LPESA Fall Conference

Information and Results!

The Louisiana Parish Engineers and Supervisors Association (LPESA) held its fall conference on September 21 and 22 at the LSU Ag Extension County Agent office in Crowley. Technical sessions included diverse presentations on Emergency Response, Natural Resource Management, and Infrastructure Management.

The opening session included important updates on issues key to parish and municipal participants. Roland Dartez, Executive Director of the Police Jury Association, provided a legislative update, and Kirt Clement, Deputy Undersecretary of LA DOTD, discussed the options available for transportation funding in the future and the impact that lack of funding can have at the local level. Curt McCarty, Administrator for the Louisiana Uniform Construction Code Council, provoked numerous

Operation Lifesaver Annual High School Speech Contest

Dates for Regional Contest Announced

Louisiana Operation Lifesaver (LA OL) recently announced the dates for its annual Operation Lifesaver High School Speech Contest. The date for the regional contests will be Friday, January 19, 2007, in the following cities: Hammond, Lafayette, Alexandria, and Monroe. Each winner of the regional contests will compete in the final contest on Friday, April 27, 2007, in Baton Rouge, in conjunction with the Students Against Destructive Decisions Youth Conference.

The topic of the speech will be Operation Lifesaver and safety at highway-railroad crossings and rights-of-way. The contest is open to all high school students in the state of Louisiana. Students must prepare an original, five to seven minute oratory, with visual aids, on rail safety. The winner of the final contest will receive a $1000 scholarship and an all expense paid trip to the Operation Lifesaver Region 5/6 Super Regional Workshop in Little Rock, Arkansas, August 23-25, 2007.

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questions and discussion with his presentation regarding Louisiana’s new construction codes which take full effect across the state on January 1, 2007. Subsequent conversations on this topic resulted in LPESA working with the Police Jury Association, the Louisiana Municipal Association, and LTAP to coordinate meetings for the parishes and municipalities in the hurricane impacted areas, with meetings around the state to follow. More information on this topic is included in this newsletter.

The technical sessions were presented by members of federal, state, and local agencies. The Hot Topics session at the end of the conference provided the opportunity to share some best practices and resulted in lively discussions. Contact information for some of the speakers and available resources on the conference presentations are listed below:

**Managing Beaver Problems in Louisiana**  
Contact:  
Dwight LeBlanc, State Director, USADA/APHIS/WS  
225-389-0229  
An informational guide is available on LTAP’s Web site at www.ltrc.lsu.edu.

**Trees in Cities: Hurricanes and Urban Forest Health (What’s the Best Tree for Your Community?)**  
Contact:  
Dr. Hallie Dozier  
LSU Renewable Natural Resources  
225-578-7219 or hdozier@agcenter.lsu.edu.

**Impact of Development on Drainage Areas and Storm Water Runoff**  
Contact:  
Dr. Rod Hendrick  
225-578-6998 or rhendrick@agcenter.lsu.edu.

**Patching: Rapid Concrete Pavement Repair**  
Contact:  
John Eggers, LA DOTD/LTRC  
225-767-9190.  
Suggested resources include:  
*The ACI Manual of Concrete*  
Chapters:  
325.11 Accelerated Techniques for Concrete Paving  
318 Building Code Requirements  
212.3 Chemical Admixtures for Concrete

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**Save the Date**

**LPESA Spring Conference**  
May 3 and 4, 2007  
Baton Rouge

The next LPESA conference is scheduled for May 3 and 4, 2007 in Baton Rouge. Mark your calendars and plan to attend. The LPESA conference is one of the best ways to keep up with current technology, best practices around the state, and your professional peers. Don’t miss your next opportunity to participate.
Louisiana State Uniform Construction Codes

LPESA Tracks Implementation

Louisiana’s new Uniform Construction Codes are scheduled to go into effect statewide on January 1, 2007. This is the message that Curt McCarty, Administrator to the Louisiana State Uniform Construction Code Council (LSUCCC), has been spreading around the state. When Curt spoke at the Louisiana Parish Engineers and Supervisors Association (LPESA) meeting in September, there were many unanswered questions regarding the implementation strategies for the new code. In addition, while it appeared that there was some funding available to assist the state in implementing the new requirements, the mechanism(s) for dispersing these funds was still uncertain. The need for training for inspectors on the code council was also acknowledged.

