

Technology 25th Anniversary NEWS

Providing transportation technology transfer for Iowa's cities and counties

Inside this issue

- 2 Iowa's Mr. LTAP: Stan Ring
- 3 Shop focus: Personal protective equipment
- 4 Just call Bob: A new safety resource for Iowa's cities and counties
- 5 New sign retroreflectivity rules require management plans
- 6 November 24: Worker visibility compliance
- 6 Library acquisitions
- 7 Conference calendar
- 7 June 15 application due date for traffic safety funds
- 7 New online, on-demand supervisory training available

Editor's note: The "news" bits on the cover of this issue were adapted from several resources, including The New York Times online archives; first four issues of Technology News, 1983; and monthly issues of Iowa DOT's 1983 employee newsletter TransTopics (thank you, Tracey Bramble, editor, Iowa DOT).

Iowa State University's Center for Transportation Research and Education (CTRE) is the umbrella organization for the following centers and programs:

Bridge Engineering Center
Center for Weather Impacts on Mobility and Safety
Construction Management & Technology
Iowa Local Technical Assistance Program
Iowa Statewide Urban Design and Specifications
Iowa Traffic Safety Data Service
Midwest Transportation Consortium
National Concrete Pavement Technology Center
Partnership for Geotechnical Advancement
Roadway Infrastructure Management & Operations Systems
Sustainable Transportation Systems Program
Traffic Safety and Operations

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25 years of service for Iowa LTAP

What were you doing 25 years ago? Here's a little context from spring 1983:

25th Anniversary

AN UNUSUALLY HEAVY invasion of mayflies gives street and road crews along the Mississippi River headaches. At least one bridge is closed due to pileups of the sticky, stinky, inch-long pests.

THANKS TO increased federal fuel taxes, dollars for bridge replacement and rehabilitation in Iowa double this year. From 15 to 35 percent of the \$37.3 million must be spent on structures not on the federal-aid system.

FUNDED BY the U.S. DOT, Iowa studies the connection between tough drunk-driving laws and number of crashes [in 1983 lingo, "accidents"] linked to alcohol.

RAGBRAI XI BICYCLISTS prepare to test their mettle along southern Iowa's hilly terrain from Onawa to Dubuque.

SHOTBLASTING a pavement surface to prepare it for a bonded overlay is one of three pavement projects showcased on an Iowa tour. More than 400 people from 26 states and Canada attend this one-day event.

ELIZABETH DOLE becomes U.S. Secretary of Transportation.

NEW, PORTABLE SCALES (handheld and trailer-mounted) help Iowa's motor vehicle enforcement officers crack down on overweight trucks traveling the state's highways.

BOB GIVEN begins what will be a four-year stint as director of the Iowa DOT's highway division.

AN IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY study suggests ways to reduce counties' potential liability from the use of low-water stream crossings on unpaved, rural roads.

IOWA'S FARMERS hope for a rebound in the farm economy after several years of low commodity prices and plunging land values.

ROUSED FROM SLEEP at 3:30 a.m. by the sheriff, equipment operators from Iowa DOT's Manchester garage check and re-check a section of Highway 13 in the dark using magnets to

pick up nails found scattered on the pavement. It cannot be determined who dropped the nails or when, or if they were dropped deliberately.

NORTHWEST IOWANS say goodbye to one of the state's largest cottonwood trees, a longtime landmark along Highway 10 near Sutherland. Carefully preserved during road reconstruction in 1971, but suffering the combined toll of lightning hits and ice and wind storms, the proud old giant is felled.

Acronyms in *Technology News*

AASHTO	American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
APWA	American Public Works Association
CTRE	Center for Transportation Research and Education (at ISU)
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
Iowa DOT	Iowa Department of Transportation
ISU	Iowa State University
LTAP	Local Technical Assistance Program
MUTCD	Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
NACE	National Association of County Engineers
TRB	Transportation Research Board



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



Iowa Department
of Transportation

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Center for Transportation Research and Education
ISU Research Park
2711 S. Loop Drive, Suite 4700
Ames, Iowa 50010-8664
Telephone: 515-294-8103
Fax: 515-294-0467
www.ctre.iastate.edu/

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25th Anniversary

Iowa's Mr. LTAP: Stan Ring

"Please call me if you have any questions. My phone number is 515-294-6777." So Dr. Stan Ring ended his front-page column in the first issue of *Technology News* in April 1983.

