



National Association County Engineers

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NACE UPDATE

The almost bi-weekly newsletter for Board members, Committee Chairs, and Members
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(Note: Sources of information include the AASHTO Journal, NACo staff, Senate and House publications, the Federal Highway Administration, and other association news journals)

Congress Sends \$8 Billion Highway Trust Fund Bill to President

The House of Representatives gave final approval last Thursday to a measure that would immediately transfer \$8.017 billion of general revenue to the Highway Trust Fund, sending the bill to President Bush for his expected signature.

“Now that the House and Senate have approved legislation to restore funding to the Highway Trust Fund, we urge the president to act quickly and sign the bill into law,” said John Horsley, executive director of the American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials. “States depend on federal funds to keep the country moving safely and we trust that the bipartisan cooperation that brought about today’s rescue will continue next year as Congress passes a new authorization bill that will keep the Highway Trust Fund solvent for future generations.”

The House originally passed the bill, HR 6532, on July 23. Senators approved it by voice vote Wednesday evening, breaking through a deadlock that had stalled action for months. Because of the urgency of the highway funding crisis, the Senate amended the legislation to make it effective upon the president’s signature rather than on Sept. 30. The House concurred Thursday with the Senate amendment by a vote of 376-29 and sent the bill to the White House.

“A number of senators and representatives worked tirelessly to resolve this predicament,” Horsley said. “We particularly appreciate the leadership of the Senate Finance Committee: Max Baucus and Charles Grassley; Senate Environment & Public Works Committee: Barbara Boxer and James Inhofe; Senate Appropriations Committee: Robert Byrd, Patty Murray, and Kit Bond; Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell; House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee: James Oberstar and John Mica; and House Ways & Means Committee: Charles Rangel.”

Senate Approves \$8 Billion Highway Trust Fund Rescue

Breaking through a deadlock that had stalled action for months, the Senate on September 11, 2008 by voice vote approved the immediate transfer of \$8.017 billion from the federal government's General Fund to the Highway Trust Fund to restore its solvency.

States have been put on hold hundreds of millions of dollars of construction projects this week as a result of the previous Friday's announcement by U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary Peters that federal-aid payments would be rationed because of a shortage of federal

funds. Peters said that distribution of federal highway funds to the states would be weekly, rather than twice daily. She also indicated that after the first weekly payment this Thursday, states would likely receive a reduced percentage of their claims, depending on the amount of revenue flowing into the trust fund.

Reversing the administration's previous opposition to a bill (HR 6532) already passed overwhelmingly by the House, Peters urged the Congress to enact a "clean bill" to resolve the crisis by Friday. She said the trust fund faces a zero balance sooner than originally expected because Americans have sharply reduced driving and gas purchases this year because of high prices at the pump. That in turn has led to a drop in gas-tax collections because the fee is assessed per gallon purchased.

Despite the administration's urging, efforts to move the legislation by unanimous consent were thwarted last Monday when several Republican senators continued their objections to increasing the nation's budget deficit by sending \$8 billion of general revenue to the Highway Trust Fund.

After behind-the-scenes negotiations, Senate Environment & Public Works Committee Chairwoman Barbara Boxer, D-CA, asked late this afternoon that the bill be brought up for immediate action with 90 minutes of debate. No objections were made to her request. The Senate proceeded with debate and then took a voice vote approving the bill and returning it to the House for consideration of an amendment by Sen. Max Baucus, D-MT and chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, which would make the transfer of funds effective upon enactment. The House bill would make funds available Sept. 30.

The bill returns \$8.017 billion to the Highway Trust Fund that was removed and sent to the General Fund as part of a 1998 budget deal.

The Congressional Budget Office released an estimate yesterday that this year's federal budget deficit will reach \$407 billion -- very close to the record \$413 billion deficit recorded in Fiscal Year 2004.

Secure Rural Schools and PILT Efforts – Action Needed Now!

Over the next two to three weeks the Congress will work to pass a continuing resolution (CR) that will provide funding for government programs and operations. Because Congress was unable to pass annual appropriations for FY2009, the CR must be passed prior to October 1 or the Federal Government will be forced to shut down. Because Congress has been unable to pass all previous attempts to reauthorize (or extend) the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act (PL 109-393) this year, all attention is being focused on obtaining a one-year extension in the CR.

It is also important to note that last week, Senate Finance Committee Chairman Baucus (D-MT) and Ranking Member Grassley (R-IA) introduced a new compromised energy tax package aimed at reducing America's dependence on foreign oil and creating American jobs by providing credits and incentives to facilitate independent energy solutions. Included in the legislation is language to reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools program through 2011. The funding distribution formula has been amended to make it more equitable, by taking into account historic payment levels to counties, average income levels in counties and acreage of federal land. The bill also would provide for full funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program for FY2009. ([Click here](#) for the Senate Finance Committee Press Release)

The Committee's press release states that they intend to bring the bipartisan compromise to the Senate floor for consideration this month. However, other sources predict that consideration of the tax bill may be bumped to a lame duck session following the elections. Due to the uncertainty of the elections and the increased probability of a lame duck session, counties should focus all attention this month to the inclusion of a one-year extension of SRS in the CR.

