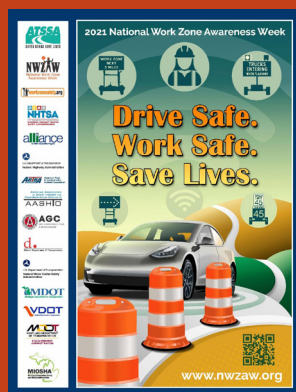




Technology Exchange

VOLUME 33, ISSUE 1
SPRING 2021



Work Zone Awareness Week April 26-30, 2021

This year's theme for NWZAW is "Drive Safe. Work Safe. Save Lives." We encourage everyone to help us promote safe driving through highway work zones. Visit www.nwzaw.org to learn more.

Go Orange Day Wednesday, April 28, 2021

Participate by wearing orange to proudly show your support for work zone safety. Post your team photo on social media and don't forget caption it with #NWZAW and #Orange4Safety.

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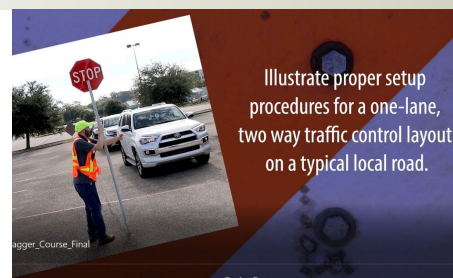
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Visit www.louisianaltap.org for our current classes, training requests, free resources, and much more...

LTAP Produces Work Zone Instructional Video

LTAP teamed up with LTRC's multimedia staff to produce an instructional video that can be used in our "Work Zone Safety with Basic Flagging" class. This course covers work zone safety topics, including standards and guidelines for traffic controls during road construction, maintenance, utility, and incident management operations. The 24-minute video highlights how a flagger operates to ensure the safety of the motoring public in work zones and during incident management events.

"We'd typically offer this class in person, but now we have the option to offer it virtually. This video is a great tool we can use for both in-person and virtual work zone safety classes. We can't always do our field exercise considering the health protocols or weather challenges, so this video will help bridge that gap. Our plan is to also make the course available virtually, so having this video comes in handy," says LTAP Director Steve Strength, who also teaches the course.



LPESA Engages Members through Hybrid Meetings

By Rudynah Entera Capone

The past year has been unusually challenging for the Louisiana Parish Engineers and Supervisors Association (LPESA), but with support from its partners, the association continues to uphold its mission of providing professional development opportunities to its members.

First, LPESA successfully held this year's Board Meeting and General Membership Meeting in a socially distanced, hybrid format. Second, LPESA now offers a monthly eLearning opportunity called the LPESA Virtual Showcase wherein associate members and partners demonstrate products, programs, services, and activities that are of interest to the LPESA community. Third, the association's officers have agreed to hold an in-person conference this year as a result of a survey that was done to gauge the level of interest among its members. Based on the responses, 45% of the members responded they would prefer an in-person meeting, while 30% would join in if it is in blended format.



cont. on pg. 7

On the Road Again—Safely!

By Steven Strength



A conversation the other day about the easing of COVID restrictions reminded me of a warning from a Navy Commander many years ago. Upon arrival in home port after a lengthy overseas deployment, the skipper told his crew, “Most of you have not driven a vehicle in six months. Don’t expect to get in a car and drive cross country

and not have any problems. Take a few days to get used to being behind the wheel.” Of course, being young and invincible, I promptly got in my car and drove seven hours home!

Fortunately I had no problems on that trip, but there was definitely a learning curve as I got used to the tasks and thought processes of safely operating a vehicle again. As our economy continues to open up this spring and more people go back to work and school in person, many of us in the local public works and transportation fields are facing similar challenges. Our roadways are experiencing more traffic, unfamiliar traffic patterns, and drivers out there who may not be as patient with this “new normal.” Meanwhile, our crews are still out there working on the roadways, putting themselves at even greater risk. It is particularly important for us all to drive carefully, take extra care in setting up and maintaining our work zone traffic controls, and watch out for each other. The National Work Zone Awareness Week (NWZAW) campaign, held every spring to raise awareness of the hazards and need for extra caution in work zones, is scheduled for April 26-30. This year’s theme is “Drive Safe. Work Safe. Save Lives,” a reminder that properly executed work zones are a big factor in the safety of both workers and the traveling public. *See cover page for more information.*

To commemorate NWZAW, take a few minutes to check out the new LTAP flagger video discussed in this newsletter and take a look at the work zone classes and other resources offered by LTAP on our website. We’re back on the road, so we look forward to seeing you out there in a training class, or better yet, in a safe work zone!

