

THE MILLER MESSAGE

SEPTEMBER 25, 2008

FROM THE MANAGER'S DESK

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SEPTEMBER??? Time to start closing up the cabins and swimming pools, winterize the boats, and get the yards cleaned up before the snow flies. For others it's a more exciting time of year; football season is under way, hunting season is just around the corner, and the skiers and snowmobilers can't wait. It's hard to believe, but as I type this I'm watching gravel trains pull into the yard one after another delivering this upcoming winters supply of salt. Where did summer go?

I suppose summer seemed to fly by simply because there was so much going on. As you look back there were a couple bridges built, two bridge designs for next year, four safety projects, several large culvert replacements, over ten miles of new pavement, approximately twelve miles of drainage reconstruction, seventeen miles of gravel resurfacing,

one hundred seven miles of chip seal, and about four hundred miles of brining. Throw in line striping, crack sealing, traffic signal upgrades along with all of the daily routine maintenance you folks do and it becomes a little easier to understand where summer went.

As I look around, not only do I see salt being delivered, but I see people diligently working to complete those projects left to be completed before winter sets in. As importantly however, I see people preparing plans and budgets for next year, I see equipment being built and fabricated, salt spreaders being installed and prepared for winter.

Thus the moral of this short article: it's those types of work ethics and attitudes that make my job so en-

joyable knowing that even when understaffed or working with a continually shrinking budget, all of you find a way to get the necessary work completed. As I look ahead to winter, I hope that Mother Nature does not come down on us as hard as she did last year, but if she does, I'm confident that all will be handled with the same expediency and professionalism as it's always been.

Thanks so much for a safe and productive summer.

See you soon.

Brian



MICHIGAN RISKS LOSING ROAD FUNDS

Michigan and its cities and counties will lose nearly \$1 billion a year in federal funds and watch another 30 percent of their roads crumble into poor condition in the next decade unless they nearly double spending on repairs, a special state advisory committee says in a report it released.

The price tag on road fixes the state should be making is \$6.1 billion a year, compared to less than \$3.5 billion being spent annually by the state and local governments on repairs of roads and bridges.

Major findings of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Transportation's study include:

- At the current funding rate, Michigan and its cities and counties will average \$950 million a year in lost federal road funding, starting in 2010, because state and local governments won't have enough dollars to pay the local share for many projects.
- Some 23,000 lane miles (miles of roads times number of lanes) will need to be fixed by 2015, but expected funding will be sufficient to repair just 876 lane miles—3.8 percent.

- Inner-city bus routes may have to be sliced 50 percent.
- More commercial flights will be canceled.
- Job losses, road congestion and inefficient freight movement will continue.

Some hard-pressed local governments already have had to forgo federal money toward badly needed road and street repairs because they don't have the necessary local match for it.

As gasoline prices soar and automakers look at such alternatives as electric- and hydrogen-powered engines, other states already are considering new ways to fund transportation or make the dollars go farther. Among them are privatizing ownership or maintenance of roads, toll roads, higher fees for driver's licenses and auto registration, and taxing motorists based on mileage rather than gallons of gasoline.

Governor Jennifer Granholm has instructed the task force to come up with road funding ideas other than increased fuel taxes. With gasoline prices now topping \$4 a gallon, she has opposed any increase in the state gasoline tax.

New Sign Retroreflectivity Requirements

Information Provided By Rob Hudec

The Saginaw County Road Commission's Sign Shop is keeping pace with the continuous changes of sign sizes, reflectivity and the placement of signs along with the upgrading of computer software.

In 1999, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) required that all of the signs be upgraded from an engineer grade material to a diamond grade material for stops, yields, stop ahead and school signs plus also upgrading the size of street signs depending on the speed limit. Once again, the FHWA is requiring another non-funded, mandatory upgrade.

One of the FHWA's primary missions is to improve safety on the nation's roadways. Approximately 42,000 people have been killed on American roads during the last decade. While only one-quarter of all travel occurs at night, about half of the traffic fatalities occur during nighttime hours. To address this disparity, the FHWA has adopted new traffic sign retroreflectivity requirements.

