  
Valentin Martinez  
**15 years**  
Earl R. Biggs  
Carl E. Freeman  
**10 years**  
Charles E. Stanley  
Alvin E. Wuensche

## Yoakum

**30 years**  
Albert H. Loehr Jr.  
**10 years**  
Charles C. Goodwin  
Wilburn C. Griffin  
Douglas A. Luedke

## Aviation

**5 years**  
Ed Oshinski

## Budget and Finance

**10 years**  
Mark D. Pollard  
David A. Smith

## Central Permit Office

**30 years**  
Omey T. Carter  
**10 years**  
Ricky D. Robinson  
**5 years**  
Merrily N. Eickbusch

## Construction and Maintenance

**25 years**  
Roy L. Smith  
**10 years**  
James W. Daily  
**5 years**  
Velma C. Schlueder

## Continuous Improvement

**10 years**  
Annie Dadian-Williams

## Design

**15 years**  
Bobby G. Dye Jr.  
**10 years**  
Brien A. Hocher  
**5 years**  
James G. Grusendorf  
Joseph S. Starkey III

## General Services

**30 years**  
Wesley M. Burford  
Stephen J. Thompson  
**5 years**  
Sheryl D. Allen

## Human Resources

**5 years**  
Steven B. Katz

## Information Systems

**30 years**  
Rene A. Gonzales  
**10 years**  
Hector P. Garcia  
Georgetta A. Whitworth  
**5 years**  
Robert G. Benavidez

## Legislative Affairs

**10 years**  
Susan C. Tutt

## Materials and Tests

**25 years**  
Ronnie A. Gill  
**10 years**  
John B. Beckham  
George H. Vogt Jr.

## Senior Management Team

**10 years**  
Kathleen M. Wilburn

## Traffic Operations

**10 years**  
Cynthia J. Chamberlain

## Transportation Planning and Programming

**20 years**  
Harold L. Gurley  
**15 years**  
Jeffrey C. Reding

## Travel and Information

**25 years**  
Elizabeth R. Dean

## Vehicle Titles and Registration

**30 years**  
Clifford Pate  
**25 years**  
David G. Linzey  
James D. McAdams  
Lawrance R. Smith  
Harold L. Wiesenhutter  
William J. Wilson Jr.

## Injury

### Continued from Page 5

employees when they report on day one of employment, Wyer said. Supervisors cover material based on what that employee will be asked to do in the workplace. They also give them an introduction of what the hazards will be and what to do to help reduce exposure to possible injury on the job.

The goal for the 1995 department lost-time injury rate is 2.86. Wyer said that as the injury rate continues to decrease each year, it creates more of a challenge for the department to continue to improve.

"Our ultimate goal is for every payroll unit to be accident and injury free. If each work group or team will concentrate on what they can do to prevent accidents, the overall picture will take care of itself," he said. "It's our feeling that we're in a critical time period right now with the number of new employees and supervisors who have been brought aboard in the last year. In addition, we are hiring more and more temporary employees and that's why it's going to be more important that we spend time adequately training these employees."

Wyer said the Occupational Safety Division plans to continue making field visits and working with supervisors, management team members and safety coordinators throughout the state to get feedback on their concerns and on issues that they feel are causing problems.

"We feel its very important to be visible and get feedback and input from all employees within the department to help improve our program overall," Wyer said. "It's proved beneficial for us the last three years and we expect to see the same in the future."