COVID-19 Impacts to Local Transportation Agency Operations

By Chris Melson



COVID-19 and resultant government health mandates had significant and wide-ranging impacts to the transportation field. The majority of current and past COVID-related studies have focused on impacts to system performance (e.g., changes in crash frequency and severity along a corridor). This is mainly due to the immediacy of these impacts in response to “lockdowns” across the country—and existing, in-place mechanisms to measure these changes. Unfortunately, less attention has been given to impacts on actual operations of transportation agencies—especially local transportation agencies.

Louisiana LTAP is leading an effort to collect and identify common challenges that local public works and transportation agencies faced during the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery, and most importantly, how these challenges were overcome. We are interested in hearing and highlighting your experiences! We encourage our locals to complete the following, brief survey over the challenges faced by your agency: <https://bit.ly/3cXiz3y>. Additionally, we are interested in scheduling short, informal interviews to gather further details and better understand your agency’s experiences. If interested in sharing your story, please contact Dynah Capone (Rudynah.Capone@la.gov). We anticipate compiling these experiences, summarizing lessons learned, and providing recommendations to better prepare agencies in the future. We appreciate your participation!



Instructions: The intent of this survey is to identify common challenges that local public works and transportation agencies faced during the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery. Responses will be collected and reported anonymously. If you have any questions, please contact Chris Melson (Christopher.Melson@la.gov).



Please enter the name of your agency and divisional unit.



Looking for Local Innovations: A “Better Crawfish Trap”

Deadline is May 14, 2021

The Louisiana LTAP is seeking your agency’s innovations for the annual FHWA Build A Better Mousetrap (BABM) recognition program. Starting this year, the Louisiana LTAP will be rebranding our state level competition (including revamping our promotional materials and prizes) and renaming to “Building A Better Crawfish Trap.” Why? Because better stuff comes from a crawfish trap than a mousetrap!

More information, including how to apply, will be disseminated soon and posted to the “Innovation” section of www.louisianaltap.org. Winners will be recognized with the “Golden Crawfish Trap” award at the LPESA Conference on May 27, 2021. Winners will also be submitted for inclusion in the national BABM program. Deadline for entry will be May 14, 2021, so start thinking about your innovations now!

We are looking for innovations that improve safety, reduce cost, or increase efficiency. We will specifically be using the following criteria:

- **Innovative Project**—A project that introduces new ideas addressing a project’s life cycle: planning, design or engineering, construction, operations, and maintenance.
- **Bold Steps**—A locally relevant, high-risk project or process that shows a break-through solution with demonstrated high reward.
- **Smart Transformation**—A project with local relevance and significant change in any activity or process that is Smart, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (SMART) in nature that increases efficiency.
- **Pioneer**—A locally relevant product or tool that is among the first to solve a maintenance problem with a homegrown solution.

Stay tuned for more information!



Catch Basin Lid Assist
Tool (Ouachita)



In-a-Pinch Salt
Spreader (Terrebonne)

Here are two examples of local Louisiana innovations that were previously recognized nationally. See pages 19-20 of the 2019 BABM Booklet: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/clas/pdfs/2019_mousetrap_entries_booklet.pdf

Getting a Handle on Catch Basin Lids

Ouachita Parish Public Works Department needed a lightweight, mechanical means to lift and lower catch basin lids for inspection purposes. At a cost of less than \$100, including labor and

materials, the lid-assist tool can be easily reproduced if lost, damaged, or stolen. Crew members no longer need to use brute force to lift and lower catch basin lids, increasing overall worker safety and decreasing the incidences of finger- and toe-pinch injuries.

