Connecticut’s Traffic Signal Circuit Rider Program

The Technology Transfer Center at UCONN is very pleased to introduce a new program to help local municipal agencies effectively manage their traffic signals.

Traffic signal management involves the planning, design, integration, maintenance, and proactive operation of a traffic signal system in order to achieve policy based objectives to improve the efficiency, safety and reliability of signalized intersections.

The Connecticut Traffic Signal Circuit Rider provides no cost technical assistance and training to local agency representative’s responsible for municipal traffic signals.

Please see SIGNAL on page 4
Device Shows At a Glance If Wheels Are Loose

A wobbly wheel on a big truck is a dangerous thing. It isn’t always easy, however, to see when lug nuts are coming loose. The Polk County Highway Department has put a simple plastic device on all its trucks that shows at a glance when a lug nut is loosening.

The device, formed from bright plastic that stands out visually, is a ring that fits tightly around the nut. A mechanic installs the devices so that the pointed ends form a simple pattern. A driver doing an inspection should be able to tell if a nut is loose, because the pattern will be broken.

Several companies make versions of the devices. Polk County uses an orange “loose nut indicator” available from redovalparts.com. “Loose tires can kill,” says Brad Driscoll, mechanic in the Polk County Highway Department. “We’re pleased to add these devices to our fleet. It only takes about five minutes to install them per wheel. And when drivers do their morning inspection, it makes it easier and quicker to make sure the lug nuts are tight.”

Special thanks to the MN LTAP for permission to reprint this information.
Training Opportunities in 2015

We are very excited to announce the training opportunities that will be available in 2015! Below is a list of the general topics we are offering including six new classes. For more information about our classes visit our online training schedule: http://t2center.uconn.edu/workshopschedule.php

• All About Asphalt
• Complete Streets NEW!
• Defensive Driving for Snow Plow Drivers
• Effective Communication Skills
• Flagger Certification
• Gravel Road Maintenance
• Infrastructure Asset Management
• Pavement Management Bootcamp NEW!
• Preventing Runovers and Backovers in the Work Zone (ARTBA partnership-no cost)
• Principles of Drainage

• Public Works Academy (Spring/Fall)
• Roundtable Discussion- Managing Special Events NEW!
• Roundtable Discussion- Salt Practices in CT NEW!
• Roundtable Discussion- Stormwater Permit Updates
• Supervisory Skills
• Transitioning to Supervision NEW!
• Underground Storage Tank Operator Training and A/B Certification
• Where and When to Use Signs, Signals and Markings
• Work Zone Safety

For those members of our Transportation Leadership Program, we have the following exciting learning opportunities:

• Change Management
• Developing Teamwork and Giving Feedback
• HR Management and Performance Evaluations
• Professionalism/Safety Culture/Goal Setting
• Public Relations NEW!
• Public Speaking/ Presentation Skills/ Effective Meetings
• Succession Planning and Workforce Development

If you’re interested in applying for the Transportation Leadership Program, visit our website: http://t2center.uconn.edu/TransportationLeadershipProgram.php
Some of the services available through the program:

• Assist Connecticut municipalities in the development of clear goals and objectives and a plan for management, operations and maintenance of their traffic signals.

• Write and disseminate technical briefs on traffic signal related topics to local municipal agencies.

• Work in the field to assist with traffic signal system retiming projects.

• Work with Connecticut regional planning agencies to promote opportunities for municipalities to consider federal-aid funding for traffic signal operations and to promote integration of traffic signal operations into metropolitan transportation plans and programs.

• Coordinate and facilitate training on traffic signal systems topics.

• Develop timing plan for municipalities that have traffic control signals at intersections that work in isolation.

For more information, please contact:
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Q: I’ve been told my beautiful maple tree is too close to the town road. Why do I need to remove it?

A: The concept of a “Forgiving Roadway” is to allow survivability of users when driver error occurs. Drivers do become distracted and vehicles do leave the roadway. The wider and smoother of a recovery area provided, the more a driver has a chance to recover. This recovery area is sometimes referred to as a clear zone. The clear zone also allows the driver to see conflicts (pedestrians, animals, other drivers, etc.) and slow down or avoid collision. The smoothness of the transition from roadway to shoulder prevents tire scrubbing and over correction which can cause roll-over as a vehicle tries to re-enter the roadway. If attended to, all of these details will provide a safer roadway and reduce liability.

