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State's Paving Budget To Decline In 2011

WVDOT Secretary Paul Mattox says paving across the state is expected to go down in the coming year. Speaking last week at the 30th Annual West Virginia Asphalt Paving Conference, Mattox said the 2011 paving program is projected to decline to \$122 million due to stagnant revenues. This compares to about \$130 million that is being spent this year. The state has spent \$781 million for paving 3,800 miles during the last five years, according to the highway department.

Secretary Mattox also announced his department will be launching a \$12 million Winter Damage Program that will be distributed based on paved road miles per district for use in patching and repairs, to be performed by the WVDOH and contractors. He told the conference attendees that the WVDOT is spending about \$1 million per day when needed for snow and ice, and, as of last week, the department had exceeded its annual budget of \$54 million by approximately \$3 million. This past weekend's "blizzard" will only add to this overrun.

Average Annual Cost To Motorists Is \$280

Harsh 2010 Winter Weather Having Widespread Negative Impacts On Roads, Bridges

(Editor's Note: Provided is a press release that was sent out last week from West Virginians for Better Transportation.)

CHARLESTON, W.VA. -- This year's harsh winter weather is having a widespread impact on roads and bridges in our state. The regular "freeze-thaw" pattern and sustained salt use are having particularly negative effects on road beds and surfaces. As a result, pot holes are springing up on West Virginia's roads and highways.

These problems are more than just a discomfort and nuisance to drivers...they can be costly. According to a report prepared in 2009, roads in need of repair cost each West Virginia motorist an average of \$280 annually in extra vehicle operating costs – \$371 million statewide. Costs include accelerated vehicle depreciation, additional repair costs, and increased fuel consumption and tire wear. Worse, potholes can cause safety issues in some extreme circumstances.

"There is very little that anyone can do about the weather, but our state leaders need to find added resources to respond to the infrastructure damages and budget overruns that this winter season will bring," said Joe Deneault, Chairman of West Virginians for Better Transportation.

Making this situation worse are the following statistics, which are taken from a 2009 report prepared for WVBT by TRIP (The Road Information Program – www.tripnet.org):

- In 2007, 37 percent of major roads in West Virginia were in poor or mediocre condition, providing motorists with a rough ride.
 - In 2007, eight percent of West Virginia's roads were rated in poor condition and 29 percent were rated in mediocre condition.
 - Roads rated in poor condition may show signs of deterioration, including rutting, cracks and potholes. In some cases, poor roads can be resurfaced, but often are too deteriorated and must be reconstructed. Roads rated in mediocre condition may show signs of significant wear and may also have some visible pavement distress. Most pavements in mediocre condition can be repaired by resurfacing, but some may need more extensive reconstruction to return them to good condition.
 - A desirable goal for state and local organizations that are responsible for road maintenance is to have 75 percent of major roads in good condition. At the time of this report, 42 percent of West Virginia's major roads were in good condition.
- More than one-third - 37 percent - of bridges in West Virginia show significant deterioration or do not meet current design standards. This includes all bridges that are 20 feet or more in length and are maintained by state, local and federal agencies.
 - Fifteen percent of West Virginia's bridges (carrying at least 2,500 vehicles per day) were structurally deficient in 2008. A bridge is structurally deficient if there is significant deterioration of the bridge deck, supports or other major components. Structurally deficient bridges are often posted for lower weight or closed to traffic, restricting or redirecting large vehicles, including commercial trucks and emergency services vehicles.
 - Twenty-two percent of West Virginia's bridges were functionally obsolete in 2008. Bridges that are functionally obsolete no longer meet current highway design standards, often because of narrow lanes, inadequate clearances or poor alignment.

Deneault emphasized that West Virginia's long-term transportation challenges are severe. "Last year we found out that the West Virginia Department of Transportation projects it will have a transportation funding shortfall of approximately \$5 billion from 2009 to 2018," he pointed out. He added that the Department estimates that \$9.75 billion will be needed through 2018 to improve road and bridge conditions, enhance economic development, provide needed safety measures and relieve traffic congestion. "However, the state estimates that only \$5 billion will be available during that time," Deneault said..

This shortfall situation is hampered further by the fact that over the five-year period from March 2004 to March 2009, the average cost of materials used for highway construction – including asphalt, concrete, steel, lumber and diesel – increased by 40 percent. "Again, our state's leaders have a very challenging dilemma facing them, and one that is shared by nearly every other state," Deneault stated.

While the federal stimulus dollars are helping somewhat, the \$215 million that the state received in 2009 is only a drop in the bucket of what is really needed, Deneault added.

On a brighter note, Deneault noted that making needed improvements to West Virginia's roads, highways and bridges could provide a significant boost to the state's economy by creating jobs in the short term and stimulating long-term economic growth as a result of enhanced mobility

and access. A 2007 analysis by the Federal Highway Administration found that every \$1 billion invested in highway construction would support approximately 27,800 jobs, including approximately 9,500 in the construction sector, approximately 4,300 jobs in industries supporting the construction sector, and approximately 14,000 other jobs induced in non-construction related sectors of the economy.

Deneault noted that the state's congressional leaders, Governor Manchin and many legislators are aware of this situation and are looking for ways to develop a long-term solution. "I am hopeful that our nation will use its limited resources to make added investments for infrastructure improvements, which not only will help create jobs and stimulate the economy but also will help ensure our economic vitality and competitiveness for the long term."

NEWS COVERAGE:

Provided is a link to an Associated Press article that was published statewide this past weekend due to WVBT's press release.

Winter barrage leave budget-busting road mess

[Associated Press, Feb. 27, 2010](#)

REGISTER TO WIN!

Special WVBT-EXPO Contest: Enter To Win An HDTV!



West Virginians for Better Transportation once again will give away a flat-screen HDTV to one lucky winner who is present at the 2010 West Virginia Construction and Design Exposition's EXPO. The drawing will take place during the EXPO's After Hours event on March 24, 2010, from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm at the Charleston Civic Center.

You must be at least 18 years of age and be present at the EXPO After Hours event on March 24, 2010 in order to win. Please read all rules before entering the drawing.

TWO WAYS TO ENTER:

1. Complete this on-line form: <http://www.keepwvmoving.org/getactive/hdtv.aspx>
2. Drop by the WVBT exhibit booth on the first day of EXPO to get an entry form.

The HDTV drawing is sponsored by The Manahan Group, Malone Consulting Services and Advantage Technology.

New WVBT Supporters

Provided are new supporters to the WVBT coalition, which is nearing 300 companies, organizations and government officials.

**LifeTite Metal Products
Snap-Tite Culvert Lining Pipe**

Help Support WVBT's Ongoing Efforts In 2010

Now more than ever WVBT needs financial support from coalition partners and companies. If your organization or company would like to help sustain the coalition's ongoing campaign or would like to get more information about West Virginians for Better Transportation, please send an email to info@keepwvmoving.org. Someone would be happy to contact you.

Remember -- even with recent successes, West Virginia still has massive unmet needs (\$2 billion) for bridge, roadway and highway maintenance and construction.

Need A Speaker?

If you would like to have a speaker come talk about transportation to your group or organization, please complete this request form:

http://www.keepwvmoving.org/getactive/request_a_wvbt_speaker.aspx

For more information about West Virginians for Better Transportation, please go to www.keepwvmoving.org.

To opt out of this email system, please send your request to info@keepwvmoving.org.