

# CENTERLINE

A Monthly Newsletter for the Employees of NDOT

## NEVADA IS TRANSPORTATION SAFETY LEADER

Lives have been saved as a result of NDOT staff's dedication to safety. Now, those same life-saving efforts have helped Nevada to be named a national traffic safety leader.

Nevada recently received the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO) 2009 Safety Leadership Award for multi-agency programs that helped decrease Nevada traffic deaths by one quarter; saving more than 150 lives since 2006.

The award not only recognizes the work and dedication of NDOT staff, but the individuals, groups and agencies across the state who have come together to develop traffic safety programs and educational messages.

"There are individuals and groups across the state who work tirelessly to save lives on Nevada roads," NDOT Director Susan Martinovich said. "With Governor Gibbons' support, Nevada's traffic and safety agencies have also made major traffic safety improvements. This award is a recognition of how each of those groups work so well together to reach one common goal. Every NDOT staff member should be proud of their part in that."

"It is about saving lives. Working together, we provide safe roads and driving safety education so every motorist can drive safely," Principal Safety Engineer Chuck Reider added. "The efforts of NDOT staff make a difference and are truly saving lives!"

Log on to [www.nevadadot.com/safety](http://www.nevadadot.com/safety) and [www.drivesafenv.com](http://www.drivesafenv.com) for driving safety information.



### NEVADA SAFETY PROGRAMS A Sampling

☆ Every day, NDOT staff ensure roadway safety by developing, designing and implementing road improvements, inspecting roadways, removing roadway debris and snow and ice, repairing guard-rail, flattening slopes to reduce severity of roadside crashes and much more.

☆ Overseen by NDOT, the Nevada Strategic Highway Safety Plan brings Nevada traffic and safety agencies together to outline strategies to reduce traffic fatalities.

☆ NDOT road safety audits bring together NDOT engineering, safety and other staff along with law enforcement and outside experts to recommend low-cost roadway safety improvements.

☆ NDOT has made numerous road safety improvements, including over 1,300 miles of centerline rumble strips, approximately 30 miles of cable median barrier and a northeastern Nevada safety overpass to reduce vehicle-animal collisions.

☆ NDOT staff are active national traffic safety leaders, with Director Susan Martinovich co-chairing the AASHTO Standing Committee on Highway Safety and NDOT safety staff providing leadership on the AASHTO Standing Committee on Traffic, as well as the Federal Highway Administration's SafetyAnalyst Technical Working Group study, Governors Highway Safety Association and others.

## ON THE FAST TRACK



It has improved roadway safety, travel and operations, and now Las Vegas' Freeway and Arterial System of Transportation's (FAST) operating agreement is being extended another four years.

A joint venture between NDOT and the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC), FAST both monitors and controls traffic via closed-circuit cameras, traffic signals, ramp meters and dynamic message signs (see sidebar).

"The data we gather is very valuable in maintaining traffic flow and easing congestion by 20 to 25% in the Las Vegas area," FAST Assistant Director Brian Hoeft explained.

Additionally, the FAST information is archived and utilized to make essential design, construction and operational decisions for important improvements such as NDOT's Interstate 15 Design Build and Express Lane projects.

"The FAST operation in the Las Vegas area is unique to the nation and does an excellent job of bringing the operations of state freeways and highways together with local arterials under one cohesive and efficient system," says NDOT District 1 Engineer Mary Martini.

NDOT Principal Operations Engineer Jeff Lerud says NDOT recently used information gathered by FAST to take a high crash location, implement solutions proposed by FAST, and virtually eliminate the high number of crashes in that area.

"Our new four-year agreement with FAST is a continuation of the prior one, with an additional emphasis on performance measure reports," explains Lerud. "We want to ensure that we can justify current and future funding of the system."

NDOT'S operating cost for FAST is just under \$2 million per year through 2013.

### FAST TECHNOLOGY: IMPROVING TRAFFIC FLOW

**Traffic Cameras:** FAST monitors traffic flow via over 140 traffic cameras installed along the roadways. Before commuting, motorists can log onto [www.nvfast.org](http://www.nvfast.org) to watch live video of their route.

**Traffic Signals:** FAST coordinates approximately 1,200 traffic signals in southern Nevada and works continuously to improve signal synchronization and create a smoother drive.

**Ramp Meters:** (pictured above): Similar in appearance to stoplights, ramp meters control the frequency and spacing of vehicles merging onto the freeway to minimize speed disruptions and improve traffic flow. In mid December, 15 new freeway ramp meters were activated on U.S. 95, increasing the number of metered ramps in the Las Vegas valley to 37.