This was the personal style that earned Ring his reputation as "Mr. LTAP." The original director of Iowa's Rural Technical Assistance Program (RTAP, later Local Technical Assistance Program or LTAP), Ring made himself available to Iowa transportation agencies needing information or assistance.

With his knowledge, experience, and passion about transportation engineering, Ring was a quiet powerhouse of a resource.

Ring spent the first nearly two decades of his career with the Iowa DOT (then the Iowa State Highway Commission). There he managed urban work on Iowa's federal-aid highways and acted as the commission's liaison with federal and local agencies in transportation planning.

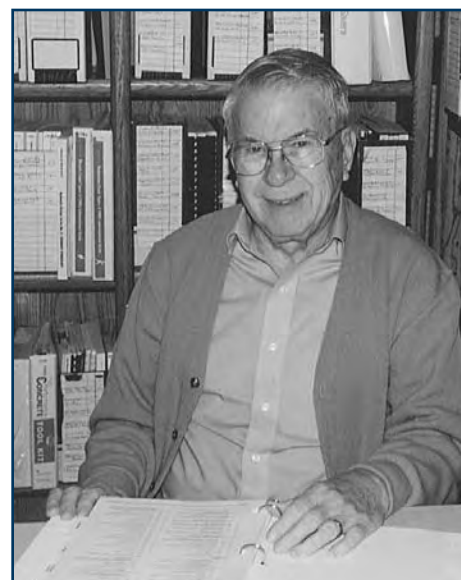
In 1967 Ring left the agency to teach transportation courses in ISU's Department of Civil and Construction Engineering.

For 20 years, in addition to teaching, Ring advised graduate students and conducted research, most significantly, wind-tunnel analysis of snow drifting, and design of low-water stream crossings.

Ring had a special interest in and talent for outreach, and eventually he led ISU's Civil Engineering Extension Program. It was in this role that he competed for and won the RTAP contract.

As RTAP-then-LTAP director, Ring set a standard for service that Iowa LTAP staff still remember and try to emulate.

Ring personally connected with transportation workers around the state, tirelessly promoting transportation engineering, teaching workshops, and building his extensive knowledge base and photo library of Iowa's transportation history.



Stan Ring enthusiastically welcomed visitors to the LTAP library.

Whether discussing civil engineering initiatives with new county engineers or quizzing old hands about Iowa's transition from mud-clogged byways to well-drained paved roads, Ring brought an enthusiastically engaging spark to every interaction.

After retiring from ISU in 1988, Ring continued serving Iowans for 12 years as LTAP's part-time librarian.

Ring oversaw the library as enthusiastically as he had built the LTAP center. He stocked the shelves with an up-to-date collection of slideshows, videos, and publications and sent them, on request, to towns and counties across the state. He oversaw the transition from a paper catalog of holdings to a user-friendly online electronic catalog, www.ctre.iastate.edu/library/search.cfm. He developed a display about LTAP's services and carted it to dozens of events where transportation workers gathered, like APWA and ISAC conferences.

One lovely day in September 2000, Ring dismantled the LTAP display he had just hosted at Iowa's annual road maintenance expo, then went home for a little nap. He died that afternoon. Mr. LTAP was 77.

Next time you're in Ames, stop by the LTAP office and visit the Stan Ring Memorial Library, now under the able stewardship of Jim Hogan. Stan would have appreciated the convenient, moveable stacks. ■

25th Anniversary

25 years of Iowa LTAP continued from cover

In 1983, ISU was introducing its new RTAP center to towns and counties throughout Iowa.

Due to the success of pilot RTAPs in Iowa and nine other states, FHWA eventually funded technology assistance centers in every state, plus regional tribal centers. The “rural” in RTAP was later changed to “local.”