The American Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) discusses clear zones (AADT <400): At locations where a clear recovery area of 6 feet or more in width can be provided at low cost and with a minimum social/environmental impact, provisions of such a clear recovery area should be considered. Fixed objects within the clear zone that may be struck by errant vehicles which would in turn injure or kill drivers should be removed or relocated.

The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) recommends that signs be placed at least 6 feet from edge of shoulder or 12 feet from traveled way. In order for sign visibility not to be affected, brush, trees and other vegetation should be cleared when they are within 12 feet of the roadway or 6 feet from the shoulder depending on which criteria is used for sign mounting.

Thank you to our colleagues in Montana for providing some technical content.

If you have any questions for Tony, email him at Lorenzetti@engr.uconn.edu.
The T2 Center is excited to announce our newest safety series “Tailgate Talk”. Each Tailgate Talk focuses on one on-the-job safety topic and is designed to be shared with your crew at the beginning of their day. When employees are presented with safety material in small chunks, in a setting they are comfortable with, they are more likely to retain that information and put it into practice. This series will cover real safety concerns that your crews face at work, such as operating vibrating equipment, how to be safe when using compressed air, and being alert of moving equipment.

Tailgate Talks are being updated regularly so be on the lookout for new topics. Some of our available topics include:

- Hand Safety & Glove Use
- Digging Safely
- Getting Caught
- Hazards of Solvents

Visit the T2 Center Website to download Tailgate Talks and share with your crew: [http://t2center.uconn.edu/safetybriefs.php#safetybriefs](http://t2center.uconn.edu/safetybriefs.php#safetybriefs) and get started with the following topic “How to Conduct a Tailgate Talk”.

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**How to Conduct a Tailgate Talk**

Use Tailgate Talks as a guide to help you conduct 10-15 minute tailgate training sessions for your crew.

**The Concept**

Tailgate training is a gathering of a small group of workers around the tailgate of a truck or other spot for a brief training session on a single safety topic.

**Plan Logistics**

- Limit sessions to a small number of workers. Six to 10 is a good number.
- Choose a quiet spot that is comfortable for your workers.
- Hold sessions early in the week, but not on Monday mornings.
- Conduct tailgate training sessions an average of once a week. Dedicate specific time for the training.

**Key Points**

- Choose one safety topic per session.
- Be concise. Keep it short.
- Keep the sessions small.
- Meet in a place that’s comfortable for workers.
- Allow time for questions and answers.
- Document the training.

**Choose Safety Topics**

- Review your accident records. Pick topics related to accidents that have occurred.
- Walk around your operation. Look for situations that could result in injuries.
- Ask employees for their ideas.
- Read newsletters and other articles for more information. Use them for additional ideas.

Please see TAILGATE TALK on next page
Prepare Your Presentation
• Use a one-page fact sheet like the Tailgate Talks provided by the T2 Center or outline your own ideas.
• Look for visual aids. Examples: warning signs, a flipchart, an illustration on poster board.

Conduct the Session
• Keep your presentation informal.
• Don’t use words your employees won’t understand.
• Use visual aids.

Tailgate Training Do’s and Don’ts

<table>
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<th>DO:</th>
<th>DON’T:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Limit sessions to no more than 15 minutes.</td>
<td>Conduct training sessions on Monday mornings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Choose topics that relate to your operation.</td>
<td>Speak in a manner workers won’t understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold sessions an average of once a week.</td>
<td>Discourage employees from asking questions.</td>
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Why Tailgate Training Works

Informal
• Sessions held on employees’ turf.
• No “lecturing.”
• Trainer speaks employees’ language.
• Employees are comfortable and more willing to participate.

Very Focused
• One safety topic presented at a time.
• Easier for most workers to digest one topic at a time.
• Puts safety information on the “front line” where it’s most effective.

Brief Sessions
• Sessions run no more than 15 minutes.
• Doesn’t lose employees’ attention.
• Employees more likely to look forward to shorter sessions.

Repetition
• Consistently held sessions reinforce the importance of safety.
• Employees are more likely to remember what they heard.
• Employees are more likely to put concepts into action.
• Constant reinforcement keeps ideas fresh.

Employee Involvement
• Workers raise issues management was unaware of.
• Employees see their ideas put into action.
• Enhances two-way communication between workers and supervisors.
• Improves worker morale.
• Employees become part of the safety team.

