Computer Directories...
continued from p. 2

The two are separated by a "." and take on the following form: ????????.???).

Changing Directories

The command for changing directories is **CD.path**, where the path is the directory you wish to go to. To move from the current directory to **C:\WORDPROC\TEXT**, you would type **CD.C:\WORDPROC\TEXT**. You can use the **ERASE, COPY** and **DIR** commands without the path when you work with files that are stored in the same directory that you're in. To list the files in this directory, simply type **DIR**. (*Note: When you don't specify the path, DOS defaults to the directory you have most recently changed into.*)

Have you figured out the short cut I talked about in the "Removing A Directory" section of this article? If so, be careful with it. You could lose everything.

Summary

We have discussed how to make and remove directories, copy files and look at the content of directories. These tools provide a great deal of latitude when moving around in your disk space. However you may feel this requires a lot of typing, and it does if you type it every time. There is a way, however, to reduce repetitive typing tasks. You can organize your computer files by grouping similar ones together and establish short commands to get to those files easily. Batch files, which were introduced in the last *Road Business*, can help. They allow you to avoid monotonously retyping the commands needed most often to access the files you use all the time.

Scan through your DOS manual. A wealth of information is there if you take the time to dig it out. For those of you who prefer not to read manuals (I don't blame you) there are many books on computers. You may want to visit your library or local bookstore and browse them.

More and more public works departments are using computers to assist them in their operations. If you have any comments, questions, or suggestions about computers and their operation please call the Technology Transfer Center at 1-800-423-0060. In particular, if you have any topics that you would like us to cover in an article let us know.

The above article was adapted from *Alaskan Transportation*, 1990, Vol. 15 No. 1. ■

Special Spreading And Plowing Problems

A few tips for winter road maintenance

Salt bridges first: Bridges freeze long before road surfaces because they do not hold warmth as a roadbed does because cold air reaches both the top and the bottom surfaces of bridge decks. Bridge decks should receive early attention and an application of salt. Bridge decks may ice over because of high humidity, low temperatures, or other conditions -- even when there is no precipitation.

Salt on the high side of elevated curves: Salt brine will flow down and across a banked curve. If you spread salt down the centerline, everything above it will remain icy. Spread salt on the high side of the curve and let gravity work for you.

Leave no gaps: Operators must go beyond their assigned areas, if necessary, to plow or salt a gap that has not been treated for some reason. A short, neglected stretch can be very hazardous to an unsuspecting motorist.

Watch for drifting: In continued high winds, maintain a patrol to watch for drifting and slick spots even after the pavement has been cleared. Treat icy buildups with a salt application. Avoid slick conditions from buildup of ice or packed snow by applying a salt application heavy enough to prevent refreezing.

Traffic icing: Occasionally, under certain weather conditions, a paper-thin sheet of ice forms in the wheel paths on a bare pavement even when the pavement looks clear (this is commonly referred to as "black ice"). The light ice formation can be deadly. Maintenance operators should be instructed to watch for this occurrence and apply salt immediately if it is detected.

Get your equipment on the road: Once you have word of an impending storm and your plows are mounted and trucks loaded, get vehicles out of the yard and onto their plowing and spreading sections. Every winter there are severe tie-ups because equipment operators are late in getting to critical points.

Make a list of trouble spots that you want operators to salt first during storms. Make sure all personnel understand that bridges, intersections, ramps, hills and curves come first. Have operators wait on location rather than at maintenance areas.

It is far better to have your equipment on the road when snow begins than in the maintenance yard. Nothing is more reassuring to motorists than to see loaded spreaders and plows patrolling prior to storms.

Give interchanges special attention: Salt on and off ramps as quickly as possible. A safe road or street is of little value without safe entrances and exits.

Can you keep trucks out of the way? One state has a novel plan aimed at reducing costly and dangerous traffic tie-ups during snowstorms by keeping truckers posted on road conditions. Here is how it works:

Eight district engineers in different regions of the state relay information about road conditions to one trucking company in their area. The trucking firm passes the information on to other truckers who request it by radio or telephone. The road condition information becomes available within minutes to a vast number of motorists equipped with CB radios as it is related on various citizen's band channels.

Company dispatchers are instructed not to send trucks into areas where trouble spots exist and to advise drivers if chains are needed.

The "Snow Alert" eliminates many serious tie-ups caused by trucks and other vehicles trying to negotiate impassable routs. This gives maintenance crews a chance to work with less interference from traffic.

Deicing Grates on Bridges: Many drawbridges and other opening spans have open metal grating over part of their length. Salt applied on these structures simply falls through the mesh with very little melting effect. To melt ice that forms on the metal, spread a salt application up to the dividing point between concrete and steel and let traffic move the brine across the grating.

The above article was taken from *The Snowfighter's Handbook*, a Salt Institute publication. ■