

Road Business

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BATTLE THE BURNOUT

BY MARILEE ENUS

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Burnout – a term heard frequently over the past couple of years, and felt by an increasingly high - and alarming- number of employees throughout the U.S. and across all industries. Merriam-Webster describes burnout as a noun meaning “exhaustion of physical or emotional strength or motivation usually as a result of prolonged stress or frustration.” As a verb, it means “to cause to fail, wear out, or become exhausted especially from overwork or overuse.” Whether you’re on the



receiving (“feeling”) end of burnout, or on the verb end (causing burnout, even if inadvertently or without intent), neither is where high-functioning, effective teams can survive. But what is a leader to do? What are we as individual team members to do? We’ve talked at lengths over the past few years about the factors impacting our workforce and communities, and oftentimes beyond our control: a pandemic, workforce shortage, material shortages, and a flagging economy, to name just a few. If it feels like we’re all being asked to do more and oftentimes with less, and for a prolonged period of time, well, that’s because we are! We’re asking it of each other, of ourselves, our families, and our teammates. If you’ve also ever felt “This isn’t sustainable... this can’t go on like this forever...” you’re right. There comes a point where the act

of burning out (the verb) becomes the thing itself – the noun – the burnout, as in past tense, reaching the state of being burned out. That’s the point where we risk losing our best talent, our valued contributors, and our strongest team players. It’s also an incredibly unhealthy place to live in – feelings of ineffectiveness, unproductiveness, hopelessness, and frustration can impact our mental health, family lives, and physical well-being.

“Wow, Marilee, thanks for the uplifting message of doom on this fine Spring day...” I know, I know, it’s a scary thought, but let me shift to sharing some more positive thoughts and ideas for how we can better live with – and perhaps even thrive-with stress and prolonged intense periods of work, without reaching burnout.

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About UNH T2 and NHLTAP

The UNH Technology Transfer Center fosters a safe, efficient, and environmentally sound surface transportation system by improving skills and increasing knowledge of the transportation workforce and decision-makers. As the site of the state's Local Technical Assistance Program, it works to enable local counties, cities, and towns to improve their roads and bridges by supplying them with a variety of training programs, an information clearinghouse, new and existing technology updates, personalized technical assistance, training videos and materials, and newsletters. LTAP Centers nationally are able to provide local road departments with workforce development services; resources to enhance safety and security; solutions to environmental, congestion, capacity, and other issues.

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SPRINGTIME IS THE LAND AWAKENING. THE MARCH WINDS ARE THE MORNING YAWN.

-Lewis Grizzard

The birds are chirping, the days are longer, and the weather is warming up... it's springtime in New Hampshire! For our public works partners, spring also means dealing with muddy roads, fixing potholes, and raking gravel roads; there is truly no "downtime" for public works. Thank you for ensuring our roads are ready for roadway users in all seasons! We do hope that you will be able to take a moment to look over our training calendar. We have a wide variety of workshops this year with a little something for everyone. We are still looking for hosts for a few workshops. Please let us know if your team is interested in hosting. Workshop hosts receive four free host seats!

We have some exciting new initiatives here at UNH T2; our new Road Safety Advocate Program, NH Advanced Master Roads Scholar Points Based Capstone Project, and our new Lunch2Go series.

Our new Road Safety Advocate Program launches May 1st. This new program was developed from a nationally recognized certificate program designed to build a knowledgeable, safety-minded workforce, responsible for operating, maintaining, and designing local roads. The seven required modules are being offered virtually and free of charge. When all requirements are met (seven modules and the creation of a local road safety plan), participants will be awarded a Road Safety Advocate certificate in the NH Roads Scholar achievement program.

The new Advanced Master Roads Scholar Points-Based Capstone project is now available. After completing at least 185 credit hours with UNH T2, begin receiving points for participation in activities that relate to public works. Accrue at least 100 points total, in addition to 200 credit hours of UNH T2 training, to achieve Advanced Master Roads Scholar.



Our new Lunch2Go series is launching in May! These workshops are free for local agencies. Each workshop is 30 minutes in the classroom followed by 90 minutes in the field. Bring your own lunch and learn about locally relevant topics!

Please reach out to us to let us know how we can help support your team, whether it is training, information, or resources, we want to help your public works team flourish!

Thank you for all you do! - Lee Cooper

Be aware of it.