**Dynamic Message Signs:** Forty-two overhead digital freeway signs provide road condition, traffic, construction and commute time information to southern Nevada motorists.

**Traffic Alerts:** RTC and FAST now offer I-15, 215 and U.S. 95 traffic incident alerts by e-mail and text message to help motorists plan their trip before traveling.

## JUST LIKE NEW



*To the right, NDOT's first completely refurbished piece of equipment outshines an unrestored truck on the left.*

Preserving the 2,700 pieces of equipment that make up NDOT's equipment fleet is no small task. For fulfilling that job at a cost savings of over \$20 million in the past two years, NDOT's equipment fleet was recently named one of Government Fleet magazine's 100 best fleets.

Behind the award are dedicated NDOT equipment technicians who preserve, refurbish and rebuild equipment to save Nevada taxpayer money while providing a top state fleet ready to maintain and make safe the roads we travel daily.

Over the past three years, 30 pieces of equipment have been refurbished by NDOT equipment division staff and another 36 have been refurbished by outside equipment shops. For each piece, three to four NDOT mechanical experts dedicate 80 man hours, leading to a total of nearly 2,400 man hours devoted to refurbishments over past years.

Complete equipment rebuilds are the newest component of NDOT's equipment preservation program. NDOT equipment technicians recently completed their first full rebuild, and will continue to rebuild end-of-life equipment such as loaders and water trucks. The rebuilds double equipment life at as little as half the cost of new equipment, saving up to \$50,000 per machine.

These are just two examples of cost-saving measures. NDOT staff also smartly maintain and reuse equipment to save even more through other preservation measures (see sidebar). The money saved goes back to fund NDOT roads and operations. But the savings on new and repaired equipment is not the largest benefit.

"The most important benefit comes from the reduction in accidents and claims by having a safer fleet," Equipment Manager Mike Stair explained.

### NDOT's EQUIPMENT PRESERVATION PROGRAM

#### Maintain

Smart preventative maintenance keeps vehicles well-maintained while helping avoid large repair costs and long equipment downtime.

#### Refurbish

Over 12 years, NDOT's refurbishment program has increased longevity, usability and safety by repainting and removing corrosive buildup from 106 snowplows and other equipment.

#### Rebuild

NDOT's new rebuild program rebuilds end-of-life equipment, saving up to \$50,000 per machine and doubling equipment life at up to half the cost of new.

#### Reuse

28 surplus Nevada Highway Patrol vehicles have been used on NDOT's Interstate 580 project. For their use on that project alone, each vehicle saves a total of \$950 per month, leading to an additional savings of \$1,276,800 over the four-year project.

#### Requisition

New performance-based equipment specifications allow NDOT to purchase longer-lasting, quality equipment

# KudosKorner

## THE WEATHER OUTSIDE IS FRIGHTFUL

*When a heavy snow storm hit the state in early December, NDOT maintenance crews were out in force. Their snow and ice removal efforts created safer roads, as well as a shower of praise.*

*"I wanted to let you know how much we appreciate the clear roads on Pyramid Highway this morning," Reno resident Tammy Soper wrote. "Excellent job!"*

*"I wanted to give praise for the exceptional work plowing U.S. 395 through the night between Minden and Carson City," Jon Erb wrote. "I was very impressed."*

*"The crews that plow State Route 341 do an excellent job," Michelle Gamble wrote. "Our commutes to Reno and Carson are done without issue thanks to your great work."*

*"Good job with all of the snow," John McShane wrote on the social networking Web site Twitter. "Keep up the good work."*

*"Great job of taking care of the roads from this last snow storm," Tammy Ramsey wrote. "Your efforts in making driving conditions safer is appreciated."*

*"Truly it is a blessing to know that there are people out there doing their jobs while we sleep so that, when we go out on our roads, we will be safe and make it back home to our families," Latrice Owens wrote.*

## Welcome

Benjamin Hoffman, Carson City  
Robert Wimer, Carson City  
Daniel Rowe, Carson City

## Thanks for Serving

Barbara Kausler, 22 years, Carson  
Jeff Knowles, 25 years, Carson

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### Members:

Brian K. Krolicki, *Lieutenant Governor*  
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Paul Morabito



Susan Martinovich, P.E., *Director*  
Meg Ragonese, *Public Information Officer*  
1263 South Stewart Street  
Carson City, Nevada 89712  
(775) 888-7172

Julie Duewel, *Photographer*  
NDOT Multi-media, *Graphic Design*

[www.nevadadot.com](http://www.nevadadot.com)