LTAP Joins New Core Safety Coalition

*Click It or Ticket is First Collaborative Effort*

A core group consisting of representatives from the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission (LHSC), LTAP, LADOTD, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recently formed a coalition that will work to aggressively and collaboratively implement key strategies of the Louisiana Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). The coalition’s inaugural effort will support the upcoming annual Click It or Ticket campaign sponsored by the LHSC. Click It or Ticket efforts include high visibility and aggressive enforcement of Louisiana’s primary seat belt law as well as education and outreach. The coalition has also worked to organize local collaborations to implement regional strategies in four areas with historically low seatbelt usage.

**Your Help is Needed!**

May is designated by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHSA) as occupant protection month and special emphasis and funding are provided to states to implement programs to increase seat belt usage. In Louisiana as in many states the primary effort occurs during the annual Click It or Ticket campaign conducted by the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission (LHSC). This year the safety coalition will provide a greater emphasis to this important effort and assist local agencies in getting more involved in saving lives on Louisiana’s roads.

Wearing a seat belt is one of the easiest and surest ways to reduce the chance of serious injury or death in a crash. Lap and shoulder safety belts reduce fatal injuries by 45% and moderate to critical injuries by 50%. In 2007, 65% of the 993 people killed in crashes in Louisiana were not buckled up. Only 183 (33%) of the 554 drivers killed were known to be wearing safety belts. Louisiana’s average safety belt usage rate of 75.5% is the lowest rate of any state with a primary seat belt law. It is the goal of the campaign to raise this percentage by at least 2 percentage points this year and to the national average by 2011.

Cont. on page 3
The Louisiana LTAP Center hosted four workshops on construction inspection during February. George Huntington of the Wyoming LTAP Center, formerly a project engineer and construction inspector with the Wyoming DOT, taught the course. Participants’ construction inspection skills varied from twenty years experience to those who had never been inspectors. The workshop was an opportunity to learn not only from the instructor, but from the more experienced people attending the workshops as well. The workshop began with an overview of the roles and responsibilities of construction inspectors, defining both their authority and their power. Legal and contractual considerations were covered with an emphasis on critical aspects of contract law and how inspectors should conduct themselves to protect the interests of the project’s owner. The importance of avoiding supervision of contractors’ employees was stressed with special attention paid to the contractual implications of taking on supervisory responsibilities. “Do not supervise” was one of the main lessons learned during the workshop.

Next, procedural aspects of construction inspection were covered. Activities that take place before the contract is awarded, those that take place before construction begins, and project close-out tasks were addressed. The importance of documenting the wide variety of tasks an inspector must perform was stressed along with the potential for the inspector serving as a witness in any possible legal actions. The sometimes uncertain role of the inspector in enforcing environmental, labor, and other regulations was described. This discussion helped to further clarify the relationships between the inspector, contractor, and owner.

Once the general procedural aspects of construction inspection were covered, the instructor discussed which technical components were to be covered with the attendees, focusing on those areas each class was most interested in. Each workshop covered earthwork, soils, and compaction, along with a section on work zone traffic control. The attendees then got to select several topics they were most interested in. Choices included erosion and sediment control, concrete, hot mix asphalt, granular bases, chip seals, geotextiles, culverts, drainage, and other features that are likely to need inspection on a road or street project.

While the technical aspects of construction inspection are important, there are too many details of inspecting a highway project to cover them all in a single day. Basic procedural issues faced by all inspectors, such as avoiding supervising contractors’ employees, time management, communication, and documentation, were the primary focuses of these workshops. Comments from participant evaluations indicated that a follow-up course or an even longer introductory class would be helpful. This would allow for more detail and focus on the numerous technical aspects of construction inspection.

Let us know what you think about more training on construction inspection; call Spencer Boatner at 225-767-9184.
Law enforcement officers from across Louisiana will work hundreds of overtime hours throughout May conducting special patrols and check points to enforce the state’s mandatory safety belt use law. “While most people in Louisiana recognize that wearing a seat belt makes them safer, about one-fourth of drivers and front seat passengers still refuse to buckle up,” said Lt. Col. John LeBlanc, executive director of the LHSC. “The focus of our outreach campaign is to inform motorists that State Police troopers, municipal police, sheriff’s deputies and other enforcement officers will be out in force the last two weeks of May enforcing the state’s seat belt law.”

