

## Efficiency Corner

In an effort to share our role in improving efficiencies to support our limited funding we would like to provide the following examples from our team:

*"In finance, computer technology and software improvements affect our work and reporting immensely."*

*Diane DeWaters, Accountant*

*"Equipment purchasing, adding wing plows to trucks to reduce the need for extra trucks on routes."*

*Bill DeYoung, Area Superintendent*

*"Energy efficiency and cost savings associated with LED traffic signals."*

*Jim Hoekstra, Traffic Engineer shared with the City of Kalamazoo*

*"I feel as though one of our greatest efficiencies is in our hot mix asphalt paving contracts....volume of work...consistency in specifications...payment of invoices is prompt and consistent..."*

*Paul Spitzley, Project Engineer*

## Managing Director's Message

*Welcome 2013!*

### STATE OF THE STATE – TRANSPORTATION HIGHLIGHTED

Once again I had the opportunity to attend the State of the State – what an honor. Certainly this was important in 2013 as our Governor highlighted the need for additional infrastructure investment in the State of the State and the 2013 State budget proposal. This is indeed something we are both passionate about achieving efficiently and effectively.

Governor Snyder and his administration have made additional transportation funding a priority. Governor Snyder has asked the legislature to act on this issue immediately. We know that the Governor's request (\$1-\$1.5 billion with additional revenues from local options) is less than the overall need, but we appreciate the Administration's commitment to seeking a greatly needed investment.

We understand the tough economic times and the need to use our limited funding efficiently and effectively – this should be happening regardless of our economic climate. The Kalamazoo County Road Commission (KCRC) has taken many efforts to be more efficient with our dollars. Unfortunately, all these great efforts will not make up for the \$1-\$1.5 billion necessary to keep our infrastructure system in "good" condition. Remember the same revenue also funds our routine maintenance operations such as tree trimming, pothole repair, winter maintenance etc.

The consistent response from our State leadership has been the need to be reassured we are using our current revenue efficiently and effectively before raising any additional revenue. Makes sense. We kindly request that when you hear these comments or believe this is the case; please call us – we welcome the dialogue and feedback on what we aren't doing efficiently. We of course also welcome feedback on the positive side of what we are doing well.

Remember law enforcement, public safety, bicyclists, motor vehicles etc. all use our infrastructure – it touches everyone's life – what you see today may be as good as it gets without efficiently and effectively maintaining the system long term – and unfortunately in the end it takes adequate funding by all users.

### A few key points:

1. We've done everything we can possibly do with the very limited resources we have but there simply isn't enough money allocated to maintain our roads.
2. While we continue to seek any possible cost-savings, there is no way to cut or reform ourselves out of the more than \$1.5 billion funding shortfall.
3. Our roads are deteriorating even as we try to do our best to maintain our system. We can't wait to address this problem and take an asset you never think about for granted.

We are proud of our accomplishments and our operations. Our team continues to be dedicated to enhancing our road network and putting those limited transportation dollars to efficient use with or without additional revenue.

Sincerely,  
Joanna I. Johnson,

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## WINTER MAINTENANCE

As part of the KCRC's on-going winter maintenance assessment for the 2012-2013 winter seasons, we have identified a level of service adjustment to provide improved and advance coverage during peak travel and commute times. KCRC has incorporated a 3 shift program;

**4:00p.m.**

**12:00a.m.**

**7:30a.m.** (also available at 4:00 a.m. if necessary)

These changes incorporate our limited staffing and equipment for optimal coverage during winter storms. The priorities within these shifts will continue to be;

**Designated snow route roads,  
balance of primary roads,  
through local roads,  
subdivision or plat streets,  
and dead-end and cul-de-sac roads.**

One important fact has not changed, road crews must have ample room in order to safely clear the many miles of roadway of snow and ice. In collaboration with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the County Road Association of Michigan (CRAM), the KCRC announced their participation in an education campaign aimed at urging motorists to remember good driving habits in winter weather conditions, "Snowplows Need Room to Groom!"