As we begin 2008, Iowa’s RTAP-now-LTAP has been helping local jurisdictions address their transportation-related challenges through training and technology transfer for 25 years.

During those years, LTAP has seen many changes. For example, Iowa LTAP has been housed in at least six different office spaces on and off the ISU campus. During its first year, Iowa LTAP offered fewer than a dozen workshops. In 2007, it offered 144 training opportunities, including 55 related to safety topics.

One thing that’s remained constant, however, is the staff’s loyalty to the program. With the exception of newcomer Bob Sperry (see page 4), everyone on staff has been with LTAP for at least 10 years.

Jan Graham has been Iowa LTAP’s bean counter and whatever-needs-to-be-done right-hand-woman almost since the

program’s beginning. Duane Smith has been director and Marcia Brink has been newsletter editor for more than half the program’s 25-year history. Together, Graham, Smith, Brink, Tom McDonald (safety circuit rider), Georgia Parham (secretary and event coordinator), and Jim Hogan (librarian)—are personally invested up to the eyeballs in Iowa LTAP, and Sperry promises to be equally dedicated. We care about helping you make a difference in Iowa.

Iowa LTAP was the foundation program that eventually grew into CTRE, a major university transportation research and outreach center. Today LTAP is one of several long-term funded programs managed by CTRE, but many people in Iowa’s towns and counties know CTRE best for its LTAP workshops, newsletter, and library.

Throughout 2008, *Technology News* will cover various aspects of Iowa LTAP’s history. We’ll highlight some achievements and point to future goals. We’ll ask you what LTAP services you find useful, and what kinds of additional help you need.

While telling you a little about LTAP’s past, we hope to encourage you to take advantage of its present and help plan its future. ■

Shop focus: Personal protective equipment

With the construction and maintenance season approaching, now is a good time to assess your shop’s personal protective equipment (PPE). PPE is defined by OSHA as any equipment worn to minimize workers’ exposure to hazards.

To maximize the effectiveness of PPE, both employers and employees have roles to play.

According to OSHA, employers are responsible for

- Performing a “hazard assessment” of the workplace to identify and control physical and health hazards;
- Identifying and providing appropriate PPE for employees;
- Training employees in the use of PPE;
- Maintaining PPE, including replacing worn or damaged PPE; and
- Periodically reviewing, updating, and evaluating the effectiveness of the PPE program.

To ensure their own safety, employees should

- Properly wear PPE;
- Attend training sessions on PPE;
- Care for, clean, and maintain PPE; and
- Inform a supervisor of the need to repair or replace PPE.

Following is a brief overview of OSHA’s guidelines on the use of personal protective equipment.

Eye and face protection

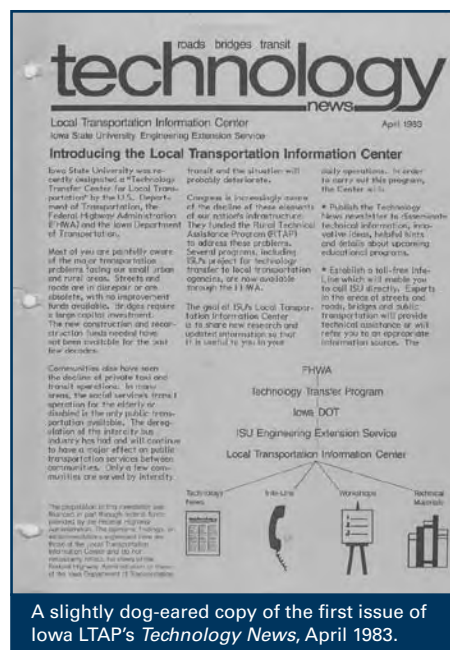
Employees exposed to eye or face hazards from flying particles or harmful chemicals should wear eye and face protection. Adequate eye and face protection should fit properly, be reasonably comfortable, and provide unrestricted vision and movement.

Head protection

Head protection, such as hard hats or protective helmets, should resist penetration by objects, absorb the shock of a blow, and be water-resistant and slow burning. Protective headgear should fit properly and should be worn by all construction and maintenance workers.