There are only so many times one person can hear “It’s going to get better…” before we become jaded or start to feel the promise of easier days ahead is a false hope, or even worse, a lie meant to try to smooth things over for the moment. I bet many of us have felt this way at least once in the past couple of years. Is it truly ever going to “get better” and will it ever feel normal? So, my first suggestion to battle burnout is to **be aware of it, and don’t hide from it**. Talk with your team members, talk with your friends and family, and those you care about. Find out how they’re doing, what keeps them up at night, and how they’re managing prolonged work hours or an increased workload from reduced staffing. Really ask- “HOW ARE YOU?” and mean it... how are YOU? We trust our people to do the work (or hopefully we do - that’s another discussion if not) - that’s why we hired them, to do the work, so asking “How are you?” shouldn’t always be about how’s the WORK you do – it should be about how are YOU as a person, as a team member.

It’s far better to find out someone is at risk of becoming burned out than to have someone come to you when they are burned out and ready to leave the team. Have someone on the team that seems more irritable, or less connected and more disengaged? Just doesn’t seem “in it” during team meetings? Perhaps someone who always arrived on time and performed well is now arriving to work late, or making careless mistakes on the job. Are you hearing someone muttering under their breath, or making negative comments about the team, management, or work? Those may all be signs of burnout.

Rethink How the Work is Done.

Burnout can come from the obvious “too much work” situation, but aside from excessive job demands, there’s another aspect of our work – and how our teams’ function- that can cause burnout, and that’s unclear or conflicting roles. If your team is short-staffed, and positions remain open, the work doesn’t just “go away” or slide to the backburner easily until you fill that position. In many cases these past few years, team members have been pitching in and going above and beyond, or have been asked to, to complete additional tasks beyond what they’re accustomed to in their role, or to fill other functions on the team. And while cross-training and being a nimble team is important, there’s a point where this lack of clarity in one’s position can become stressful. Take time to review positions, review job descriptions, and build in conversation around who is doing what, as well as keep in mind fairness, transparency, and equity in managing work and performance.

Now is the time to prioritize! You’ve likely heard the phrase “Stop Starting and Stop Finishing” as it relates to managing your work pipeline (don’t take on or begin more until you’ve cleared out the backlog), and now is a critical time to look at everything through the lens of priority: What’s priority NOW and what will be priority LATER? What’s a future “nice to have” but not business critical? My husband implemented the Project Whiteboard to our fridge last year. See, I have the habit of wanting to do all the spring planting and yard projects – I mean ALL the projects- like now, this spring, this weekend. By writing our project list out and putting it in front of us in black and white, we committed to what was a reasonable list of projects, and most importantly, committed to not adding to that list until we had removed other items. And his logical, straightforward approach to there-are-only-so-many-hours-in-our-weekend, really helped save our sanity- and enjoyment – for the warmer season. So reconsider what work has to happen now, and what is reasonable to expect to complete over the coming months. Have a brainstorming session- what is no longer value-added or necessary to the work you’re doing? Perhaps you’ve always pulled a set of reports to share with your administrator each month, but she is no longer reviewing them and forgot to tell you. Perhaps your team has always maintained the flowers around the bandstand, but the ladies club in town has expressed interest in helping with that. As you work through your daily tasks, ask yourself what is value-added- what is contributing directly to your mission and objectives, what is critical to department goals, and what’s not.

Also reconsider what perfection looks like, and what “good enough” might mean. Some tasks and projects just have to get done, and in the past, we may have strived for a “masterpiece” level for all of our work, but with increased workloads and resource challenges, the measure of “good enough” might need to be revisited. Will this task being done to 90% be better than it not getting done at all, or better than it getting done to 100% but other tasks not getting done? I’m not suggesting you cut corners by not doing infrastructure work properly and with the correct procedures and materials, nor cutting corners in any way that may impact a safe work environment. I’m talking about how often your breakroom gets thoroughly



deep-cleaned, or how glamorous and glitzy your PowerPoint for the monthly board meeting is. Think about what can be addressed with a “good enough” approach and communicate that.

Lastly, think about when work is getting done, and if there’s a way to change the cadence of your schedule to balance the week based on your mental or physical stamina. Well rested and mentally alert on Monday? Maybe tackle any physically or mentally intensive tasks. A heavy schedule of meetings on Tuesdays and Wednesdays? Carve out Thursday for catch-up time. And maybe you feel the least energized on Fridays? Use that day for catching up at your desk, catching up with your team, or completing routine or less-intensive tasks.