From Seed to Salt: Spreaders Repurposed “In a Pinch”

Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government (TPCG) experienced a record string of sub-freezing temperatures and didn’t own the proper de-icing equipment. They re-purposed a seed spreader into a salt spreader to de-ice the roads. It took only four hours of labor to complete and cost just \$250. It allowed the agency to reopen area roads and bridges faster than anticipated.

Destination Zero Deaths

Louisiana Traffic Safety Webinars

NOW

AVAILABLE



Distracted Driving - A Deadly Addiction



Impaired Driving - DWI: Myths and Misconceptions



Infrastructure & Operations - LA Road Safety 101



Occupant Protection - A Click that Saves Lives



Young Drivers - So You Think You Know Traffic Safety?

This document is provided solely for the purpose of identifying, evaluating and planning safety improvements on public roads; and is therefore exempt from discovery or admission under 25 U.S.C. 4061.

Louisiana Traffic Safety Webinar Recordings Now Available

The Louisiana Destination Zero Deaths (DZD) team recently shared a new portal that contains a list of recorded webinars on safety-related topics relevant to the work that local agencies do to implement the statewide Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) at the local level.

This is a resource collectively provided by the nine regional transportation safety coalitions in an effort to bring traffic safety awareness to the public. The coalitions were established to implement the SHSP at the local level and help Louisiana reach zero deaths on all public roads. The traffic safety webinars are as follows:

- Distracted Driving – A Deadly Addiction
- Impaired Driving – DWI: Myths and Misconceptions
- Infrastructure & Operations – LA Road Safety 101
- Occupant Protection – A Click That Saves Lives
- Young Drivers – So You Think You Know Traffic Safety?

This resource may be accessed on <https://sites.google.com/swlarsc.com/swla-rsc/webinars>

For more information, visit www.destinationzerodeaths.com.

DISASTER RECOVERY

Calcasieu Parish Public Works Division Recounts Disaster Recovery Efforts after Hurricane Laura

After Category 4 Hurricane Laura devastated the Southwest region of Louisiana, particularly Calcasieu Parish and the City of Lake Charles, disaster recovery efforts were flowing left and right to help families get back on their feet. It was an unexpected blow with 150-mile-per-hour winds forcing 580,000 people to evacuate and leaving approximately 44,000 customers without electricity for three weeks after it came ashore Cameron Parish on August 27, 2020.

According to Calcasieu Parish Public Works Director, Allen Wainwright, their priority as first responders was to help the community bounce back. He said their public works crews were the first ones to respond. Emergency crews immediately went out in the field to gauge how massive the damage was.

“Our first goal was to restore the safety of the roads for the residents and emergency vehicles to pass,” he started recounting the events in response to an interview by FHWA’s Center for Local Aid Support’s (CLAS) Transportation Program Manager Trinette Ballard.



cont. on pg. 6

Leadership Spotlight: Alison C. Lognion, M.S., P.E.

By Rudynah Entera Capone

In this edition of *Technology Exchange*, we take leadership inspiration from one of the regional representatives of LPESA, **Alison Lognion**, who works as an Engineer III and Manager at Lafayette Consolidated Government (LCG).

Alison has been with LCG since 2013. Her job entails developing and managing the agency's Bridge Program for 191 bridges as well as working with Operations and Public Works divisions to assess maintenance and prioritizing total replacements. She has a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (ULL) and a master's degree in structural civil engineering from Virginia Tech. She is also licensed as a professional engineer (PE). In December 2018, she was elected to be LPESA's Regional Representative in the Lafayette region. She has transitioned herself from being LPESA's scholarship recipient while she was at ULL to now being part of the Board of the association. LTAP's team member Rudynah Capone connected with Alison to get her views about leadership, challenges she overcame along the way, and who she takes inspiration from.

What is your definition of leadership?

Leadership is about developing an awareness of other people's strengths and weaknesses and how circumstances relate to the totality.

If you were to pick three competencies or traits that a leader should possess to be effective in leading teams, what would they be? Briefly explain why.

The three traits of an effective leader are humility, listening, and awareness. Humility, in its most basic form, is living in the truth of oneself and others, rather than living in the ego detached from reality. Humility lends itself to listening without preconceived opinions and set determinations. I have developed an awareness to give compliments to fellow engineers, co-workers, and contractors when they are due. One contractor said to me, "Few engineers come back to their jobs at the end or during the project to acknowledge what's done right." Or, as simple as, "You did a good job!"