Louisiana law requires that drivers and front seat occupants wear safety belts and that children under the age of 13 wear a safety belt and/or be restrained by an appropriate child safety seat belt regardless of seating positions.

Four regional areas identified for enhanced coalition efforts include Lake Charles, Monroe, Alexandria, and New Orleans. These areas have historically had the lowest average seat belt usage rates in the state. The local coalitions will be involved in identifying road safety stakeholders in each area, engaging local agencies and organizations through outreach and education, providing leadership and resources to community efforts and helping to reach target groups, such as teen drivers and other high risk populations. Initial leadership and support from the Louisiana State Police, LADOTD District offices, LHSC, and LTAP will assist locally based coalitions in planning and implementing activities.

**What You Can Do**

Supporting the Click It or Ticket campaign and the associated outreach activities is something that every person in Louisiana can do within their own workplace, community associations, and their own families. Here are some things that individual and organizations can consider doing to encourage seat belt usage.

Public agencies and commercial and private organizations are asked to choose among the following:
- Review your existing seat belt usage policy and publicize it to all employees.
- Conduct an informal survey of employees to evaluate seat belt usage.
- Publicize the Click It or Ticket campaign and seat belt benefits through organization communication mechanisms (websites, e-mail alerts, newsletters, with paychecks or stubs, etc.).
- Post publicity materials in prominent locations during April and May.
- Include seat belt usage in defensive driving or other safety classes or meetings during April and May.
- Make it clear that your agency requires all vehicle occupants to be belted on work time.

Parents and Family Members:
- Parents of teens should recognize that teens are a high risk, low belt usage group. Encourage your teens to buckle up at all times and enforce this life saving practice.
- Set an example by always buckling up and requiring all passengers in family vehicles to buckle up at all times.
- Tell your family members, friends, neighbors, coworkers about Click It or Ticket and encourage everyone to buckle up, everytime.
- Contact LTAP if you need print or video materials to use at local events on seat belts or other safety topics.

**Help Save a Life!**

Call Marie Walsh at 225-767-9184 if you would like to get more involved in a regional coalition in the areas of Monroe, Lake Charles, Alexandria, or New Orleans.
By David McFarland
Louisiana LTAP

David McFarland, LTAP’s Work Zone Safety Trainer shares some of his thoughts based on his years of experiences working in the field with state and local road agencies.

The first week in April has been designated National Work Zone Awareness Week. Public service announcements, ad campaigns, and media coverage will attempt to enlighten roadway users of the carnage that has occurred in work zones over the last year. Statistics will be quoted and pictures will be used telling us that this can be avoided, the damage and deaths reduced, if not eliminated, by simply slowing down and becoming more aware. In addition, stepped up enforcement in work zones will be conducted to reinforce the message.

The four main driver errors found on crash reports are inattentive drivers, disregarding traffic control devices, following too closely, and exceeding the speed limit. Sound familiar to you? Couple these with temporary traffic control devices in work zones, and there exists a perfect mix for fatalities and injuries on the roadways.

FHWA reports that:

- One fatality every 10 hours occurs in a work zone in the U.S.
- One work zone injury every 13 minutes occurs in the U.S.
- 85 percent of those killed in a work zone are drivers or occupants
- More than 40,000 people are injured each year as a result of motor vehicle crashes in work zones

The most dangerous time for work crews is the initial setup and removal of traffic control devices. This is the period when workers are trying to advise motorists of what to expect ahead, show them their proper path of travel, and arrange their workstations in a safe environment. Once established, a curious thing happens – people want to know what is going on. The drivers become distracted by work zone equipment, wanting to know what is being done outside the travel lane that they are in, how long it is going to take, and what will the improvement mean to them. These are the types of things that lead to collisions, both sideswipes and rear-enders. Distractions are deadly as drivers tend to drift toward the object they are looking at. That is why so many law enforcement vehicles are struck while parked on the shoulder with their emergency lights flashing. A momentary lapse of concentration, a distraction either within or outside of the vehicle, is not only dangerous to the driver but to anyone within the recovery area, including roadway workers and their equipment.

