

# Highway Talk

Sawyer County Highway Department

Volume I, Issue I  
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## Newsletter Reborn

The Sawyer County Highway Department is re-introducing our departmental newsletter that was originally started back in 1999. Due to staff changes the newsletter took the back burner and it is now time to bring it back into circulation.

Originally, the newsletter was called Northern Roads, but we didn't want to portray the idea that we were referring to roads in the northern part of Sawyer County, thus the new name.

Our hope in the distribution of this newsletter is to help keep people informed, both inside and outside of our department, of our operation. Feel free to pass this newsletter along to others that may be interested in this information.

Thank you for taking the time to review our newsletter and learn more about our operations at the highway department.



**Check out current road conditions on the Web:**  
[www.dot.wisconsin.gov](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov)

## “Smart” Traffic Counters

The Sawyer County Highway Department recently purchased two traffic counters for monitoring traffic volumes and speed.

The new counters were

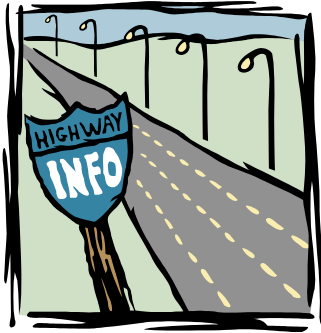
purchased from Roadway Data and are incredibly small; they measure just over 3 ½ inches by 2 inches. But don't be fooled by their small size. These

counters are capable of recording the volume of traffic on the road, as well as what speeds the traffic is flowing as well as the type of vehicle traveling the road

## Safe Winter Driving Tips

- Keep your lights on and clear your windshield of accumulations of snow and ice.
- Always assume road conditions are worse than they are.
- Slow down and avoid making sudden moves
- Drive alert and sober and Buckle Up!
- Never tailgate the plow truck
- Don't pump anti-lock brakes

## Traffic Counters (cont'd)



(i.e. motorcycle, school bus, logging truck).

The tiny devices are secured to a pole or sign to prevent vandalism. Two tubes are then connected to the counters and are placed across the road at a distance of 36 inches apart from each other. When the count is complete, you take the counters

back to the office; download the data onto the computer, and a wide array of reports become available to you.

The highway department feels that these counters will aid in the decision on when to consider speed zones on highways, as well as to monitor increased or

decreased traffic volumes.

If you are interested in having a traffic count done on a particular section of highway, please contact the highway department.

## Chloride Shed in Radisson



Due to a savings in our routine maintenance budget, the Sawyer County Highway Department was authorized by the Department of Transportation to construct a shed at our Radisson shop to hold a liquid chloride product

used in winter maintenance operations. This product, called Mag 95, is a concentrate of magnesium chloride that aids in the removal of ice and snow from the roadway. Mag 95 lowers the properties of salt and allows it to ac-

tivate quicker. It has been used at the Hayward shop for the past year with very good results.

Our next venture will be to install pre-wet systems on our patrol trucks.

## Hazard Elimination Safety Grant



The curve on CTH NN at Gurno Lake Road will be reconstructed under a safety grant awarded to Sawyer County.

The Sawyer County Highway Department was awarded a safety grant from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to reconstruct a segment of County Road NN at Gurno Lake Road.

This segment of highway has experienced 14 accidents with 3 fatalities.

The \$208,000.00 grant would allow for the highway department to reconstruct the highway so that the hori-

zontal and vertical alignments would meet current Department of Transportation standards for a 55 m.p.h. road.

This project is currently scheduled for 2006.



## Department of Transportation Reorganization

Many of you may have already heard of the Department of Transportation's reorganization. The restructuring came as a result of Governor Doyle's request to make government more efficient. The reorganization took the eight transportation districts and combined them into five transportation regions. Sawyer County had been part of the transportation district known as District 8. District 8 was comprised of Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Polk, Rusk, Sawyer, and Washburn counties. The new Northwest Region is now made up of 20 counties. They include Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Buffalo, Chippewa, Clark, Douglas, Dunn, Jackson, Eau Claire, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Rusk, Sawyer, St. Croix, Taylor, Trempealeau, and Washburn counties.



Governor Doyle is seen here putting the last pieces of the puzzle together regarding the WisDOT Reorganization (NOT—just checking to see if you are reading this!)

Because trying to work with all 20 counties would be a very difficult task, the regional director has chosen to break the 20 counties into 2 subregions. The 9 counties in former District 8 plus Taylor County will make up the "North 10". The 7 counties of former District 6, plus the 3 upper counties of former District 5 will comprise the "South 10". Even though there is an internal break of the Northwest Region, the director insures all counties that there will be consistency throughout the region.

The Department feels that this reorganization will facilitate easier coordination of Departmental services in each respective region and ultimately provide a more efficient and responsive organization. Sawyer County has some apprehension on this reorganization, but will work with the Department in this transition period.

A committee made up of Governor Doyle appointees will be monitoring the reorganization for it's effectiveness and efficiency.

**Sawyer County has some apprehension on this reorganization, but will work with the Department in this transition period.**



## Sawyer County Highway Department

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County Website!**  
**[www.sawyercounty.gov.org](http://www.sawyercounty.gov.org)**

### Sawyer Co. Highway Department Mission Statement

*The mission of the Sawyer County Highway Department is to construct and maintain the county trunk highway system. Along with that, the department maintains the state trunk highway system on a contract basis with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.*

*Our goal is to provide for a safe, well-maintained highway system for the traveling public.*

#### Sawyer County Highway Department Hours of Operation

Summer Hours: Monday—Thursday, 6:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

Winter Hours: Monday—Friday, 7:00 a.m.—3:30 p.m.

Phone Numbers:	Office	(715) 634-2691
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	Fax	(715) 634-4824

## 2006 Highway Improvement Projects

This year will again be a busy year for the highway department. We have an aggressive schedule and hope that Mother Nature cooperates with us.

Projects are scheduled on CTH N (CTH CC—CTH E), CTH K (Froemel Rd—Tall Pines Rd), CTH CC (CTH H—New Post), and CTH C (Eckel Lane—Lemington).

Also, the department will finish paving on CTH M (CTH W—Pit Rd) and CTH M (Rusk Co. Line—CTH W).

The safety grant project discussed in the article on Pg. 2 may be delayed until 2007 be-

cause of programming delays and right-of-way acquisition. We are still keeping it on our schedule for 2006 but this will be the first project that would be bumped to 2007 if we run into scheduling problems or weather delays.

The CTH N project is a cooperative project with LCO. It is a 50/50 cost share with the County utilizing LCO forces and materials to aid in the reconstruction.

The paving on CTH M (north) will be completed with the funding that the department received from the Community Resource Development Fund.

Engineering will be started on two projects that are scheduled for reconstruction in 2007 and 2008. Engineering will begin on CTH C, from Georgia Street to STH 27/70. This project will be reconstructed in 2007. Engineering on CTH S, from south of Moose Lake Rd to STH 77 will take place next year for a projected 2008 reconstruction project.

We are crossing our fingers that we will receive a grant for improved centerline striping on approximately 60 miles of roads. This striping will be a more durable reflective paint with a wider edgeline to aid our senior drivers.



Be prepared for slight delays during our construction season.