At LPESA’s request, in conjunction with the Louisiana Municipal Association and the Police Jury Association, Curt McCarty agreed to a meeting in LTAP’s Baton Rouge office to discuss implementation issues. Representatives of all groups, including: George Mikhael, President of LPESA; Bob Manual, President of the PJA; Roland Dartez, Executive Director of the PJA; George Marretta of LMA; and Marie Walsh, of LTAP, attended. The impending deadline was discussed, as were the various options available to local agencies to implement new, or to enhance existing code, enforcement programs. The lack of available inspectors was addressed, as was the need for training.

As a result of this meeting, two workshops were scheduled to provide information regarding the LSUCC and the special provisions already in effect in the hurricane impacted parishes. The LMA and PJA notified their members and encouraged building officials representing all agencies with permitting responsibilities to attend. LTAP worked with the groups to develop an agenda and formalize documentation of the history of the code program and considerations in developing a new code enforcement program. These documents, made available at the meetings, are now available on LTAP’s Web site at www.ltrc.lsu.edu/ltap. The two meetings were held in Jefferson Parish and Vermillion Parish, with over 150 attendees. Subsequent meetings were held in five other locations around the state.

The meetings gave local building officials and elected officials the opportunity to ask questions of the LSUCCC representatives regarding the code enforcement statutes that go into effect on January 1, 2007. It was apparent from the questions and feedback that confusion and concern regarding the training and certification requirements, registration, and funding assistance were common to many agencies, whether municipal or parish based. The greatest concern was from those agencies with no existing programs.

LPESA, LMA, and the PJA continue to work with the LSUCCC to communicate implementation strategies and to develop workable solutions, including funding assistance.

For the most up-to-date information on implementing the LSUCCC, contact Curt McCarty at 225-922-0817 or curt.mccarty@dps.la.gov. Other information is available at www.dps.state.la.us/sfm and http://www.iccsafe.org/safety/hurricane/Louisiana.html.

Safety Tip: In Case of Emergency

One of the largest problems for rescue personnel to handle during an accident, apart from providing aid, is contacting victims’ family members or friends to let them know what has happened or provide vital information.

By putting an “in case of emergency” or ICE number on your cellphone, your emergency contact can be reached as soon as possible and provide rescue workers with your physician’s name, blood type, and medical history.
Introduction by Darrell Johnson, LA DOTD Traffic Operations Construction/Maintenance Manager

Reduce staff, but do more. Control costs, but do more. With less funding do more. How often have we heard these words in the past few years? Whether it’s staffing, materials or equipment, in today’s world we all have to do more with less. Do you want a way to help confront these trends and still be productive? Then an inventory management system for traffic control devices (in addition to your other assets) may be one answer.

One key to the effective management of your operation is the ability to know what assets you have and when they may need to be replaced and/or require maintenance. In the future we may see even more specific requirements from the FHWA as related to traffic control devices, such as minimum reflectivity of signs, that may impact your operations and demand resources. Time will become an even more valuable commodity, and being able to plan work and control material costs will be critical. There is truly no better time than now to implement one of many of the software packages that will allow you to establish your own Traffic Control Device Inventory and even complete asset management systems. The need for your own inventory or asset management system is truly a sign of the times.

There are a number of traffic control device inventory methods and systems available to meet the needs of large and small asset management programs. These computerized software packages are relatively inexpensive to purchase. Several agencies included a request for inventory systems as part of their road safety improvement applications involving signs and pavement markings as part of the LA Local Road Safety Program. This program is an excellent opportunity to apply for funding to not only improve signs and pavement markings but to also to implement an inventory system to improve program management in the future.

The Iowa Center for Transportation and Education has published a manual which includes a good overview of inventory systems. The excerpt below details considerations for choosing a system. The entire article and manual can be accessed at: http://www.cte.iastate.edu/pubs/itcd/index.htm.