In 1994 Stan Ring introduced a hot new training technology: interactive CDs.



A slightly dog-eared copy of the first issue of Iowa LTAP’s *Technology News*, April 1983.

Iowa LTAP Mission

To foster a safe, efficient, and environmentally sound transportation system by improving skills and knowledge of local transportation providers through training, technical assistance, and technology transfer, thus improving the quality of life for Iowans.

Staff

Shashi Nambisan
Director of CTRE
shashi@iastate.edu

Duane Smith
Director of Iowa LTAP
desmith@iastate.edu

Tom McDonald
Safety Circuit Rider
tmcdonal@iastate.edu

Bob Sperry
Local Roads Safety Liaison
rperry@iastte.edu

Georgia Parham
Secretary and Events Coordinator
gparham@iastate.edu

Marcia Brink
Communications Manager and Editor
mbrink@iastate.edu

Alison Weidemann
Designer

Christianna White
Contributing Writer

Advisory Board

These professionals help guide the activities of Iowa LTAP. Contact any of them to comment, make suggestions, or ask questions about any aspect of LTAP.

Royce Fichtner
Marshall County Engineer
641-754-6343
rfichtner@co.marshall.ia.us

Gary Fox
Transportation Director, City of Des Moines
515-283-4973
glfox@dmgov.org

John Goode
Monroe County Engineer
641-932-7123
jgoode@monroecoia.us

Neil Guess
Howard R. Green Company
515-278-2913
nguess@hrgreen.com

Bret Hodne
City of West Des Moines
515-222-3480
bret.hodne@wdm-ia.com

Larry Jesse
Iowa DOT, Office of Local Systems
515-239-1291
larry.jesse@dot.iowa.gov

Joe Jurasic
Operations Engineer, FHWA–Iowa Division
515-233-7321
joe.jurasic@fhwa.dot.gov

Wally Mook
Director of Public Works, City of Bettendorf
319-344-4128
wmook@bettendorf.org

Charlie Purcell
Iowa DOT, Office of Local Systems
515-239-1532
charlie.purcell@dot.iowa.gov

Christy VanBuskirk
Keokuk County Engineer
641-622-2610
cvanbuskirk@keokukcountyia.gov

Dan Waid
Hamilton County Engineer
515-832-9520
dwaid@hamiltoncounty.org



Printed with soy ink

Just call Bob: Another safety resource for Iowa's cities and counties

Iowa LTAP is pleased to welcome Bob Sperry, recently retired Story County engineer and long-time Iowa LTAP advisor, to the staff.

On March 3, Sperry begins his new LTAP assignment as part-time Local Roads Safety Liaison.

Sperry will be traveling the state to share crash data with cities and counties, especially agencies not currently using Iowa's rich crash database or perhaps interested in more fully exploiting this valuable resource.

He will also provide information about state-of-the-art techniques that are helping some Iowa local agencies make strategic, data-based safety improvements in their jurisdictions.

This new safety liaison position signals another first for Iowa's LTAP. Our introduction of the country's first LTAP Safety Circuit Rider in 1989 broadened the impact of Iowa's safety-related outreach by taking workshops to local agencies' garages and offices in every corner of the state.

Bob will supplement Safety Circuit Rider Tom McDonald's safety workshop offerings with individualized consultations and training in crash-data tools for local agencies.

As with so many of LTAP's safety-related services, this opportunity is the result of a grant from the Iowa DOT's Office of Traffic and Safety.

Tom Welch, director of the office, is acutely aware that half of all crash fatalities in Iowa occur on local roads.

"We want to give county engineers as much assistance as possible," Welch says.

"Through Bob's position, we can interact personally with every county engineer



Iowa LTAP is glad to have Bob Sperry join its safety team

in Iowa and make sure they are aware of and have access to all the safety resources available to them from the Iowa DOT and CTRE."

Bob Sperry is a fortunate match for this position. After graduating from Iowa State with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering, he worked for several years as a bridge designer at the Iowa DOT.

