



Tuesday, August 31, 2010

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the TxDOT Update. This is the first edition of our new bi-weekly newsletter about important news and events at the Texas Department of Transportation. If you have any questions, comments, or just want to know more about something you read in here, send a message to [AskTxDOT@txdot.gov](mailto:AskTxDOT@txdot.gov).

## In this issue

- Safer Roads Contribute to Significant Drop in Highway Fatalities
- Eyes on the Road
- First Proposition 12 "MY 35" Contract Awarded
- New Travel Information Line Launched
- Commission Approves Funding for Transportation Enhancement Projects
- Agencies Upgrade Communication on Bridge Weight Limits
- New rules adopted for Transportation Planning and Project Development Process

## SAFER ROADS CONTRIBUTE TO SIGNIFICANT DROP IN HIGHWAY FATALITIES



The numbers are in, and they are impressive. Last year, there were 388 fewer fatalities on Texas highways, an 11 percent decrease from the previous year. And safer roads contributed to the significant decline. The new numbers represent the lowest rate in 75 years of measuring crashes on Texas roads. At a news conference on August 24, 2010, TxDOT and DPS officials and State Sen. Kirk Watson announced the new crash statistics.

In the last five years, the TxDOT has dedicated \$1.2 billion toward highway projects that have the greatest potential for reducing traffic crashes. The money comes from the Texas Safety Bond Program, which comprises 20 percent of the funds available from Proposition 14 highway bonding authority, approved by Texas voters in 2003. [Read more »](#)

[Back to top](#)

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## EYES ON THE ROAD

In an era of limited resources, it's important that we put dollars where they'll do the most good. When managing an 80,000+ mile network of roadways, we need every set of eyes we can to help us do that.

This month we created a place on [www.TxDOT.gov](http://www.TxDOT.gov) where citizens can report maintenance issues we need to look into and may have missed. We'll soon add a toll-free number and we plan to follow that with other opportunities for getting that information to us.



**REPORT A POTHOLE**

Take a look at what we've done so far: [Read more »](#)  
[Back to top](#)

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## FIRST PROPOSITION 12 "MY 35" CONTRACT AWARDED

The first MY35 project to be funded with Proposition 12 bond proceeds was let in July. The contract for widening I-35 from four to six lanes from Loop 340 north of Waco to FM 1858 in West was awarded to Williams Brothers Construction Company of Houston. The company's winning low bid of \$166.8 million was approximately \$44 million under the project's original estimated cost of \$211.2 million. Construction on this 13-mile stretch of I-35 is expected to begin this fall and should be completed in the fall of 2014.



This contract award brings the Texas Transportation Commission closer to fulfilling its promise to relieve congestion on I-35 by expanding the busy corridor between San Antonio and Hillsboro to six lanes - a project also known as MY35.

The MY35 project was among 16 Proposition 12-funded highway project contracts totaling approximately \$250 million approved by the Commission at its July 29 meeting. This contract letting was the first for the \$2 billion in highway projects the Commission approved for Proposition 12 funding late last year. The stretch from Waco to West is one of six segments along I-35 that will be funded with Proposition 12 proceeds. The remaining five segments are scheduled to be bid in 2011 and ready for construction by 2013. All construction updates and traffic advisories will be posted at [www.my35.org](http://www.my35.org)

[Back to top](#)

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## NEW TRAVEL INFORMATION LINE LAUNCHED

The Travel Information Division this month launched TxDOT's new interactive voice response system (IVR) for the 1-800-452-9292 Travel Information Line. The IVR system is available 24 hours a day and contains continuously updated road condition information for all 80,000-plus state maintained centerline miles. [Read more »](#)

[Back to top](#)

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## COMMISSION APPROVES FUNDING FOR TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS

The Texas Transportation Commission recently approved \$76 million in funding for 54 transportation-related enhancement projects throughout the state. These projects will contribute to the livelihood of communities, promote the quality of our environment and enhance the aesthetics of Texas roadways. [Read more »](#)

[Back to top](#)

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## **AGENCIES UPGRADE COMMUNICATION ON BRIDGE WEIGHT LIMITS**

TxDOT and DPS are working more closely to ensure that Texas bridges are safe. For example, TxDOT has implemented a procedure to immediately notify DPS whenever there is a change to a bridge's maximum weight allowance. DPS is then tasked with the enforcement of posted bridge weight restrictions through its commercial vehicle enforcement operations. [Read more »](#)

[Back to top](#)

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## **NEW RULES ADOPTED FOR TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

The Texas Transportation Commission voted last week to adopt new rules that will enhance the role citizens and communities play in planning the state's transportation system.

The rules were re-written by a body called the Transportation Planning and Project Development Rulemaking Advisory Committee, composed of 11 representatives from the Texas Legislature, metropolitan planning organizations, local government, transit organizations, tolling authorities and the Federal Highway Administration, created by the Commission in mid-2009. [Read more »](#)

[Back to top](#)

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