To comply with the new requirements, public agencies will have until January 2012 to implement and then continue to use an assessment or management method that is designed to maintain traffic sign retroreflectivity at or above the minimum levels specified. Five assessment or management methods are defined in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) as acceptable maintenance methods for traffic signs. Agencies are also permitted to develop and use other methods based on engineering studies.

The compliance date for regulatory, warning, and ground-mounted guide signs is January 2015. For overhead guide signs and street name signs, the compliance date is January 2018.

The Saginaw County Road Commission's Sign Shop Group Leader, Jason Brown and employees Matt Peek and Mike Ecker are on their way to becoming leaders in keeping up with the sign

changes. By 2012 they plan to have established and implemented a sign assessment or management method to maintain minimum levels of sign retroreflectivity.

The Saginaw County Road Commission has received coupons and a National Association of County Engineers (NACE) grant to help with the cost of these mandatory upgrades.

In your travels you should notice a big difference in the sign reflectivity to make it easier for you and your family members to get around.

The Sign Shop takes great pride in their work, whether it be making the signs bigger and brighter, trimming brush away from the signs or installing new signs. Since 2000, the Sign Shop has completed over 21,766 jobs. Thank you to all of the employees who have had a hand in helping the sign shop achieve that number.

Please remember to keep your eyes open and report all missing and damaged signs.

TECHNICAL CORNER

Top Ways To Keep Your Computer Running Safe & Sound

1. Defragment your Hard Drive

Over time, the data on your hard drive gets scattered. Defragmenting your hard drive puts your data back into sequential order, making it easier for Windows to access it. As a result, the performance of your computer will improve.

In Windows XP select Start->Programs->Accessories->System Tools->Disk Defragmenter

2. Scan for Viruses

Viruses can wreak havoc on your computer. Detecting and cleaning viruses is an excellent way to improve your system's performance. Several great antivirus products are now available for free. I recommend AVG Free Antivirus which can be downloaded at the following website:

<http://free.avg.com/>

3. Install a Firewall

Firewalls provide protection against outside attackers by shielding your computer or network from malicious or unnecessary Internet traffic. Firewalls can be configured to block data from certain locations while allowing the relevant and necessary data. They are especially important for users who rely on "always on" connections such as cable or DSL modems. One firewall I recommend is from Zone Alarm and can be downloaded for free at the following website:

http://www.zonealarm.com/store/content/catalog/products/zonealarm_free_firewall.jsp

4. Check for Spyware and Adware

Spyware is software that allows companies to monitor what websites you visit or even access your computer. Adware is software that displays advertisements. Both use system resources and slow your computer down. Detecting and removing the programs will improve system performance. I recommend Ad-Aware 2008 which can be downloaded for free at the following website:

http://www.download.com/Ad-Aware-2008/3000-8022_4-10045910.html?part=dl-ad-aware&subj=dl&tag=top5&cdIPid=10844457

5. Uninstall Unneeded Program

Removing programs that you no longer use can free up space on your computer and speed up your system's performance. However, you need to uninstall the programs properly to see much improvement; deleting them is not enough.

6. Stop Programs from starting on Windows Boot

One way you can speed up your computer is to prevent programs from launching themselves at start-up. Not only do the unwanted programs delay the start of Windows, they also continue to slow down your computer since they use system resources.

In Windows XP select Start->Run. Type "msconfig" without the quotes and click OK. Click the Startup tab and deselect programs that you know do not need to be running.

Article Provided By Tom Luck

Safety Corner

WHEN THE TEMPERATURE DROPS

Have you ever noticed a change in the temperature? Did you notice a layer of dew on your windshield this morning? That dew will soon turn to frost, the leaves will begin to fall and before long, as you go outside, you will see your breath as you exhale. As you look around you can see all the signs that cold weather is coming to Michigan.

For those of us that have to work outside during the winter season, cold weather safety is a must. Excessive exposure to the cold weather can be hazardous to your health. Serious health problems can result from prolonged exposure to freezing or cold temperatures.