Because of the short turnaround (drafting of the CR is currently underway) immediate grassroots support is critical. Please contact your Congressional delegations and urge support of a one year extension of the Secure Rural Schools program in the upcoming Continuing Resolution.

Nominating Committee Interested in New Officers for 2009--2010

The NACE Nominating Committee is accepting nominations for 2009-2010 NACE officers. The positions of President-elect, Secretary-Treasurer, and Regional Vice Presidents for the Southeast, North Central and Western regions will be on the ballot this year. The constitution requires that a minimum of two candidates be nominated for Vice Presidents and Secretary-Treasurer. If fewer than two nominations are received for any of these positions, the nominating committee will seek out qualified candidates. Nominations should be sent to the Nominations Committee Chair, George Webb by November 30, 2008 so that they can be reviewed, assembled and printed for distribution to the membership. A biography and photograph should be included. Nominations and or questions should be directed to George Webb at (561) 355-2006 or email: gwebb@pbcgov.org

NACE Awards Program: It's Time to Nominate Deserving NACE Members as "Engineer of the Year" or "Program/Project Manager of the Year"

Each year the NACE Awards Committee reviews nominated individuals for the "Urban Engineer of the Year", "Rural Engineer of the Year" and "Program/Project Manager of the Year" awards. The rules and criterion can be found by visiting the NACE website www.countyengineers.org Click on Programs and Committee and you will find the appropriate file. In addition, each NACE Board member has copies of the forms. We encourage each NACE state affiliate organization to submit their nominations (5 copies) by December 31, 2008 to Ken Stone, Director of Asset Management and Sustainability, 207 4th Avenue, N., Kelso, WA 98626-4189. For more information contact Ken at (360) 577-3030; email: stonek@co.cowlitz.wa.us

NACo Sponsored Webinar on Greening County Fleets 101 on Sept. 30th

Greening County Fleets 101

Tuesday, September 30 2008 - 2:00pm – 4:00pm Eastern

Take advantage of NACo's free green government webinars. Go to www.greencounties.org and click on "webinars and upcoming events" on the right for registration information.

As counties seek to green their county fleets, many are trying to assess relative costs and benefits of purchasing new efficient vehicles, retrofitting older ones and using alternative fuels. Ultimately, the composition of the fleet will vary for each county and often depend upon other environmental or economic policy goals. In addition to county case studies, this webinar will cover:

- Current and future availability of green vehicles and fuels

- Actions that can improve existing fleet performance
- Approaches and strategies to greening the county fleet
- Components and key factors for a green county fleet policy

IBTTA Transportation Finance Summit Planned

NACE is proud to sponsor IBTTA's [Transportation Finance Summit](#) on December 7-9, 2008 in Washington, DC. This Summit will explore practical and workable solutions to meet the huge transportation funding challenges confronting us today. If you are in charge of funding, maintaining, and operating surface transportation infrastructure at the state, regional, county, and municipal level, you don't want to miss this Summit! Transportation experts from around the world will unpack the toolbox of funding and financing options that are available to you. Check the IBTTA [website](#) for registration and program information.

Local Technical Assistance E-News available

The latest LTAP//TTAP e-news it's now available online. Please also make sure to visit the new 2008 Conference section that includes presentations, video links, photos and other great resources.

e-newsletter <http://www.ltapt2.org/newsletter/2008/summer2008.php>

2008 Conference section
<http://www.ltapt2.org/conference/2008/>

USDOT's Awards \$14.7 Million for Rural Roads Safety

'Rural Safety Innovation Program' Funding Latest Tool in Effort to Safeguard Drivers

RAYMOND, Miss. - Fourteen states, three counties and two parishes competed for and will receive \$14.7 million in Rural Safety Innovation Program (RSIP) funds to improve safety on rural roads, Deputy Secretary Thomas J. Barrett said today.

"Making one road safer is important. But making rural roads around the country less deadly is absolutely essential," said U.S. Transportation Deputy Secretary Thomas J. Barrett, who personally presented awards to officials in Mississippi today. "Thanks to these funds our rural roads are on their way to becoming as safe as they are beautiful."

Rural roads carry less than half of America's traffic but account for more than half of the nation's vehicular deaths. Last February, the U.S. Department of Transportation launched the "Rural Safety Initiative" to address this issue.