# Service Awards

## February

### Abilene

**25 years**  
Eliazar M. Saucedo  
Guadalupe B. Vasquez  
**15 years**  
Humberto C. Ruiz  
**5 years**  
Arnett C. Preston

### Amarillo

**25 years**  
Charles S. Sanders  
**20 years**  
James P. Morrison  
**15 years**  
David A. Hunt  
**10 years**  
Darrell W. Caldwell

### Atlanta

**30 years**  
Robert E. Morris Jr.  
**20 years**  
Martin W. Loyd  
**15 years**  
James R. Reynolds  
**5 years**  
Rea D. Jones  
Richard Valentine

### Austin

**15 years**  
Richard L. Wilkinson  
**10 years**  
Charles E. Collins  
Gary J. Hilgenberg  
David W. Krizan  
Darren Muenster  
William G. Orr IV  
**5 years**  
Tracy D. Cain  
Clint J. Dube  
Steven B. Newman

### Beaumont

**25 years**  
George R. Dunn  
**10 years**  
Jacqueline G. Anderson  
John A. Elam  
John P. Jannise  
**5 years**  
David C. Beckett

### Brownwood

**30 years**  
Alletta B. Brasher  
**10 years**  
Rocky A. Roberts  
**5 years**  
Daniel N. Hudson

### Bryan

**30 years**  
Virgil M. Arnold  
**15 years**  
Charlie Juarez Sr.  
Ricky G. Wills

### Childress

**20 years**  
Kenneth R. McClendon  
**10 years**  
Jose A. Sanchez

### Corpus Christi

**25 years**  
Cecilio P. Alaniz  
Peter W. Stricker  
**20 years**  
Raul H. Noyola  
**10 years**  
Adam A. Gomez Jr.  
Joseph M. Sauve Jr.  
Oscar L. Zambrano

### Dallas

**30 years**  
Mosies Hernandez  
Franklin D. Sumrow  
**25 years**  
William D. Edwards  
**20 years**  
Donald L. Linn  
**15 years**  
Carl D. Fuller  
Diann J. Rhodes  
Steven M. West  
Deborah C. Williamson  
**10 years**  
Charles L. English  
Carl W. Seaholm III  
**5 years**  
William C. Hall II  
Lynn E. McKinney  
Rocky A. Mooney  
Matthew R. Morrow  
Rhonda R. Poole  
Gerald K. Wetzig

### El Paso

**30 years**  
Joseph A. Duval  
**25 years**  
Robert Acosta Jr.  
**15 years**  
Hector I. Jaquez  
**5 years**  
Clyde E. Rhodes

### Fort Worth

**20 years**  
Charles H. Marshall  
Carl G. Vossler  
Jerry M. Wooldridge  
**15 years**  
Cecil A. Wester Jr.  
**10 years**  
Jesus F. Armendariz  
William J. Padon  
**5 years**  
Rodney G. Holden  
Sharon O. Makarwich  
Kelly B. Price  
Bichlien N. Tran

### Houston

**30 years**  
Joe D. Hargett  
Clarence E. Pampell  
**25 years**  
William P. Ezzell  
Guy L. Foster  
Ludvik E. Okruhlik Jr.  
**20 years**  
Kenneth C. Fisher  
Elizabeth K. Gerstenberger  
Michael J. Jewell  
**15 years**  
Robert F. Cotrone  
Effie C. Henry  
Charlie F. Hodges  
David O. Robinson  
**10 years**  
Clarence S. Ainsworth  
Rosminda B. Bautista  
Tim W. Chase  
Fred E. Farnham  
Crystallin Hankins  
Su-jen Hwang  
Sharon K. Johnson  
Jose C. Martinez  
Juanita C. Munson  
Sally G. Wegmann  
**5 years**  
James W. Burnett  
Michael D. Carter  
Ronald J. Contreras  
Rudy P. Eguia  
Jennie L. Francis  
John W. Hunt  
Joe J. Michael  
Bonnye S. Stokes  
Brenda S. Theeck  
Gene A. Vasut Jr.  
Lisa M. Williams  
Stephen M. Zapata

### Laredo

**30 years**  
Domingo Perez  
Maria G. Reyna  
**20 years**  
Arturo Martinez  
Ricardo S. Veliz  
**15 years**  
Jesus O. Menchaca  
**10 years**  
Rogelio Montemayor