Choosing a System

Inventory systems range from very basic to quite sophisticated, depending on the needs of an agency and the available resources. A very basic inventory system might consist of manual records, such as paper files of activities of a card system, to maintain the system and keep it current.

Many transportation agencies use automated, computerized systems. Each agency should consider several factors before making a selection from the many computer programs available. Such factors include:

- Agency requirements
- Computer skills and capabilities
- Availability of trained staff to support the system and keep it current
- Improved accuracy and production with use of laptop computers for field operations

When selecting an inventory system, the following issues should be
Highway-Rail Safety Highlighted

Union Pacific Provides Heritage Equipment Ride

In early November, Union Pacific Railroad and Louisiana Operation Lifesaver conducted a train ride through South Central and Southwest Louisiana, during which local officials and media representatives were invited to ride the rails while engaging in informal discussions about highway-rail safety. The Union Pacific Heritage Equipment traveled from Livonia to Lake Charles while representatives from Louisiana Operation Lifesaver, LA DOTD, Union Pacific Railroad, LA State Police, and local police departments gave informative presentations on the importance of highway-rail safety education and the benefits of the communities and the railroads working together for safety. The event was successful, bringing together nearly 100 local officials from across South Louisiana. Marie Walsh, of LTAP, participated, as did Robert Bergeaux of Acadia Parish and several other members of the Louisiana Parish Engineers and Supervisors Association.

Some things discussed on the train were the responsibilities of the LA DOTD for railroad crossings in local communities and the local road authority’s responsibilities at locally owned crossings. Union Pacific Railroad discussed its responsibilities as a railroad and answered many questions from local officials. Law enforcement discussed laws pertaining to railroad crossings and the Officer on the Train program. Also, LA Operation Lifesaver gave the audience information on how to contact its office for free presentations on highway-rail safety.

For more information on highway-rail safety, or to schedule a safety presentation with Operation Lifesaver, contact Bryant Laiche at 225-721-3431, or e-mail him at bryant@laoperationlifesaver.org. For information on the requirements of local road authorities for advanced warning signs and pavements markings, contact Marie Walsh, of LTAP, at 225-767-9184 or Mark Suarez, LA DOTD Systems Engineer, at 225-379-1559.

References and Resources

Louisiana 2006 Five Percent Report
This report prepared by the LA DOTD and FHWA is in response to a new federal requirement that each state describes 5 percent of its locations with the most severe highway safety needs. This report can be viewed at http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/fivepercent/06la.htm.

Gravel Roads Maintenance and Design Manual
Developed by the South Dakota Local Technical Assistance Program, the Gravel Roads Maintenance and Design Manual addresses many concerns with gravel road upkeep. This manual covers routine maintenance, shaping principles, and the construction of road shoulders along gravel roads. Drainage, dust control, and gravel selection is also discussed. The Gravel Roads Maintenance and Design Manual can be found at http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/gravelman.pdf.

OSHA Quick Takes
OSHA Quick Takes is a bi-weekly e-news memo with information, updates, and results about safety and health in America’s workplaces. Topics focus on practical issues in the American workplace. Subscribe to OSHA Quick Takes at www.osha.gov.
Controlling Roadside Invasive Species

New DVD Video Available at the LTAP Library

A training video to help road maintenance crews recognize and control invasive plants has been developed by the U.S. Forest Service in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration and other agencies. An accompanying fact sheet provides additional information.

The video, titled *Dangerous Travelers: Controlling Invasive Plants Along America’s Roadways*, outlines the best management practices that road crews should be following in their day-to-day operations. Best practices include how to work with botany professionals for plant identification, developing inventory systems, mapping infestations, mechanical removal, herbicide treatments, weed-free products, maintenance techniques to reduce risk of spreading weeds, and equipment cleaning.

According to the fact sheet, "Targeting invasive species is one of the Forest Service’s top priorities. In the Western United States alone, 17 million acres have been taken over by invasive species. And the number of acres is growing. It is estimated that an additional 4,600 acres are taken over by noxious weeds every day." Road maintenance crews are the nation’s "first responders, providing early detection and rapid response to new infestations of invasive plants that could be spread quickly along these highway corridors."