Though last year's fatality rate - 1.37 per 100 million vehicle miles traveled - is the lowest in the nation's history, the 41,059 fatalities in 2007 remain "entirely too high," said Barrett. "The RSIP program will help us put a national focus on a local problem."

The awards, made possible by funds from the USDOT's Delta Region Transportation Development Program and Intelligent Transportation Systems Program, are part of a \$287 million effort to help local and state governments reduce crashes on dangerous rural roads. The RSIP recipients include:

Project Lead	Grant Amount	Project
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Arizona DOT	\$ 480,000	I-10 Severe Weather Warning System
Arkansas Highway and Transportation Dept.	\$1,540,786	Cable median barrier on I-55 in Crittenden County
California DOT	\$1,575,175	Coordinated speed management in work zones
California/El Dorado County	\$ 304,000	Intersection safety using ITS technologies
Colorado DOT	\$ 324,390	Speed management on US 160 Wolf Creek Pass Snow Shed
Colorado DOT	\$ 140,749	Speed information on approach to curves on US 50 in Fremont County
Illinois DOT	\$ 344,000	Rural curve improvement strategy on county and township highway
Illinois DOT	\$ 40,000	Vehicle actuated advanced warning on curves
Iowa DOT	\$ 500,000	Traffic and criminal software improvements
Kansas DOT	\$ 284,000	Dynamic message signs and road weather information system
Louisiana/Rapides Parish	\$1,140,943	Roadway departure crash reduction action plan
Louisiana/Grant Parish	\$ 597,954	Roadway departure crash reduction action plan
Louisiana DOT	\$1,925,983	Rural intersection safety implementation plan
Minnesota DOT	\$ 160,000	Installation of dynamic curve warning systems
Mississippi DOT	\$1,925,983	Low-cost road departure crash countermeasures
Mississippi/Hinds County	\$ 303,552	Low-cost road departure crash countermeasures
Missouri DOT	\$ 800,000	Dynamic message signs and closed-circuit TV on I-57, I-55 and US 60
South Carolina DOT	\$ 840,000	Decrease hydroplaning on US 25 in Greenville County
Tennessee DOT	\$ 650,800	Sign inventory and Assessment/Management System Project
Washington/King County	\$ 202,400	Advanced curve warning and driver feedback signs
Wisconsin DOT	\$ 609,000	Rural thru-stop intersection crash prevention

For more information on the USDOT's Rural Safety Initiative, visit <http://www.dot.gov/affairs/ruralsafety/>

Thickness Design for Municipal Pavements

The latest topic for our popular web-based seminar is thickness design pavements used in municipal, county, and rural streets and roads. This webinar will include an outstanding overview of design basics, as well as a review of ACPA's StreetPave software.

Join ACPA's Scott Haislip for this interesting and informative webinar scheduled for **Tuesday, September 23, at 1 p.m. (Central)**. *Important note: This is a repeat of the very popular webinar presented on this topic in April 2008.*

Course Content

This webinar focuses on the design of streets and local roads, ranging from residential streets to heavily trafficked collector and arterial roadways. The recently revised ACPA StreetPave software will be featured as the primary design method. The basis for the StreetPave design methodology, development of realistic inputs, performing the analysis and interpreting results will be covered in the webinar. Audience: Contractors, Agency Personnel, Consultants, and anyone requiring a basic knowledge of design for streets and roads using ACPA's StreetPave software.

Date & Time

The webinar is scheduled for 1:00 p.m. (Central) on Tuesday, September 23, 2008. The webinar will last approximately 90 minutes, although questions & answers typically add about 10 to 15 minutes to the presentation time. Call-in information and other important details will be provided to confirmed registrants by the sometime after noon on Friday, September 19th.

Registration

To register for this event, contact Debbie Becker (with the subject line, "Thickness Design") at dbecker@pavement.com. Payment may be made by credit card (MasterCard, VISA, American Express) in advance, or alternatively, we can invoice you. Please indicate your payment preference at the time of registration. To participate in this event, we must receive your registration before 1 p.m. (Central) on Thursday, September 18, 2008.

How it Works

A special program allows us to present all information by computer and telephone. From your laptop or personal computer, you will be able to see the presentation materials as if you were in a classroom setting. All you need is a computer (preferably with a DSL, cable, or T-1 connection) and a telephone. We'll handle all of the rest! You'll not only be able to hear and see the presentation live and in "real time," you will also have the opportunity to interact with the moderators, ask questions, and even participate in brief survey questions, too.

Earn One Professional Development Hour (PDH)

An examination covering the key points of the presentation will be available online at the conclusion of the webinar. Successful completion of this examination is required to receive one Professional Development Hour (PDH).

Registration Fee

The registration fee is \$25.00 (US) per person.

Questions/More Information?