### Lubbock

**25 years**  
Warren L. Davis  
**20 years**  
Danny M. Holmes  
**15 years**  
Teddy J. Copeland  
Leonardo R. Gallegos  
Yvonne W. Nevins  
**10 years**  
Steven L. Hudson  
Carmen M. King  
Ronald E. Watson  
**5 years**  
Ronald K. Gandy

### Lufkin

**25 years**  
Donald R. Hodges  
**20 years**  
Billy C. Raines  
**15 years**  
Thomas P. Christian  
Gary L. Fincher  
Richard K. Ivy  
Ricky A. McDonald  
Rodger G. Stewart  
**10 years**  
Joe M. Burke  
Dianne H. Spinks  
Chris E. Turner

### Odessa

**25 years**  
Roberto H. Herrera  
Dolores M. Rivas  
**10 years**  
Gabriel M. Castro  
Florencio H. Molinar  
**5 years**  
James L. Crain  
Samuel Cuellar  
Homero A. Martinez

### Paris

**30 years**  
Michael D. Ribble  
**15 years**  
George O. Charles  
James O. Dickerson  
Charles A. Guffey  
Elijah L. Palmer Jr.  
John A. Yant  
**10 years**  
Byron M. Caylor Jr.  
Johnnie E. Fridle  
**5 years**  
Michael S. Gibson  
Cynthia G. McClure  
David W. Morrison

### Pharr

**30 years**  
Arturo Camarillo  
**20 years**  
Veronica S. Salinas  
**10 years**  
Tomas R. Barraz  
Jacinto Garza  
**5 years**  
Ernesto O. Alvarado  
Ramiro O. Flores  
Daniel Llanes

### San Angelo

**5 years**  
Jane Gray  
James C. Hopper  
Delmar A. Radde Jr.  
Douglas F. Roberts

### San Antonio

**30 years**  
Jimmy L. Henson  
Robert L. Lombrano  
**25 years**  
Ervin R. Brooks  
Charles V. Brown  
Santiago Muniz  
George F. Thomas  
**20 years**  
Judy T. Alonzo  
**15 years**  
David B. Otwell  
Margarita Y. Rios  
**10 years**  
Ginger R. Cortez  
Hugh J. Fleming III  
Roberto Garcia  
Edward E. Stephen  
John Waliky Jr.  
John T. White  
**5 years**  
Michael S. Bailey

### Tyler

**25 years**  
Bobby J. English  
**15 years**  
Ernest J. Glasscock  
Albert P. Sheppard  
Warren B. Tidmore  
**10 years**  
Glennel Ross  
Leonard G. Stigall  
**5 years**  
George L. Grantham Jr.  
Mark D. Jones  
Pete Martinez

### Waco

**30 years**  
Donald R. Lehmann  
**25 years**  
Doyle E. Bood  
Darrell R. Wells  
**15 years**  
Mary P. Lucien  
**10 years**  
James A. Edwards  
Boyce G. Zinn  
**5 years**  
Larry D. Kruger  
Charles E. Richter

### Wichita Falls

**15 years**  
Leona U. Morgan

### Yoakum

**30 years**  
Alton C. Dittrich  
Arthur J. Harris  
**10 years**  
Darren B. Florus  
Glenn R. Jaeger  
Kenneth W. Meyer  
William A. Rowland  
**5 years**  
Larry D. Howren