How do you think your colleagues view your leadership style?

One of the characteristics pointed out to me is that I have an ability to wait and think over things before producing a judgment or answer.

In being a project engineer and manager, I've been challenged to see the humanity in myself and others. This shared understanding has pushed me to evaluate my initial reactions in light of the greater situation at hand as a whole. This involves humility to take a step back at times and listen to my co-workers, who at times encourage me and at other times help me see differently.



Engineering is a technical field. Do you think technical knowledge is key to being a great leader?

Within the engineering field, it is essential not only to have the understanding of the technical topics at hand but also know where and to whom to go for help, capitalizing on the strengths of others in and outside one's particular workplace. This dependence only comes from humility.

In any of your past and present leadership roles, what has been the most challenging task you've had to overcome? What techniques, approaches, or strategies did you utilize to handle such a challenging task?

Throughout all of my projects in the past and now for almost eight years, there have been a few encounters with contractors when I had to be bold—bold enough to say clearly we're not on the same page. One of the contractors even called my boss to say it was one of the best conversations he had with an engineer. Another contractor I had to charitably tell him, in his own words that "he was not an effective communicator," exaggerating statements and blowing things out of proportion, failing to read correspondence, responding appropriately, and seeing how he was being helped.

Who is your model leader? Why?

My model leader is the late Msgr. Luigi Giussani, founder of Communion and Liberation, who taught a method to look and judge the totality of reality, especially in the working atmosphere.

DOTD Shares Changes on New Funding Cycle for Off-System Bridge Program

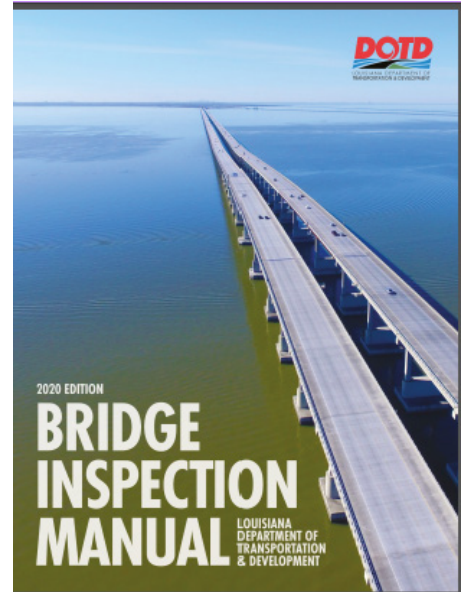
There are a few changes that parish agencies ought to be on the lookout for in the new funding cycle (2021-2023) for the federal-aid Off-System Highway Bridge Program administered by DOTD. All parishes are eligible to participate provided that they complete the “Annual Certification” confirming that all maintenance requirements are met, and they must have a signed agreement with DOTD.

“Application packets will be sent to the parishes in the next couple of months,” Off-System Bridge Program Manager Barbara Ostuno announced during the Louisiana Parish Engineers and Supervisors Association (LPESA) General Membership Meeting held on February 23, 2021 at TTEC Auditorium in Baton Rouge.

She specified that each participating parish will receive a packet that contains a list of eligible structures, the parishes’ available funds to spend, and a detailed list of all requirements. The parishes are advised that when choosing bridges to be replaced, they have to take into account factors such as right-of-way, utilities, permits, project priority, detours, and bridge closings.

In the previous programming cycle, eligible bridges were determined based on sufficiency rating of < 50 and a status of 1 (structurally deficient) or 2 (functionally obsolete). In the current 2021-2023 programming cycle, these sufficiency ratings are no longer calculated. Instead, funding is allocated based on a formula—the percentage of bridges in need of replacement minus construction costs and estimated amount of replacement structures per parish.

For more information on Off System Bridge Program, visit www.dotd.la.gov or email Barbara.Ostuno@la.gov.