More Road Work and Work Zones Ahead

A statistic recently used in a driver education class stated that in the United States, a motorist will encounter some type of road work for every 50 miles driven. With the additional influx of funds from the American Recovery Act, this figure will most likely increase. Our aging infrastructure as well as new development ensures that more road work and work zones will be encountered.
The Design and Implementation of Work Zones

Work zones are designed to protect both the worker and motoring public. The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) contains guidance on the standardization of work zone design and traffic control through work zones. In addition, Work Zone Safety Mobility, published in the Federal Register 2004 and effective as of October 2007, updates the changing times of more traffic, more congestion, greater safety issues, and more work zones. This new report focuses on a policy-driven approach of impact management and execution by looking at a project and its impact on travelers.

Education and Training: Who should teach what to whom?

It might be helpful to view the need for education from a couple of different perspectives. As a roadway worker, I would like to see the motorist stand out here for an hour and find out what it’s like to have 2800 pounds of metal going by within three feet of where I’m standing. As a utility worker, I wish the designer of this road had left some room for my vehicle and crew so we could work without having to be in traffic. The motorist could show that worker how hard he or she is to see without bright, reflective clothing and what the motorist would have done differently if they had been warned in advance that normal conditions had changed, if only for 15 minutes.

There is regular training conducted by the LADOTD, LTAP, and other organizations on the design and implementation of safe work zones. Contractors are required to have trained personnel to work on state road projects. There is even special training for law enforcement officers assigned to work zones. Work Zone Awareness week will include other special education and outreach activities to the general public.

Don’t underestimate the potential danger of work zones or the tremendous opportunity to implement the safest work zone possible by following the appropriate guidelines and standards for work zone design. This ensures that workers are properly trained to install and then work in an active work zone. Also, remember your responsibility as a driver on our public roads. Stay attentive, be patient, and don’t jeopardize your safety or the safety of other motorists or workers.

To set up work zone training for your local agency work crews or supervisors or for other work zone safety resources, call David McFarland at 225-767-9118.

LPESA Spring Conference

The Louisiana Parish Engineers and Supervisors Association (LPESA) Spring Conference is scheduled for May 7–8, 2009 at the Ouachita Parish Fire Training Center in West Monroe, LA. Rooms have been reserved at the Wingate by Wyndham. Topics include pipeline safety, vegetation management, right of way issues, new road surface treatment products, ethic considerations for public employees, local bridge management, and safety trends in public works. Dinner on the first day will be provided by ERGON, Diamond B, Dreher Construction, and Davison Petroleum at the Cheniere Lake Park Pavilion. Join LPESA in Ouachita to hear the latest on new technologies and share ideas with other members from across the state.

To register online, please visit www.lpesa.org. Conference agenda and brochure is also available at the LPESA Web site. Room reservations for the Wingate must be made by April 24.
National Public Works Week (NPWW) will be celebrated this year from May 17–23, 2009. A celebration of the tens of thousands of men and women in North America who provide and maintain the infrastructure and services known as public works. Originally instituted as a public education campaign by the American Public Works Association (APWA) in 1960, NPWW calls attention to the importance of public works in community life.

More information on celebrating NPWW and ideas for local activities may be found in the NPWW How to Guide at www.apwa.net/About/NPWW/2009 or by calling LTAP at 225-767-9118.

The Baton Rouge Branch of the Louisiana APWA Chapter will kick off NPWW with an education and networking event on May 15, 2009. Co-sponsored by the Louisiana LTAP Center, the event will be held at the Transportation Training and Education Center (TTEC) on the Louisiana State University campus.

Scheduled topics and speakers include:

**Storm Water Updates**
Dr. Rod Hendricks, LSU AgCenter Extension

**Ethics for Public Works Employees**
Courtney Jackson, Louisiana Board of Ethics

**Public Bid Laws**
Jennifer Schaye, Louisiana Legislative Auditor

**New Orleans APWA Information**
Randy Nicholson, Jefferson Parish

**Luncheon – Sponsored by CH2M Hill**

**Right of Way**
James Hall, FHWA and Lloyd Scallon, LADOTD

**Field Trip to LA House**

Credit for professional development hours (PDH) will be available. Registration information may be found at louisiana.apwa.net. Contact LTAP’s David McFarland at 225-767-9118 if you are interested in combining a training or educational event in conjunction with your celebration.

