Congratulations Richard Kaczer, Town of Cheshire

Richard Kaczer, fleet manager for the Public Works Department in Cheshire, CT, was recognized by his peers as Person of the Year for his diligence and hard work. Each year, Town staff nominate coworkers who they think are Employee of the Year. Kaczer is a 36-year veteran with the Public Works Department and a Cheshire native.

Kaczer, along with his three mechanics, ensure that all of the 139 registered vehicles with Cheshire license plates and the hundreds of pieces of Town-owned equipment are deemed useable and safe. “Safety”, Kaczer said, is one of the more important parts of the job and something that makes him proud.

Please see KACZER on page 8
The Town of Wethersfield – Making a Difference in Local Road Safety

By Anthony Lorenzetti, CT Safety Circuit Rider

In December 2014, Wethersfield Director of Physical Services, Sally Katz, requested that I come and meet with the Town Manager Jeff Bridges, Town Engineer Mike Turner, and Lt. Donald Crabtree of the Police Department. A meeting was held at Wethersfield Town Hall on January 13, 2015, where the concept of Local Roadway Safety Planning and other safety considerations were discussed. During the meeting, two locations were identified that the town was either working on, or had a concern about, the Marsh Street, Main Street, and Church Street Intersection in Old Wethersfield, and Wolcott Hill Road between Coleman Road and Marmor Court. The Old Wethersfield project was in the preliminary design phase, and Wolcott Hill Road area was being evaluated by staff. I was asked to look at both locations with Mike Turner. We toured the two areas the same day.

Preliminary plans for the intersection of Marsh Street, Main Street, and Church Street in Old Wethersfield were provided to me by Mike Turner. The Old Wethersfield project was in the public meeting phase, and a public meeting was scheduled that week. So based upon the limited time available Mike Turner requested that I provide my thoughts verbally to him, which I did. The project proceeded through the public meeting process, through design and was constructed in the late summer/fall of 2015. The revised project included recommendations that were provided from the field evaluation and plan review.

Please see Wethersfield on next page
Initially there was no project proposed for Wolcott Hill Road. Mike Turner and I toured the site and discussed possible solutions. Mike requested a list of items to be considered so that the Wethersfield Engineering Division could develop a preliminary plan for the purpose of applying for a grant. I submitted a list of considerations to Mike during May, 2015, and in June, 2016 the town submitted an application under the Local Accident Reduction Grant to the Capital Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) for the project. The list of project considerations included enhancements for pedestrian access, signing, markings and lane narrowing on Wolcott Hill Road which provided a larger buffer zone for parked cars from the travel eastbound lane on Wolcott Hill Road.

In August 2015 CRCOG submitted the project to The Connecticut Department of Transportation for evaluation. The Town was just notified the state will not be funding this project (not because of merit, but because the scope value falls below the dollar threshold set in the grant). The Town is looking at other means to undertake the project.

If you are interested in setting up a meeting to discuss your Town’s local road safety considerations, don’t hesitate to contact me at: lorenzetti@engr.uconn.edu
The CT Technology Transfer Center (T2 Center) and the Governor’s Highway Safety Program’s Game Over Initiative have joined forces to bring awareness to Roadway Safety in Connecticut!

We want to make roadway safety a priority and asked the children of Connecticut to help promote safety through art. Keeping the theme of “Every Life Counts in Connecticut” in mind, students in grades K-6 submitted their poster designs depicting safe habits such as not driving distracted, maintaining the speed limit, and slowing down in work zones. We were looking for creative posters illustrating roadway safety concepts from a child’s point of view.

All submitted entries have been reviewed by a panel of roadway safety professionals and a winner and runner-up were selected for three age categories: grades K-1, 2-4 and 5-6. Winners will receive prizes and awards at the Work Zone Safety Week Press Conference in April, where they are presented with ribbons and gift baskets to honor their artistic achievements and for caring about safety on our roadways.

Stay tuned for the announcement of the winners in the next Technology Transfer Newsletter.

To visit the PBS Kids Driving Website use the following link: http://pbskids.org/.fetch/ruff/driving/
Transportation Leadership Program Begins its Fourth Cohort

Welcome and congratulations to the newest group of public works professionals to be accepted into the Transportation Leadership Program! This group of leaders will work together over the next two years to hone their skills, enhance their abilities and share their experiences in order to improve their agencies and the public works profession.