The DOTD Off-System Bridge Guidelines and Compliance Review Process has been updated and replaced with this Bridge Inspection Manual - 2020 Edition

Disaster Recovery Efforts *cont. from page 4*

For Wainwright’s crew, it was not an easy task along the way. They found there were too many traffic signs that were either missing or severely damaged, and their inventory of 60 signs at hand was not sufficient to address the immediate need.

On estimate, there were 1,200 roadway miles and 400 intersections that had some damage within their jurisdiction alone. “It was beyond our capacity to replace those signs,” he said.

As a solution, Wainwright reached out to LTAP and consequently put out a call for assistance. A few days later, they managed to gather over 500 signs from other local agencies that also offered to use their trucks and crews for installation. He commended that everyone’s response was quick, and that the help they received from other agencies was remarkable.

“I just cannot thank them enough,” he expressed.

After half a year since Laura, the road to recovery still continues for some of the residents of Lake Charles. As for Calcasieu Parish Public Work Division, their recovery efforts inspired an idea of possibly forming a mutual aid agreement that will assist agencies in any disaster recovery efforts, so that the lessons learned and hiccups experienced in the aftermath of Laura will be avoided in the future. As Wainwright reflected, it could be an agreement that answers questions like how the transaction would take place, and whether or not a transaction can happen at all under different scenarios.

See related story on CLAS Newsletter here: www.fhwa.dot.gov/clas/training_tools/clas_newsletter_spring2021.aspx



SAVE THE DATE: LPESA Conference May 27, 2021

LPESA members, associate members and agency partners will convene for a full-day conference on May 27, 2021, at the Baton Rouge Marriott Hotel.

More details will be posted on www.lpesa.org soon.

Chainsaw Safety Fall 2021

This class is designed to help prepare all crew members and supervisors to deal with routine chainsaw use as well as the tree damage and debris common after storms.

Roads Scholar #13: Inspection of Local Bridges Winter 2021

This class includes an overview of preventive maintenance techniques and basic repairs of the bridge approach, deck, railing, and joints.

For a full list of LTAP training, visit the “Training” tab on www.louisianaltap.org

LPESA Virtual Showcase Happening Monthly

Each month, the Louisiana Parish Engineers and Supervisors Association (LPESA) is holding the LPESA Virtual Showcase, a monthly eLearning opportunity designed to provide its members an opportunity to earn PDH credits and exchange best practices.

April 16, 2021 10:00 - 11:00 A.M. (CST)

Survey Lite Using Mobile LiDAR and Panorama Videography:
Preparing Accurate Strip Maps for AutoCAD, DGN, and ESRI
Presenter: Wilfred Barry, SJB Group, LLC

May 21, 2021 10:00 - 11:00 A.M. (CST)

Louisiana DOTD’s Specification for Internally Cured Concrete: The Key to 100-Year Service Life?
Presenter: Jeff Speck, FACI, Arcosa Lightweight

For an updated list of LPESA Virtual Showcases, visit www.lpesa.org.



New Leadership. Newly elected LPESA President David Rome, Public Works Director of Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government, led the discussion on the association's plans for a conference this year.



Those In Favor, Say Aye. Outgoing LPESA President Tommy Durrett, Road Superintendent of Claiborne Parish Police Jury, presided at the meeting and election of officers.

LPESA Hybrid Meetings

cont. from page 1

LTAP hosted this year’s LPESA Board Committee Meeting and General Membership Meeting last February 23 at the TTEC Auditorium in Baton Rouge. Remote participants also joined in through Zoom. Over 50 participants engaged in business discussions, technical presentations, associate member showcases, and election of new officers.

Erich Ponti, Louisiana Asphalt Pavement Association’s (LAPA) Executive Director, provided an update about Louisiana’s Government Reform in Transportation (GRIT) Act. Joan Schexnayder of Terrebonne Parish shared some information about membership dues and upcoming virtual conference by the National Association of County Engineers (NACE). Barbara Ostuno, DOTD’s Off-System Highway Bridge Manager, gave a talk on the federal-aid Off System Highway Bridge Program’s programming cycle for fiscal years 2021-2023.

A training on “Professionalism and Ethics” was offered in a hybrid format immediately after the meeting, with DOTD Chief Engineer Chris Knotts as the instructor.



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The purpose of the Local Technical Assistance Program 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.