Then, during more than 30 years as county engineer in Taylor, Webster, and finally Story Counties, he worked with county representatives, regional planning authorities, the Department of Natural Resources, the Iowa DOT, LTAP, and others to meet a variety of challenges.

Sperry knows firsthand the road safety-related issues Iowa's local jurisdictions face.

"I want to keep up my contacts with people," he says, "and show them the value of the safety programs in reducing crash fatalities."

For more information give Bob a call, 515-294-8103, 515-231-6902 (cell). ■

New sign retroreflectivity rules require management plans

After years of work—starting as long ago as 1992—the FHWA recently released MUTCD Section 2A.09, which establishes new minimum levels of retroreflectivity for signs. The new standard also outlines compliance deadlines for the new regulations, and requirements for sign assessment and management plans.

Compliance deadlines

The new rule specifies three-stage compliance deadlines. Assuming agencies get started now, the deadlines are generous.

First, agencies must have a sign assessment or management plan in place by 2012. The plan must cover improved sign inspection, data management, and sign replacement within a typical sign replacement cycle. Second, all regulatory, warning, and ground-mounted signs must comply with the retroreflectivity standards by 2015. Finally, overhead guide signs and street name signs must comply by January 2018.

Sign assessment or management plans

Tom McDonald, CTRE's safety circuit rider, emphasizes the importance of starting now to put together a sign management plan. Four years might seem like plenty of time, but a major part of developing the plan is compiling a required comprehensive set of data about all signs in your jurisdiction.

That will take time.

Some people who have already started working on their plans have been surprised to find out just how many signs are in their jurisdictions and how little data they actually have on all those signs compared with what they'll need to be in compliance.

And it will take money.

Assessing all signs in your jurisdiction will be the most expensive part of developing your plan. Many personnel hours and certain equipment will be needed to identify, classify, locate (using GIS techniques for accuracy), and measure every sign and

record the data.

This may be the time to seriously consider using sign management software if you're not using it already. This software can help you gather, record, and analyze information about your signs that you'll need to meet the second and third compliance deadlines.

Using software doesn't guarantee compliance, but it may help you set sign replacement schedules without having to undertake expensive and time-consuming visual inspections.

Like many projects, the least expensive elements of the sign management process are the hardware and software required to do the job right.

Exceptions

The following roadway signs may be excluded from the requirements for minimum retroreflectivity:

- A. Parking, Standing, and Stopping signs (R7 and R8 series)
- B. Walking/Hitchhiking/Crossing signs (R9 series, R10-1 through R10-4b)
- C. Adopt-A-Highway signs
- D. All signs with blue or brown backgrounds
- E. Bikeway signs that are intended for exclusive use by bicyclists or pedestrians

Compliance methods

The new MUTCD language describes five methods that agencies can use to maintain traffic sign retroreflectivity at or above the

minimum levels, including visual nighttime inspection. Agencies can choose from these methods or combine them.

Agencies are allowed to develop other appropriate methods based on engineering studies, as long as the method(s) consistently provide results corresponding to the values in the new standards.

At any one time, some individual signs in a jurisdiction may not meet the minimum retroreflectivity levels. As long as the agency has a management plan in place and is maintaining signs in accordance with Section 2A.09 of the MUTCD, the agency will be considered to be in compliance.

For more information

Contact Tom McDonald for more information about the new regulations or sign management software, or to arrange training, 515-294-6348, tmcdonal@iastate.edu.

Some information in this article is excerpted from a short, straightforward FHWA brochure, "Know Your Retro: New MUTCD Sign Retroreflectivity Requirements." This useful publication provides details about the new requirements, including a table of minimum standards for various signs. The brochure is online at www.tsp2.org/news/Retroreflectivity_Brochure.pdf.

Information about three sign management software products can be found online, www.rowekamp.com/SimpleSigns.htm; www.ecountyworks.com/page.php?10#SM; and <http://www.cartograph.com/signview.html>. Other products may also be available.