MDOT, CRAM and the KCRC offer the following reminders for motorists:

- **Snowplows have limited visibility and drivers cannot see directly behind their trucks**
- **Snowplows often throw up snow clouds, reducing visibility on all sides of the truck**
- **To remain focused on driving, motorists should not text or talk on cell phones while they are behind the wheel**
- **Motorists should never attempt to pass a moving snowplow on the right. With new wing-plow technology the blade can clear the shoulder and the lane of travel simultaneously. Motorists attempting an illegal pass through a snow cloud on the right and/or shoulder of the road most likely won't see the plow blade and run the risk of a serious crash**
- **Always wear your safety belt and allow extra time to reach your destinations this winter.**

### ***Remember – in Ice and Snow, Take it Slow!***

Help us also educate the children on the risks presented by snowplows and the dangers of playing on the high piles of snow and ice that are near the roadway during snow removal –

- **Please KEEP THE CHILDREN AWAY from roadside piles of snow**
- **Don't build snow forts, make tunnels, or play in or on snow banks next to roads**
- **Keep away from the edge of the roadway as you wait for the school bus, get the mail, or watch the plow trucks**
- **Stay away from the end of a driveway when a snow plow is approaching**
- **Hidden objects under the snow, when thrown by the plow truck could cause serious injury**
- **Keep sleds and toys away from the roadways at all times**

### **REMINDER:**

- **MCL 257.677a prohibits pushing snow and ice onto, or across, roadways and requires that people do not obstruct the safety vision of motorists.**

## Seasonal Weight Restrictions

As you travel roads across the State you can visibly see the effects of our freeze/thaw cycles with the appearances of potholes this winter already. Annually KCRC implements weight restrictions as necessary to protect our road system during the freeze/thaw cycle. Weight restrictions are enforced to minimize the damage caused during Michigan's seasonal thaw. As the ground thaws in the spring, water is forced toward the surface and exerts pressure on roads, causing them to buckle and become more prone to damage. The heavier the vehicle, the greater possible harm to our roads. During the weight restriction period, commercial vehicles traveling on restricted roads must carry lighter loads and travel at slower speeds. We strive to not have our seasonal weight restrictions in force unnecessarily; however we must protect our investment within our road system. In prior years, we have implemented weight restrictions as noted below, which vary on weather conditions. Since 2003 the weight restrictions have varied as follows:

2003 – ON 3/12 OFF 4/4  
2004 – ON 2/25 OFF 3/31  
2005 – ON 2/14 OFF 4/6  
2006 – ON 3/6 OFF 3/27  
2007 – ON 3/1 OFF 4/2  
2008 – ON 3/4 OFF 4/9  
2009 – ON 2/12 OFF 3/30  
2010 – ON 3/4 OFF 3/30  
2011 – ON 2/21 OFF 3/31  
2012 – Not posted  
**2013 – To Be Determined**

KCRC will post notifications, issue press releases and provide information on our KCRC website and the County Road Association of Michigan website at [www.micountyroads.org](http://www.micountyroads.org)

An ALL SEASON ROUTE MAP is available on the "Publications" section of our website.

### **HOTLINE RETURNS IN 2013**

For daily updates to the seasonal weight restrictions, citizens can call **269-381-3170 extension 251**. The hotline will be updated daily for any changes to the seasonal weight restrictions status.

## Sign Retro-Reflectivity

The Federal Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) establishes uniformity and standards for traffic signs on public roads. Recently adopted language in the MUTCD now requires all agencies to adopt a sign maintenance program, which in turn will help agencies meet new minimum retroreflectivity requirements for the traffic signs they have installed. There is no additional funding to accomplish the new sign standards. To remain in compliance our plan includes visual inspections of the base/sign structure and a retro-reflectivity test to determine the remaining service life of the sign face. Signs not meeting the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) sign retro-reflectivity standards will need to be replaced as identified during our inspection schedule.

To remain in compliance with the MUTCD retro-reflectivity requirements, KCRC will utilize a reflectometer to test and assess the remaining service life of our signs reflectivity performance. All regulatory and warning signs will be tested on a 5 year schedule and signs not meeting the minimum reflectivity requirement will be replaced. Recently replaced signs will continue to be included in our 5 year inspection cycle. New signs generally include a manufactures warranty of +/- 10 years depending on the grade of the material. KCRC will complete visual inspections of the base/sign structures and report any needed maintenance during the regular inspection. Sign reflectivity testing will also be conducted on the recently replaced sign to assist KCRC to determine life expectancies of different sign types, locations and facing directions.

The following is our completed blanket township upgrade schedule and 3 year schedule to complete the remaining townships utilizing the reflectometer and only replacing signs not meeting the minimum retro-reflectivity requirements. With the updated schedule, KCRC will have completed all 15 township retro-reflectivity testing/inspections by 2015.