### Aviation

**10 years**  
Kathryn J. Griffin

### Budget and Finance

**10 years**  
Daniel E. Walsh

### Central Permit

**10 years**  
Michael S. Warnken

### Continuous Improvement

**10 years**  
Julie C. Larrimer

### Design

**10 years**  
Sherwood E. Helms Jr.  
Roger N. Porter  
**5 years**  
Mark A. Wallace

### Environmental Affairs

**15 years**  
John W. Clark Jr.

### General Services

**10 years**  
Margie R. Freeman  
Royce K. Moore  
**5 years**  
Randall Sakai

### Human Resources

**10 years**  
Janet L. Green

### Information Systems

**15 years**  
James R. Steele  
**10 years**  
David E. Norman

### Management Services

**15 years**  
Theodore A. Miller

### Materials and Tests

**30 years**  
Jerry L. Howell  
**5 years**  
Joann J. Lins

### Right of Way

**25 years**  
Jackie P. Barnett

### Transportation Planning and Programming

**30 years**  
Samuel F. Dunkin Jr.  
**25 years**  
Merlene W. Kouba  
**20 years**  
Roger A. Pfluger  
**15 years**  
Fritz W. Krugman  
**10 years**  
Michael H. Nunn  
William T. Theis Jr.

### Travel and Information

**15 years**  
Rosemary M. Eaves  
Rhonda M. Hillis

### Vehicle Titles and Registration

**30 years**  
William E. Heath  
**25 years**  
Katherine M. Astin  
Charles M. Craig  
**15 years**  
Patsy J. Howard  
Max Williams  
**10 years**  
Ruth T. Day  
Rachel V. Lindley  
Lavaughana D. Rosebery

# Transitions

## Effective November

Robert Eason, Deputy Division Director, Human Resources Division  
Ron L. Piri, Director, Administration, San Angelo District

## Effective December

Juan J. Martinez, Internal Review Analyst, Laredo District

## Effective January

Gary T. Humes, P.E., Director, Operations, Brownwood District

## In Memoriam

### Employees

Jerry D. Harred, Paris District, 31 years service, died Oct. 29, 1994.

### Retirees

George A. Agnew, Leander, retired from Vehicle Titles and Registration Division in 1981, died Oct. 27, 1994.  
 Emil Brinkerhoff, Quanah, retired from Childress District in 1973, died Oct. 22, 1994.  
 Robert E. Brooks, Trinity, retired from Lufkin District in 1968, died Oct. 14, 1994.  
 John B. Brown, Dallas, retired from Tyler District in 1967, died Oct. 22, 1994.  
 Lloyd H. Carpenter, Baytown, retired from Houston District in 1976, died Nov. 15, 1994.  
 Thomas J. Dick, Cleveland, retired from Houston District in 1990, died Oct. 8, 1994.  
 William A. Eads, Throckmorton, retired from Wichita Falls District in 1973, died Dec. 5, 1994.  
 Jacob C. Flippo, Sweetwater, retired from Abilene District in 1987, died Oct. 14, 1994.  
 Choyce W. Gandy, Buna, retired from Beaumont District in 1976, died Sept. 17, 1994.  
 Everardo Garcia, Rio Grande City, retired from Pharr District in 1975, died Oct. 15, 1994.  
 Leon Garza, Brownsville, retired from Pharr District in 1974, died Dec. 8, 1994.  
 Royce A. Ginn, Acton, retired from Tyler District in 1971, died Nov. 12, 1994.  
 Monnie C. Graham, Wheeler, retired from Amarillo District in 1968, died Oct. 5, 1994.  
 Carl Grau, Taylor, retired from Austin District in 1969, died Oct. 26, 1994.  
 Nathan L. Gregory, Lufkin, retired from Lufkin District in 1977, died Dec. 2, 1994.  
 Paul T. Hensler, Gatesville, retired from Waco District in 1973, died Dec. 4, 1994.  
 Miguel G. Hernandez, Fort Stockton, retired from Odessa District in 1981, died Nov. 20, 1994.  
 George J. Kempf, Floresville, retired from San Antonio District in 1977, died Sept. 24, 1994.  
 Thomas Knox, Bells, retired from Paris District in 1977, died Oct. 28, 1994.  
 Bland M. Kyser, Manor, retired from Budget and Finance Division in 1980, died Nov. 8, 1994.  
 Jack C. Lewis, Austin, retired from Travel and Information Division in 1993, died Nov. 2, 1994.