■

Three major deadlines for sign retroreflectivity compliance

Date	Aspect of Compliance
January 2012	Sign assessment or management plan in place
January 2015	Regulatory, warning, and ground-mounted signs
January 2018	Overhead guide signs and street name signs

Stanley L. Ring Memorial Library: New acquisitions

Note about delivery of materials: *The library now sends orders through the U.S. Postal Service. This change is resulting in important savings for LTAP, but ordered materials do not arrive as quickly. If you have an urgent need for library materials, let us know when you place your order and we will arrange faster delivery.*

Three ways to order LTAP library materials

- Use the online catalog, www.ctre.iastate.edu/library/search.cfm.
- Contact Jim Hogan, library coordinator, 515-294-9481, hoganj@iastate.edu, fax 515-294-0467.
- Mail or fax the order form on the back cover of *Technology News*.

Publications

P 1709 *Prairie Seedling and Seeding Evaluation Guide*

This guide features color photos and field descriptions for seedlings of native grasses, forbs, and common agricultural weeds as well as their seeds. It also includes a method for assessing a prairie seeding during the first few years after planting.

P 1710 *Central Region Seedling ID Guide for Native Prairie Plants*

This guide helps identify native plants at various stages of growth. Color photos illustrate seed, seedling, juvenile, and flowering stages, and distinguishing characteristics.

Videos

V 663 *Night Lights: How Retroreflectivity Makes Roads Safer*

This video explains retroreflectivity and provides nighttime driving and safety tips.

DVDs

DVD 112 *Personal Protective Equipment*

This video describes the safe use and maintenance of PPE, including everything from hard hats to eye protection and hearing aids. It includes a training manual with exam questions.

Historical

Iowa's first LTAP director and later part-time librarian, Stan Ring, was a transportation history buff who, until he died, collected slides and information documenting Iowa's journey from mud-caked byways to paved roadways. The following library holdings are highlighted in his memory:

DVD 65 / V 580 *A History of Iowa's Rivers, Rails, Roads, & Runways*

This videotape provides an excellent overview of the role of transportation in the state's development.

P 1288 *Building Better Roads*

This book, prepared in celebration of the Transportation Research Board's 75th anniversary, documents the history of highway research in Iowa and Iowa's critical role in instituting the original Highway Research Board in 1920. It includes several personal interviews and dozens of photos and offers an overview of the period from 1904 through 1974. It was produced by CTRE with support from the Iowa DOT.

P 1450 *Iowa Highway Research Board: 1949–1999*

This book reviews the history of the Iowa Highway Research Board's activities, beginning with its inception in 1949 as the first organized effort in the United States to investigate local road construction problems. It was produced by CTRE with support from the Iowa DOT.

V 313 *History of Concrete Paving in Iowa: The Slip Form Paver*

The first part of this video covers the development of roads and concrete pavements up to World War II. The second part covers the invention of the slip form paver in Iowa.

PPE continued from page 3

Foot and leg protection

Employees should wear protective footwear if they face possible leg or foot injuries from falling or rolling objects, or if they are exposed to hot substances or corrosive or poisonous materials. Footwear should have a protective toe and should offer impact and compression protection.

Hand and arm protection

Employees should wear hand and arm protection—gloves, finger guards, and arm coverings—if they face possible skin absorption of harmful substances, chemical or thermal burns, electrical dangers, cuts, abrasions, or other hazards.

Body protection

Employees should use body protection if they face possible bodily injury of any kind that cannot be eliminated through other practices or controls. Examples of body protection include coveralls, vests, reflective clothing, and body suits. ■

November 24: Worker visibility compliance

The compliance date for FHWA Final Rule on Worker Visibility is near. Effective November 24, 2008, the rule states that “all workers within the right-of-way of a Federal-aid highway who are exposed to either traffic or to construction equipment within the work area shall wear high-visibility safety apparel.”

Workers are people on foot whose duties place them in the right-of-way of a federal-aid highway. This includes roadway workers, survey and utility crews, incident responders, and law enforcement personnel.

High-visibility safety apparel is defined as personal protective safety clothing intended to provide conspicuity during both daytime and nighttime usage and that meets Class 2 or 3 performance requirements of ANSI/ISEA 107-2004.