Alamo, Charleston, Cooper, Oshtemo, Richland, Ross Townships – **Completed**

### **Retro-reflectivity Inspections**

2013 – Kalamazoo, Comstock and Texas Township

2014 – Pavilion, Climax and Wakeshma Township

2015 – Brady, Schoolcraft and Prairie Ronde Township

*If you see our crews along a roadway inspecting signs, now you now know why! Please use caution.*

## Staff Highlights

The KCRC is currently recruiting for **Project Engineer and General Superintendent**. The Project Engineer positions will be enhancing our engineering and traffic department. The General Superintendent position will be supporting our Operations Director and two reclassified Area Superintendent positions of Maintenance and Project Superintendents. This is not an increase in staffing, but rather a realignment of duties and staff.

We look forward to filling these positions and enhancing our public service commitment. We continue to have the lowest staffing levels, while providing the very best in public service.

**Paul Spitzley, Project Engineer** has accepted a position with the Ionia County Road Commission as their County Highway Engineer. We wish him all the best!

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*Citizens can call our office directly for routine service requests and/or your primary contact for service related issues by township is as follows:*

- **Jim Beaudoin**, Area Superintendent
  - Alamo, Oshtemo, Prairie Ronde, Schoolcraft, Texas
- **Bill DeYoung**, Area Superintendent
  - Charleston, Comstock, Cooper, Richland, Ross
- **Jeff Daughtry**, Area Superintendent
  - Brady, Climax, Pavilion, Kalamazoo, Wakeshma

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## Visit our Website

- Board Meeting Information
- Construction Guidelines - Updated
- 2013 Budget
- 2013 – 2017 Primary Road Capital Improvement Plan
- Brochures
- Permits
- Maps – *view our new interactive map*
- Purchasing
- Road Data

*Subscribe to our news feeds for up to date information.*

[www.kalamazocountyroads.com](http://www.kalamazocountyroads.com) or email us at [info@krcr-roads.com](mailto:info@krcr-roads.com)

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We are committed to providing a safe and convenient road system for our county motorists. As our customers and as residents of Kalamazoo County you are also entitled to excellent service from us at all times.

We aim to provide answers to your service requests. We encourage our residents and the motoring public to report road conditions that need attention. To make sure our service to you is prompt and courteous we strive to continually improve our methods of contact.

Office hours 7:30am – 4pm, Monday through Friday  
269-381-3171 or [info@krcr-roads.com](mailto:info@krcr-roads.com)  
Call 911 for road related emergencies.

## Road Commissioners of Kalamazoo County

To better serve our County and local officials, each Road Commissioner has also been assigned as a liaison to various townships we serve as follows:

**Daniel J. Moyle – 2013 Chairman;**

Alamo, Oshtemo, Richland

**Kenneth R. Oscarson – 2013 Vice Chairman;**

Brady, Prairie Ronde, Wakeshma

**Dennis J. Berkebile – Charleston, Schoolcraft, Texas**

**Jeffrie M. Maddox – Comstock, Cooper, Ross**

**David Q. Worthams – Kalamazoo, Climax, Pavilion**

**Welcome new Road Commissioner**

**David Q. Worthams**

Mr. Worthams is a lifelong resident of Kalamazoo County; he currently resides in Kalamazoo Township.

His term as Road Commissioner is January 2013 –

December 31, 2018. He formerly served as the

Transportation Policy Advisor to former Michigan House Speakers Rick Johnson, Craig DeRoche and currently serves as the Policy Director for the Michigan Bankers

Association (MBA). He is a Past President of the

Kalamazoo Junior Chamber (Jaycees) and the Michigan

Jaycees. He also has served on the Kalamazoo County

Metropolitan Planning Commission from 2002 to 2012,

serving as their chairperson for the last 6 years.



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## Educational Opportunities

*Asset Management for Elected Officials*

**February 19, 2013 9:00AM – 12:00 Noon**

*Setting Realistic Speed Limits*

**March 13, 2013 10:00 – 11:30AM**

*Building of the Kalamazoo County Map*

**October 10, 2013 10:00 – 11:30AM**

**Please Mark Your Calendars!**

**All sessions will be held at KCRC at no cost**

*The goal of the Board of County Road Commissioners of Kalamazoo County is using our expertise, energy and funds to provide the safest and most convenient road system possible, and to contribute to economic development and*

*high quality of life throughout the county.*