William G. Lewis, Mesquite, retired from Dallas District in 1977, died Nov. 1, 1994.  
 Melvin H. Lott, Paris, retired from Paris District in 1973, died Oct. 27, 1994.  
 Roland M. Lucas, San Augustine, retired from Vehicle Titles and Registration Division in 1975, died Oct. 16, 1994.  
 Hurshel B. Lummas, Navasota, retired from Houston District in 1971, died Nov. 8, 1994.  
 Melvin E. Mazy, Abilene, retired from Abilene District in 1975, died Nov. 5, 1994.  
 Joseph E. McGrew, Beeville, retired from Corpus Christi District in 1976, died Sept. 25, 1994.  
 Oscar R. Melnar, Weimer, retired from Yoakum District in 1984, died Dec. 18, 1994.  
 Russell E. Mobley, Cedar Park, retired from Austin District in 1982, died Oct. 25, 1994.  
 R. C. Paysinger, Princeton, retired from Dallas District in 1988, died Oct. 1, 1994.  
 Conrado S. Ramirez, Lodsburg, retired from El Paso District in 1979, died Nov. 28, 1994.  
 Dick Richardson, Bastrop, retired from Fort Worth District in 1979, died Oct. 30, 1994.  
 Jose Sandoval, Pearland, retired from Houston District in 1981, died Oct. 15, 1994.  
 Rudolph Silva, Port Bolivar, retired from Houston District in 1982, died Nov. 17, 1994.  
 Henry T. Smith, Anson, retired from Abilene District in 1970, died Oct. 7, 1994.  
 Lee C. Smith, Longview, retired from Amarillo in 1982, died Oct. 10, 1994.  
 Alvis H. Spence, Frankston, retired from Waco District in 1985, died Oct. 9, 1994.  
 Avel L. Thompson, Leakey, retired from old Del Rio District in 1975, died Sept. 23, 1994.  
 Loyd B. Wakefield, Fort Worth, retired from Fort Worth District in 1971, died Nov. 23, 1994.  
 Roland C. Welsch, Bulverde, retired from San Antonio District in 1984, died Sept. 30, 1994.  
 Don L. Williams, Whitehouse, retired from Tyler District in 1989, died Oct. 24, 1994.  
 Raffael J. Williams, El Paso, retired from El Paso District in 1981, died Oct. 1, 1994.  
 William R. Wright, Fort Worth, retired from Fort Worth District in 1974, died Oct. 10, 1994.

## Retirements

### October

#### Fort Worth

Douglas W. Holleman, 1 year, Roadway Maintenance Technician II  
 George T. West, 8 years, Motor Vehicle Mechanic II

#### Houston

Gene O. Day, 30 years, Engineer V

#### Tyler

Marvin L. Timmerman, 8 years, Maintenance Technician I

### November

#### Houston

Ronald T. Templeton, 31 years, Engineer IV

### December

#### Abilene

Donald E. Davis, 25 years, Maintenance Technician IV

#### Atlanta

William G. Latham, 30 years, Maintenance Technician V

#### Corpus Christi

Abel Vasquez, 27 years, Marine Captain/Engineer III

#### Dallas

Michael D. Allison, 30 years, Director of ADP I  
 Edward W. Ewing, 31 years, Roadway Maintenance Supervisor II  
 Tony W. Malone, 28 years, Engineering Technician V  
 Jack D. Page, 30 years, Engineering Technician V  
 Justin R. Smiley, 30 years, Motor Vehicle Mechanic III  
 Travis D. Thornburgh, 30 years, Maintenance Technician III

#### Houston

George Abschneider, 38 years, Maintenance Technician II  
 Henry J. Kure Jr., 31 years, Maintenance Technician IV