Conference calendar

March 2008

20–21	Iowa Concrete Pavement Preservation Workshop	Ames	Sharon Prochnow 515-294-3781 prochnow@iastate.edu
24	Work Zone Safety	Storm Lake	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384 tmcdonal@iastate.edu
25	Work Zone Safety	Sioux City	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384 tmcdonal@iastate.edu
26	Work Zone Safety	Council Bluffs	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384 tmcdonal@iastate.edu
27	Work Zone Safety	Ames	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384 tmcdonal@iastate.edu
28	Work Zone Safety	Ames	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384 tmcdonal@iastate.edu

April 2008

4	Pervious Concrete Forum-Iowa City		Anne Leopold 515-964-2020 aleopold@snyder-associates.com
7–11	National Work Zone Awareness Week	Kickoff in Sacramento, CA	Get more information www.workzonesafety.org/news_events/awareness_week/2008/brochure
8	Tech Transfer Concrete Consortium	Baton Rouge, LA	
9–10	National Concrete Consortium (NC ²)	Baton Rouge, LA	
TBD	Motor Grader Operator Workshops	various locations TBD	Georgia Parham 515-294-2267 gparham@iastate.edu

June 2008

17	Mower Safety Workshop	Davenport, IA	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384 tmcdonal@iastate.edu
18	Mower Safety Workshop	Iowa City, IA	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384 tmcdonal@iastate.edu
19	Mower Safety Workshop	Waterloo, IA	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384 tmcdonal@iastate.edu
20	Mower Safety Workshop	Eldora, IA	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384 tmcdonal@iastate.edu

September 2008

10	Snow Roadeo (Truck, Motor Grader, Loader)	Newton	Duane Smith 515-294-8103 desmith@iastate.edu
11	Iowa Maintenance Training Expo	Newton	Duane Smith 515-294-8103 desmith@iastate.edu

Supervisory Techniques & Skills online training available by end of April

Some Roads Scholar courses will be available soon in a new online format through Engineering Distance Education at ISU. The first course will be offered soon: Supervisory Techniques and Skills (formerly called Successful Management), a core course to achieve the level of Senior Roads Scholar. The \$75 registration fee covers all course materials.

Supervisory Techniques and Skills is designed for city, county, and state transportation personnel, as well as other public works employees in supervisory positions. Among other things, the course can help supervisors learn to

- motivate employees,
- communicate effectively, and
- handle disciplinary issues.

Offered through an online system called Moodle, the online courses will allow participants to view informational videos, conduct self-assessment inventories, and review course materials when it is convenient and at their own pace. In the case of the Supervisory Techniques and Skills, participants will have six months from the time of registration to complete the course.

On completion of any of these courses, participants will receive a certificate of completion and appropriate credit in the Roads Scholar program.

For more information, contact Duane Smith, 515-294-8817, desmith@iastate.edu. ■

Applications for traffic safety funds due June 15

Beginning in 2008, applications from cities and counties for Traffic Safety Funds will be due at the Iowa DOT Office of Traffic and Safety by June 15. Note the earlier date.

Iowa's Traffic Safety Fund (TSF), also known as the Traffic Safety Improvement Program (TSIP) or the Half-Percent Program, provides funding for local safety-related proj-

ects in three categories: site improvements, materials to install new or replace obsolete signs or signals, or traffic studies or public information initiatives.

Advancing the application deadline from August to June 15 allows successful applicants to be notified of their awards in time to begin designing approved projects

during the winter.

In anticipation of related changes to the state administrative rules, likely in June 2009, applications for 2009 projects will be due June 15, 2008. For more information about the program itself, see the TSF program website, www.dot.state.ia.us/tsip.htm. ■

LTAP Materials

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Fax: 515.294.0467

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Title _____

Organization _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

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- Send the following library materials to the address below (or to the corrected address above):

Title: _____

P-, V-, DVD or CR-number: _____

Title: _____

P-, V-, DVD or CR-number: _____

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Ames, IA 50010-8664

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