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**Hurricane Season**

Hurricane season will soon be upon us again and state and local agencies are making preparations to ensure timely and safe response to any natural disaster that might challenge Louisiana this year. Hopefully, the state will be spared a direct hit, but hope is not enough to rely on. LTAP will again offer the popular workshop, Safety for Public Works Responders, at convenient locations across the state.

Local public works and transportation agencies are among the first responders after a storm or other disaster and the hazards and challenges faced can be numerous and deadly. This workshop moves timely information on safety and organizational issues.

The workshop will focus on roles and responsibilities during a natural disaster, hazards encountered by public works responders, and includes modules on the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

The instructor, Skip Breeden, assistant section chief of preparedness at the Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, has over 20 years of training and emergency response experience. He has provided training on emergency management topics on the local, state, and national levels.

Register soon for this class to make sure you, your local responders, and work crews will be better prepared for this year’s storm season.
New Publications

Electronic Reports

Road Safety Audits
safety.fhwa.dot.gov/rsa/rsaguidelines/html/index.htm

Roadway Shoulder Rumble Strips (Technical Advisory 5040.35)
www.fhwa.dot.gov/legsregs/directives/techadvs/t50435.htm

Recommended Procedures for the Safety Performance Evaluation of Highway Features
safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadway_dept/road_hardware/nchrp_350.htm

The Safety Edge: Pavement Edge Treatment
safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadway_dept/docs/sa05003.htm

Roundabouts in the United States (NCHRP Report 572)
onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp_rpt_572.pdf

A Guide for Addressing Unsignalized Intersection Collisions (NCHRP Report 500, Volume 5)
onlinepubs.trb.org/Onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp_rpt_500v5.pdf

Pedestrian Facility User’s Guide: Providing Safety and Mobility

Two Low-Cost Safety Concepts for Two-Way Stop-Controlled, Rural Intersections (FHWA-HRT-080-063)

LTAP Library Publications
Call Bob Breaux at 225-767-9117 to check out for review.

Emergency Management: Field Manual for Public Works and Countering Disaster CD-ROM
APWA’s new field manual is designed to help your response team plan for, work through, and recover from disaster.

Objectives and Strategies for Improving Safety at Unsignalized and Signalized Intersections
This key sheet is a companion to the NCHRP Report 500 series on strategies to reduce crashes and unsignalized (Volume 5) and signalized (Volume 12) intersections.

FHWA Intersection Safety Strategies
This brochure is a quick reference to the countermeasures described in the NCHRP Report 500 Volumes on reducing crashes at unsignalized (Volume 5) and signalized (Volume 12) intersections and is a supplement to individual guides for each of the 77 countermeasures.
Upcoming Events

**Safety for Emergency Responders**
April 21 – Sulphur, LA
April 22 – Rayne, LA
April 23 – Baton Rouge, LA
April 28 – Madisonville, LA
April 29 – Metairie, LA
May 12 – Bossier City, LA
May 13 – Monroe, LA
May 14 – Alexandria, LA

**National Work Zone Awareness Week**
April 6 – 10, 2009

**LPESA Spring Conference**
May 7 – 8, 2009
West Monroe, LA

**APWA Education Forum**
May 15, 2009
Baton Rouge, LA

**National Public Works Week**
May 17 – 23, 2009

**Louisiana Highway Safety Commission**
**Click It or Ticket Campaign**
May 17 – 30, 2009

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Need Technical Help?
Contact LTAP

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The Louisiana Local Technical Assistance Program was established at the Louisiana Transportation Research Center on the LSU campus in 1986. The purpose of the center is to provide technical materials, information, and training to help local government agencies in Louisiana maintain and improve their roads and bridges in a cost-effective manner. To accomplish this purpose, we publish a quarterly newsletter; conduct seminars, workshops, and mini-workshops covering various aspects of road and transportation issues; provide a lending library service of audio/visual programs; provide technical assistance through phone and mail-in requests relating to transportation technology; and undertake special projects of interest to municipalities in Louisiana. LTAP also coordinates the Louisiana Local Road Safety Program.