## Calendar

### February

14-15 Herbicide Training and Recertification, Amarillo, CMD  
 14-15 Herbicide Training and Recertification, Waco, CMD  
 15 Area Engineers Conference, Austin, FDO  
 16-17 Herbicide Training and Recertification, Lubbock, CMD  
 16-17 Herbicide Training and Recertification, Bryan, CMD  
 19-21 American Traffic Safety Services Association National Conference, San Antonio, TRF  
 20 Washington-Lincoln Day (Holiday)  
 22-23 Herbicide Training and Recertification, El Paso, CMD  
 22-23 Herbicide Training and Recertification, San Antonio, CMD  
 23 Commission Meeting, Longview

### March

2 Texas Independence Day (Holiday)  
 8-10 Texas Public Transportation Conference, Austin, PTN  
 22-23 Maintenance Conference, Austin, CMD  
 30 Commission Meeting, Austin

### April

3-5 Management Team Meeting  
 9-14 Texas Travelers Counselors Conference, Odessa, Midland, San Angelo, Abilene, TRV  
 21 San Jacinto Day (Holiday)  
 27 Commission Meeting, Austin

### May

8-12 Public Relations Certification Program, Austin, PIO  
 25 Commission Meeting, Austin  
 29 Memorial Day (Holiday)  
 31 Transportation Planning Conference, Houston, TPP (through June 12)

### June

5-9 CAICE Training, Austin, ISD  
 6-8 11th Annual Internal Audit Conference, Austin, AUD  
 19 Juneteenth (Holiday)  
 29 Commission Meeting, Austin

### July

4 Independence Day  
 10-12 Management Team Meeting  
 27 Commission Meeting, Austin

### August

31 Commission Meeting, Austin

## Drunk

### Continued from Page 7

and drove off."

Roddy's brother was in a coma for three days before he was taken off life support.

"Our family was traumatized," said Roddy. "How could someone be so cruel as

to hit someone standing 20 feet off the highway and then not stop?

"The sense of loss, helplessness and anger one feels changes one's life forever. I guess you never stop asking yourself why it happened," Roddy said.

### Lufkin

Carl W. Home, 28 years, Maintenance Technician IV  
 Gertha J. Scarborough, 30 years, Contract Technician III

### Pharr

Agustin Espericueta Jr., 22 years, Assistant Maintenance Section Supervisor III

### Continuous Improvement

Terry A. Palmer, 26 years, Director of Programs I

### Information Systems

Donald A. Drew, 24 years, Director II

### Right of Way

Veda S. Cazzola, 19 years, Legal Assistant II

### January 1995

#### Brownwood

Eugene M. Keel, 15 years, Maintenance Technician IV

### Houston

Basil L. Williams, 30 years, Engineering Technician V

### Lufkin

Curly Fugate, 16 years, Maintenance Technician V

### Paris

Jim Hall, 25 years, Area Engineer III

### General Services

Stephen J. Thompson, 30 years, Director II

### Vehicle Titles and Registration

Paul H. Hancock, 26 years, ADP Supervisor IV

## Letters

On Sept. 28, my wife and I stopped at the rest stop south of Woodsboro.

When I went to my motor home to leave, it wouldn't start. I fiddled with it a while, but to no avail.

Albert Perez came over to see if he could assist. To make a long story short, he expended a lot of effort, knowledge, skill and good will to get an old retired couple going again. Without his assistance, graciously given, we would have used up an awful lot of time and money plus anxiety.

We tried very hard to give him a monetary thank-you. He adamantly refused the money, stating that part of his job is helping people out. He certainly did about 200% of that.

We just want to advise you what a great employee you have in your department.

**Mr. & Mrs. Gerald L. Paschke  
Harlingen**

*Perez works in the Refugio Maintenance Office, Corpus Christi District.*

....

*This letter was received by Bill Burnett:*

Many "customers" are remiss in praising or giving "thank you's" to our public service employees, but are quick to condemn bad service or work.

I want to express a very warm and sincere "thank you" to the Texas Department of Transportation's management and especially to the work crew mending FM 1362 and FM 2000 in Burleson County.