Line Supervisor Involvement
• Gets line supervisors involved in the safety program.
• Supervisors who train are more likely to “buy into” safety.
• Increases line supervisors’ self-confidence.

For more Tailgate Talks, Safety Briefs or more information about the Connecticut Technology Transfer Center, visit us at: www.T2center.uconn.edu

Basic Training Tips

• Be enthusiastic about the topic.
• Choose topics employees can relate to.
• Don’t speak in a monotone voice.
• Set a good example.
• Don’t “spoon-feed” information to trainees.
• Reward good ideas and safe practices.
• Get them involved.
• Show you really care.
Kristin Doundoulakis is a Project Management Specialist for the Town of Groton Public Works Department. Since becoming part of the Region 4 ESF-3 Committee in 2008 she has been heavily involved in emergency preparedness and response for her region. We had the opportunity to discuss emergency preparedness with Kristin and find out some of the ways ESF-3 Committees can help municipalities acquire emergency preparedness plans, training and equipment.

How long have you been working for the Groton Public Works Department and what is your primary role in the department?
I've been working here since August 2006. I manage multiple environmental permits, registrations and regulatory requirements associated with the Town’s facilities and infrastructure. I also coordinate emergency preparedness planning for public works and I’m the department's representative on the town's emergency management working group.

How did you get involved with emergency preparedness?
My director Gary Schneider is a co-chair of Region 4 ESF-3 Committee. When the committee was formed by the state he asked me if I'd be interested in learning about public work's role in emergency management and assist with keeping the committee organized.

What is ESF-3 and what does it mean for public works departments?
ESF-3 is Emergency Support Function 3. The federal government puts out several emergency support functions. There's numbers and each one is defined with a different discipline; ESF-3 is for public works and engineering. The committees were established to develop and implement a system of resource and response capabilities for handling regional emergencies concerning public works issues like waste water, debris management, solid waste disposal, vehicle fueling and maintenance- all public works emergency response issues.

Is ESF-3 a new concept, or has emergency response always been part of public works’ role?
With emergency management, public works has always done it they've just never really been recognized for their role in it.

What has been the most rewarding part of your work in public works emergency response?
Probably the most rewarding part was back when winter storm Alfred hit. We didn’t get hit that hard down here on the coast, but I received a call from one of the communities up north saying they got hit really hard. And being able to help coordinate a response effort that was really rewarding. Our own town ended up sending two work crews up there to help out for about two weeks cleaning up. So that was really cool, seeing the payoff of all the coordination. Through ESF-3 there are grant funds available to purchase emergency equipment for the towns.

What kind of equipment is available for towns in Region 4?
We now have three emergency response trailers which are traffic control trailers that contain cones,
Preparedness

Continued from previous page

signs, barricades, lights- anything you would need for traffic response. We have three automated sand-baggers in the Region. We have three portable light towers and we have five electronic message boards, and we actually have one more portable light tower and one more electronic message board that we’ll be receiving with the next round of grant funding when that becomes available.

Our region extends from the Massachusetts border all the way to the south corner. We try to spread them [equipment] throughout our region- we try to keep the equipment north, central and south so that they can be easily deployed wherever they’re needed.

That must be fun- giving out equipment to towns.
It is! These towns are always excited because it’s not in their budgets, this type of thing. And you know, like a sand-bagger- how many times are you going to use it? But if you need it, you really need it.

Is there anything about your role, the Committee or ESF-3 that you’d like towns to know about?
It’s a great resource for local public works departments. Not only do we provide training and equipment, it’s also about getting to know your other local departments: What they do, what resources they have, just knowing a person’s face- in an emergency you’re more apt to be able to call them up directly and share resources.

Like I said, we’re such a vast region that we don’t always all get hit at the same time. Events that happen in the north don’t always happen down south and vice versa so I think it’s really important for local public works departments to realize that this is a great resource for them for emergency management.

*In addition to being a part of the Region 4 ESF-3 Committee, Kristin also sits on the Region 4 Training and Exercise Committee which works with the T2 Center and other training agencies to provide emergency response training to municipalities.

If you would like to get involved in your region’s ESF-3, you can find more information at: http://www.ct.gov/demhs/cwp/view.asp?a=1903&q=295316