For additional information or any questions about this or other ACPA Education & Training programs, please contact Michael Ayers, Ph.D., at 217-621-3438 or,

alternatively, please send an e-mail (with the subject line "Webinar Training") to mayers@pavement.com.

Investigation of the Long Term Effects of Magnesium Chloride and other Concentrated Salt Solutions on Pavement and Structural Portland Cement Concrete Released

The recently completed study titled "Investigation of the Long Term Effects of Magnesium Chloride and other Concentrated Salt Solutions on Pavement and Structural Portland Cement Concrete." is available at:

http://www.state.sd.us/Applications/HR19ResearchProjects/oneproject_search.asp?projectnbr=SD2002-01

This was a 9-state FHWA pooled fund study over 5 years. It has some very interesting things to say about alternatives to salt. The report is huge, the Executive Summary and the Guide are much more manageable. No concrete pavement you say? It covers the effects on related concrete structures too--bridges, curbs, sidewalks, etc. that are even more susceptible to damage. Dr. Larry Sutter, the main researcher, is available to present this information at your statewide conferences (please expect to cover travel expenses.). He can be reached at: lsutter@mtu.edu

Interactive Highway Safety Design Model (IHSDM) web conferencing series

FHWA invites everyone to participate in their next scheduled quarterly IHSDM web conferencing event on **Wednesday, October 8, 2008**.

Web Conference Details –

2008 Interactive Highway Safety Design Model

Wednesday, October 8, 2008

Start time: 11:00 am (EST)

End time: 12:30 pm (EST)

Registration -

Meeting URL, teleconferencing number and additional instruction will be sent to you after registration. [Please register her by October 7](#) (Registration URL: Link to Register: <https://www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/resources/webconference/viewconference.aspx?webConfID=15065>)

General Information -

The primary topic of discussion for this web conference will include a presentation and demonstration of the newly added **Driver / Vehicle Module (DVM)** and enhanced **reporting capabilities** for the FHWA's latest 2008 public release of the Interactive Highway Safety Design Model. An IHSDM application case study will also be presented in this event.

Bridge Guardrail Survey Request from Iowa State University Center for Transportation Research and Education (2nd Notice)

A new research project –Bridge Rails and Approach Railing for Low-Volume Roads in Iowa – has been funded by the Iowa Highway Research Board and the Iowa Department of Transportation. The primary objective of this research is to provide guidance for installing, replacing, or upgrading bridge and bridge approach guard railing on low volume roads (i.e., ADT<400).

The Iowa State University Center for Transportation Research and Education has created a brief questionnaire for collecting information regarding what nationwide state/agency criteria exists for determine whether or not bridge and bridge approach guardrail are needed. The online questionnaire can be found at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=izxIoOwqVtih3kVQYXJC7g_3d_3d.

In order to allow the research team to complete the work in a timely manner, we ask that you please complete the questionnaire by **September, 30th 2008**. Thank you in advance for your assistance with this project. It is with your help that we hope to produce a practical document that will assist county engineers, consultants, etc. with low-volume road guard-rail concerns. If desired, you may contact either of the project Principal Investigators: Dr. Brent Phares (515) 294-5879 or Zach Hans (515) 294-2329.

Future Webinars on Roadway Departure – Please Complete This Survey for FHWA (2nd Notice)

The FHWA Office of Safety and Resource Center Safety and Design Team are developing several webinars related to Roadway Departure and would like your input. Attached is a link where you can indicate your priorities. Please submit this by September 12th, 2008 so that we can start preparing webinars for the high priority topics. For more information contact **Dick Albin, FHWA Safety Engineer**, Office - 720-963-3266; Email: dick.albin@fhwa.dot.gov
Click on below to start survey.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=06Leo2uzb3smtUo_2bki65dA_3d_3d

SAFETY DATA AND ANALYSIS IN DEVELOPING EMPHASIS AREA PLANS

http://www.trb.org/news/blurbs_detail.asp?id=9444

TRB's National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Report 500, Vol. 21: Guidance for Implementation of the AASHTO Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Safety Data and Analysis in Developing Emphasis Area Plans provides guidance on data sources and analysis techniques that may be employed to assist agencies in allocating safety funds.

SAFETY RESEARCH ON HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS: IMPROVING PRIORITIES, COORDINATION, AND QUALITY

http://www.trb.org/news/blurbs_detail.asp?id=9151

The printed version of TRB Special Report 292, Safety Research on Highway Infrastructure and Operations: Improving Priorities, Coordination, and Quality are now available. The report recommends the creation of an independent scientific advisory committee (SAC). The SAC would be charged with development of a transparent process for identifying and prioritizing research needs and opportunities in highway safety, with emphasis on infrastructure and operations, and using the process developed to recommend a national research agenda focused on highway infrastructure and operations safety. The report also explores opportunities to improve the quality of highway safety research.