I know that state road and bridge funds are very limited and much patch work is needed—especially the extreme damage done by the large oil rigs and trucks traveling these farm roads not engineered or designed for such traffic. But this crew (can't speak for other FM's) has done, is doing, and I'm sure will continue to do, a "way above average" job. They are to be commended!

**Larry Lindly  
Caldwell**

....

This is the kind of letter I take great pleasure in writing—a letter of commendation concerning the personal, voluntary actions of **Mike Anderson** to help a stranger.

On Sunday, Nov. 28, at approximately 4 p.m., my family and I stopped at Bethany for fuel and discovered a fan belt had broken. No service station, mechanic or auto parts was available. The Exxon gas station was most unhelpful. Mike Anderson could see the situation we were in—he took us to the home of a mechanic and the auto parts store owner—they were not available. Mike then took his little daughter home, came back and drove me approximately 50 miles to pick up a belt and installed the belt for me. Remember, this was done with Thanksgiving visitors at his home. Mike would not accept any payment or compensation for his invaluable assistance.

You and the State of Texas have an employee to be very proud of. He handled himself in every manner for you to be proud of him and his actions.

**Earl D. Coleman  
Houston**

*Anderson works as an engineer in the Carthage Area Office, Atlanta District.*

....

I would like to take the time to commend three of your employee's for a job well done: **Jason Andrews, Bill Chabot, Rodolfo Tarin.**

On Saturday, Nov. 6, I was on my way to my little brother's playoff game. I was on Garland Road and my tire went flat. I pulled over when I noticed that it was going flat and turned on my flashers, as I tried to call my mother on my mobile. I had never changed a tire in my life, nor had I ever watched someone change a tire to learn.

There were three men on duty—I suppose evaluating the concrete or something for future construction in this area. Jason asked his fellow employees if they would mind if he stepped aside to see if I needed help. Indeed, I did. Jason immediately just took over. Rodolfo came over and started helping while Bill directed the traffic away from us. I felt as if these men weren't watching out just for their own safety, but mine as well.

There is never a good time to have a flat, however, if there were, this was it!

This is a newer model vehicle so the work was very extensive and complicated. I just knew that any minute Jason and Rodolfo were going to give up and throw in the towel. They didn't though.

I could not thank them enough at the time, and I still can't thank them enough. It was a very cold day and I know it wasn't easy changing that tire. No telling how long I would have been sitting there waiting if it weren't for Jason, Bill and Rudolfo. If only there were more people like these men in this world.

No matter how cold, how hard or how rough it got, their attitudes remained the same. The frustration that was building up did not overcome them. They were very helpful, thoughtful and kind.

I made it to my brother's football game just in time to see him in the last touchdown!!

**Valerie Henry  
Dallas**

*Chabot and Tarin are engineering technicians and Andrews is an engineering aide. All three employees for the Dallas Northwest Area Office, Dallas District.*

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My wife and I just returned from a trip through five Canadian provinces and 17 states. Being a retired transportation worker I can't help but observe the various states' highways. In my opinion Texas can be proud of their system. Your signing is excellent on the roadways, but

particularly on detours and in construction zones.

There were no other states or provinces that compared overall with your system. Of course there were no other states that we had 884 miles to compare. I think you, your commission and your department's professionals, technicians and employees should be proud of what you all have accomplished.

Best wishes to you and your department employees. May continue your excellent highway tradition in the future.

**Gordon and Janet Sweitzer  
Silver City, MN**

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I would like to say a special "thanks" to Charles Sechrist for helping me. I had a blowout on my truck on Sept. 28, in the middle of nowhere and miles from any phone. He sure saved my having to walk too far. He was very kind and his help was greatly appreciated. Again, thanks to you Mr. Sechrist, we need more people like you in the world today.

**Rebecca Brannon  
Roaring Springs**

*Charles Sechrist is the Assistant Maintenance Foreman at our Ralls Maintenance Office, Lubbock's District.*

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