This year, the group will focus on the following modules and will begin work on their capstone projects:

Module One: Developing Teamwork, Communication and Giving Feedback
Module Two: Promoting Professionalism and Developing a Culture of Safety
Module Three: Presentation Skills and Effective Meetings

If you are interested in developing your passion for leadership and your lighting a fire within your team, consider applying for Cohort Five of the Transportation Leadership Program. More information can be found on our website - [http://www.t2center.uconn.edu/TransportationLeadershipProgram.php](http://www.t2center.uconn.edu/TransportationLeadershipProgram.php)

“*If you can hire people whose passion intersects with the job, they won’t require supervision at all. They will manage themselves better than anyone could ever manage them. Their fire comes from within, not from without.”*  
— Stephen Covey
Connecticut law enforcement faced a daunting challenge in 2015. As of January 1, 2015, the State of Connecticut changed the requirements for how police departments investigate and document motor vehicle collision reports. These changes were the first to be made to collision investigations in over 20 years. The Connecticut Transportation Safety Research Center (CTSRC), located at UConn, assisted the Department of Transportation in making this change, and training the law enforcement community on the new form.

As a result, a Crash Data Repository (CTCDR) was established at UConn consisting of motor vehicle crash report data from 1995 to the present. This repository includes over 100,000 collision reports from 2015 crashes already being reported for 2016 and new crashes uploaded every night. The CTCDR is an online database that provides all municipalities the ability to query and analyze data specific to their communities. The data can be specifically analyzed by criteria such as collision types, locations, times of day and days of the week. The new report form requires precise location information such as latitude and longitude of the crash location. This new information can now allow users to generate crash maps for problem area identification. These crash maps can then be converted into heat maps to indicate areas with high crash densities.

Anyone wishing for more information on the Connecticut Crash Data Repository is asked to contact Charles Grasso at (860) 753-1240 Email: grasso@engr.uconn.edu.

To listen to “MMUCC – What’s Happening in 2016” Podcast go to this link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3FBwJBDwrrnsdKRM82cVJUcWc/view
The Town of Simsbury, Department of Public Works offers its town’s residents the opportunity to ride-along with one of the snowplow drivers during a winter storm. We asked the Director of Public Works, Tom Roy, how the program started? “We, as a department, are very proud of our work and what better way to show someone what we do, than to let them sit next to one of our drivers while they are doing their job.” When Tom Roy came to the department he did not come from a traditional public works background. During his first winter, he went out with a number of drivers during snow storms. Seeing what his employees went through he had a better understanding of his crew and the job itself. As time went on, Tom would take calls from town residents with differing complaints regarding the snowplow operations. That’s when the idea came for a ride-along program, Tom explains: “Police departments have ride-along programs, so why not show the residents what it’s really like to plow the town’s roads and what obstacles the drivers face each and every snow storm. We at Public Works have an open-door policy”.

Tom worked with the town’s insurance company to develop a ride-along waiver form and then the Snowplow Ride-along program was born.

Here’s how it works: Interested participants fill out an application (application found on the town’s website) with times they are available to participate in the ride-along. One or two days before a winter storm, town staff will confirm the resident’s availability for the anticipated storm and schedule a time for their ride-along. Participants will arrive at the public works facility, where they are given an overview of the town’s snow plowing operations and a tour of the public works vehicle maintenance facility. Following the tour, the participants will meet the plow driver and climb into the truck.

The program began in 2009. Since its conception many town residents have signed up and taken the ride!

“If you haven't done a ride-along in one of our Public Works’ snowplows – you should.” – Thomas Cook, Simsbury’s Director of Administrative Services.
The program is a huge success. One resident, Karen Sidel said in an email to the Director:

“Thank you so much for having this program – I think everyone should go out with the plow team. It’s a real eye-opener and gave me a new appreciation for the job your crew does to keep the roads clear.”

If you would like more information regarding this great program please go to the Town of Simsbury’s website or visit this direct link to review the program’s description and application.


Public Works Director George Noewatne called Kaczer, “the consummate professional” who is always looking out for the best interests of the town and his staff. “He’s surrounded himself with a fantastic team down there” Noewatne said “…They’re a very tight unit and they all pull together. You can tell they’re very motivated and focused on doing what’s right. He’s the leader, so he certainly sets the tone for all that, and he’s a great person”. Congratulations, Richard Kaczer!

Cheshire Herald – Contributing article