Protect yourself from the hazards of cold weather by wearing the proper clothing for cold, wet and windy conditions. Be sure to wear a hat, gloves, face protection and warm boots. Dressing in layers allows you to adjust to changing conditions. Keep yourself warm on the inside by drinking warm beverages and whenever possible, eating warm food.

If you are working outside in cold, windy conditions, take a short break—get back in your truck and warm up. This will prevent you from the danger of frostbite and hypothermia. Remember to keep a couple of disposable hand warmer packets with you just in case.

Let's all have a good and safe winter.

Article Provided by Randy Emeott

UPCOMING MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

****Estimated Dates****

Information Provided By Scott Hare

OCTOBER, 2008

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
Ditch Cleaning	Various Locations		Weather	Permitting *		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13 Hemlock Hemlock	14 Over the Over the	15 Eaton Drain Jennings	16 in Brant Drain in	17 Township Brant Twp.	18
19	20	21	22	23 Annual Safety Mtg.	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

NOVEMBER, 2008

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
Ditch Cleaning	Various Locations		Weather	Permitting *		
2	3	4	5	6	7 Flu Shots 3:30 P.M. Board Room	8
9	10	11 Holiday Office Closed	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
26	24	25	26	27 Holiday Office Closed	28 Holiday Office Closed	29
30						

DECEMBER, 2008

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Ditch Cleaning	Various Locations		Weather	Permitting *		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24 Holiday Office Closed	25 Holiday Office Closed	26	27
28	29	30	31 Holiday Office Closed			

Ditch Cleaning to take place, weather permitting, throughout the above months

Barnard Road/McCarty Road Safety Project

The Saginaw County Road Commission applied for a safety grant in February of 2006 to make improvements to the intersection of Barnard Road and McCarty Road in Saginaw Township. The grant application outlined the accident history and congestion issues that have plagued the intersection over the years and the potential to reduce the problems through a coordinated intersection widening project. Upon review of the grant application, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) concurred and awarded a \$250,000 safety grant to the Road Commission in May of 2006.

The primary intent of the project is to widen all four quadrants of the intersection to accommodate left turn lanes. The widening will allow for the construction of designated left turn lanes which will allow traffic traveling straight through the intersection or making right turns to do so more freely. Intersection improvements will also involve upgrades to the existing traffic signal which will be upgraded with new energy efficient components.

The design work was completed by the Saginaw County Road Commission staff. Bids were taken on July 11, 2008 by the Michigan Department of Transportation and Bilacic Trucking of AuGres was the low bidder at \$410,000. Funding for the project is coming from three different sources: MDOT Safety Grant (Approx. 61%), Saginaw County Road Commission matching funds (20%), and Federal Urban STP Funds (Approx. 19%).

Throughout the project, the intersection will be closed and traffic will be detoured. Utility relocation for the project could start as early as August 4, 2008 with an overall project completion date at the end of October, 2008.

Information Provided By Adam Ball



Excellent Job!

2008 CONSTRUCTION SEASON

Information Provided by Adam Ball

Township	Road	Location	Type of Improvement	Start of Construction	End of Construction
Birch Run	Beyer	Willard to Burt	Drainage & Paving	Ongoing	October, 2008
Saginaw	Barnard	@ McCarty	Intersection Improvements	Ongoing	October, 2008
Saginaw	Berberovich Subdivision	Interior Roads	Paving	Ongoing	October, 2008
Thomas	Thomas	Gratiot to Schomaker	Drainage & Paving	Ongoing	November, 2008
Kochville	Bueker	Bay to Tittabawassee	Mill & Resurface	Ongoing	October, 2008
Carrollton	Hanchett	Shattuck to Rustic	Drainage/Crush/Shape/Pave	Ongoing	October, 2008
Kochville/Saginaw	Tittabawassee	Bay to Michigan	Joint Repair	September, 2008	October, 2008
Maple Grove	Bueche	Volkmer to Chesaning	Crush & Shape	September, 2008	October, 2008
Bridgeport	Townline	Bell to Pettit	Drainage	September, 2008	December, 2008
Bridgeport	Townline	Blackmar to I-75	Drainage	September, 2008	December, 2008

We're On The Web!

www.scrc-mi.org

SAGINAW COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION

3020 Sheridan Avenue
Saginaw, MI 48601

Phone: 989-752-6140

Fax: 989-752-8934

REGULAR OFFICE HOURS: Monday–Friday

7:00 A.M.—3:30 P.M.