The video is the first in a new series of videos on best management practices for invasive species prevention. It will be part of a series of five videos (that cover maintenance practices for unpaved roads) titled, *Forest Roads and the Environment.*

The video was developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service’s San Dimas Technology and Development Center in partnership with the National Forest System Invasive Species Program, Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. It may be accessed on the invasive species program Web site, http://www.fs.fed.us/invasivespecies or by contacting: USDA Forest Service
San Dimas Technology and Development Center
444 East Bonita Avenue
San Dimas, California 91773
909-599-1267

A copy of the video is also available through the LTAP office by calling 225-767-9117.

A Sign of the Times, cont. from page 4

addressed:
- Does the system match the selected data elements? Are all data elements recorded?
- Is there an understanding of the basic features of a software program as compared to data elements?
- Do the hardware and software requirements of computer programs match the existing computer system?
- Have user support and references been reviewed?
- What does the initial cost include? All modules?
- Are there maintenance costs with the program?
- Have other local agencies successfully implemented the software?

Software that provides basic inventory features has been developed and is available at minimal cost to local agencies. These programs can be effectively used as a low-cost supplement to a sign management system. Information on several commercial systems currently available may be found at: www.cartegraph.com and www.tapconet.com.
Mark Your Calendar

Environmental Regulatory Compliance Conference
January 24 & 25, 2007
Riverfront Center
Alexandria, LA

LTAP Road Scholar Course #5 Safety for the Public Works Employee
January 17, 2007 Rayne
January 18, 2007 Lake Charles
January 23, 2007 TTEC
January 24, 2007 Metairie
January 25, 2007 Madisonville
February 6, 2007 Bossier City Holiday Inn
February 7, 2007 Ruston
February 8, 2007 Alexandria

LTAP Road Scholar Course #4 - Temporary Traffic Control
January 30, 2007 Lake Charles
February 13, 2007 TTEC
February 14, 2007 Metairie
February 27, 2007 Bossier City
February 28, 2007 Ruston
March 1, 2007 Alexandria
March 20, 2007 Rayne

DOTD Transportation Engineering Conference
February 11-14, 2007
Baton Rouge River Center
Baton Rouge, LA

Louisiana Police Jury Association Annual Convention
February 22-24, 2007
Cajundome Convention Center
Lafayette, LA

NHI Course “New Approaches to Highway Safety Analysis”
March 28-30, 2007
Baton Rouge, LA

Road Scholar Course #2 - Asphalt Roads: Common Maintenance Problems
Road Scholar Course #7 - Asphalt Roads: Surface Treatments
April 10, 2007 TTEC
April 11, 2007 Metairie
April 12, 2007 Madisonville
April 24, 2007 Lake Charles
April 25, 2007 Rayne
April 30, 2007 Bossier City
May 1, 2007 Ruston
May 2, 2007 Alexandria

National Association of County Engineers (NACE) 2007 Annual Meeting and Management & Technical Conference
April 22-26, 2007
Hyatt Regency Milwaukee Hotel
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Road Scholar 13(a) Bridges: Minor Repair Techniques
May 8 – Madisonville
May 9 – Metairie
May 10 – Baton Rouge, TTEC
May 15 – Rayne
May 16 – Lake Charles
May 22 – Bossier City
May 23 – Ruston
May 24 – Alexandria

Road Safety Audit Class
May 8 and 9
Baton Rouge, TTEC

Please visit our website at www.ltrc.lsu.edu/ltap for more information on these upcoming conferences and classes.
Operation Lifesaver, cont. from page 1

Operation Lifesaver is a non-profit program dedicated to eliminating fatalities and injuries at highway-rail grade crossings and on railroad rights-of-way. Louisiana was ranked among the top five states in the nation for the number of collisions at highway-rail crossings. For further information, please visit www.laoperationlifesaver.org or www.oli.org.

After attending the speech contest for several years, Marie Walsh, of LTAP, had the honor of participating as a judge in the 2006 Louisiana State Speech Contest Finals. The enthusiasm and poise of the contestants made hard to choosing a winner difficult. However, all of the finalists had obviously put forth a lot of effort in learning more about highway-rail safety and could be very persuasive in informing their peers and the public about this topic.