SUMMER OFFICE HOURS: May 1st — Labor Day

Monday–Thursday 6:00 A.M.—4:00 P.M.

CLOSED FRIDAY

COMMISSIONERS

Wallace “Butch” Warner—Chairperson

John Sangster—Vice-Chairperson

Richard Mallette—Member



SCRC Announcements

- Flu Shots for SCRC employees are scheduled for Friday, November 7, 2008 at 3:30 P.M. in the Board Room. Please watch for the informational posting and sign up sheet.
- The Bruce Weiss Memorial Golf Outing was a success. The employee golf outing was held Friday, July 18, 2008 at Valley View Farms Golf Course in Shields. A huge thanks goes out to Ryan Whiteherse and Tom Kramer for organizing the event. Thanks to everyone who helped collect door prizes. A very special thank you to all of the vendors and sponsors who donated and helped make this event a success. We hope to see everyone again next year!
- Sign Shop Employees Jason Brown and Mike Ecker attended the SAM's Club Safety Day in Kochville Twp. on June 26, 2008. They demonstrated safety in construction zones which included lane closures. They displayed an arrow board and construction signs used in construction zones and explained how to safely maneuver through a construction zone so as both the driver and the road crews are safe.

Saginaw County Road Commission has 1,846 miles of roads to maintain. Although local townships share in the cost of maintaining some of the roads, the Saginaw County Road Commission is responsible for most of the cost.

The extensive number of rivers and drains in Saginaw County means there are also over 200 bridges to maintain. Smaller tributaries and ditches add more than 2,800 culverts to the road system and the list continues to grow as new roads are built to meet the needs of our ever changing and expanding community.

As you can see, maintaining the county road system is no easy task; however, everyone at the Saginaw County Road Commission is committed to giving you the best road system for your money. We are proud to be a part of the Saginaw Community and are committed to building a quality road system which will last for many generations to come.

HEALTH CORNER— INFLUENZA A.K.A. THE FLU

Influenza, commonly known as “the flu”, is a highly contagious viral infection of the respiratory tract. Although the flu affects both sexes and all age groups, kids tend to get it more than adults. The illness even has it's own season—from November to April, with most cases occurring between late December and early March.

The flu is often confused with the common cold, but flu symptoms tend to develop quickly (usually 1 to 4 days after a person is exposed to the flu virus) and are usually more severe than the typical sneezing and stuffiness of a cold.

Symptoms may include: fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, dizziness, loss of appetite, tiredness, cough, sore throat, runny nose, nausea or vomiting, weakness, ear infection and/or diarrhea. Infants with the flu may simply seem sick all of a sudden or “just don't look right”. The flu that people get is not the same strain of virus as the avian flu.

After 5 days, fever and other symptoms have usually disappeared but a cough and weakness may continue. All symptoms are usually gone within a week or two. However, it is important to treat the flu seriously because it

can lead to pneumonia and other life-threatening complications, particularly in infants, senior citizens, and people with long-term health problems.

The flu is very contagious and is spread by virus-infected droplets that are coughed or sneezed into the air. The flu usually occurs in small outbreaks, but epidemics tend to occur every few years. Epidemics (when the illness spreads rapidly and affects many people in an area at the same time) peak within 2 to 3 weeks after the first cases occur and then begin to decrease.

The flu vaccine usually is offered between September and mid-November, although it may be given at other times of the year. It reduces the average person's chances of catching the flu by up to 80% during the flu season. Because the vaccine prevents infection with only a few of the viruses that can cause flu-like symptoms, it isn't a guarantee against getting sick. But even if someone who's gotten the flu shot gets the flu, symptoms usually will be fewer and milder.

Getting the flu shot before the flu season is in full force, gives the body a chance to build up immunity to, or protections from, the virus.