Do Some Spring Cleaning!

Organization is key during these turbulent times. Don’t get lost in touching things twice- be it a post-it, email, or piece of paper... clear them out. While we can’t go into organization in this one brief passage if this is an area you or team members, struggle with, we’d be happy to develop some resources or possibly training to support you.

And organization extends beyond the physical; take time to organize your thoughts. Are you an idea generator? Even if you have to “stop starting to start finishing” right now, and have to let some ideas go for now, don’t lose them altogether. Capture your ideas for the future and pull from that list when time allows. Use Trello, an Outlook task, a piece of paper, or a Word document to jot down future “hmmms” you would like to dig into when time allows, but that doesn’t have a business impact today. Now they’re out of mind, but not forgotten forever.

Delegate – And Empower Independent Decision Making.

People like to feel a sense of control, and that includes with their work. Studies have shown that people are significantly less likely to experience high levels of burnout when they have control of their job, including how and when tasks are completed. As resources allow, delegate and empower decision-making about individuals’ jobs to the employees directly. But be aware that we also like to feel we have the resources and support we need to do a job well; so delegating and giving autonomy doesn’t mean relinquishing all interests or participation as a manager; in fact, feeling a lack of support from management can lead to burnout, so be sure to check in with and support your team members, and be available to help remove burdens to success.

And of course- don’t forget to recognize and reward employees frequently, and specifically. Share congratulations, thanks, and kudos with sincerity. Find ways to reconnect as a team for shorter moments and more frequently, and find ways to reward team members, be it closing the shop so everyone can attend

Mountain of Demos, rewarding someone who’s gone above and beyond with a professional development opportunity, sharing a job well done on your agency’s social media page, or making breakfast for the team, there are dozens of small and meaningful ways to say thank you and recognize your team’s hard work.

Communicate – With Team Members and the Community.

Share data with your public works team that tells the story of what’s happening. This can peel away ambiguity and recognize “yeah, we’re feeling burned out because we as individuals worked an average of 350 more hours this winter than last year.” This can help employees to recognize how they may be feeling is normal, and that you acknowledge it. It also reinforces a culture of “in this together” and that no one is riding the proverbial struggle bus by themselves.

And while it’s always important to talk about the impact of public works on our communities, it’s particularly critical now to be sure our citizens understand the factors influencing your decisions and output. Without sharing personal or confidential specifics, make sure you’re communicating the data of what your team is doing, and the obstacles you’re up against. Talk about choices – what can be completed with the people and financial resources available, what can’t, and what those choices will look like with time. Be transparent with your community, and where you can, ask for help. If a high staff vacancy rate is negatively impacting your team, speak up and share the concern with your administration and when appropriate your citizens. Look for volunteers in the community to support tasks that your team is unable to support, such as planting and maintaining flowers in front of the library, or picking up park litter.



Be Nice to Yourself.

Find ways to fill yourself back up – implement walking breaks, make sure you're taking a lunch break, do more of what makes you feel productive and effective, and cut back where you can on things that don't. If you're feeling cynical about your work, consider how you can cut back on those interactions or activities that bring that feeling out of you. Take time away – be it short mental breaks throughout the day to walk a fast lap around the parking lot and clear your head, daily lunch breaks, or vacation time... plan time into your calendar for non-work time. I mean it (and I've not always been the best at doing it)... **TAKE A BREAK!** If you have to note that time as an appointment in your calendar until it becomes daily habit, so be it... just take a break. And take some time away too. My husband and I have started scheduling vacation time for the whole year out in January. By January 5th, we know what days we'll take off for vacation that year. We find that by getting it on the calendar early, we're both far more likely to honor that time (and therefore **TAKE** vacation time!), and it makes scheduling easier for everyone our work impacts if we are communicating our availability in advance.

Find ways to cope with stress and build resiliency. Be it taking up a new (healthy) hobby, learning a few stress reduction techniques like breathing exercises or this ["Five Senses"](#) activity from PositivePsychology.com, reading about how to develop a healthy work-life separation, or learning to recognize your own negative thoughts to change your perception, recognize that anyone can be impacted by feelings of burn out and that there are ways to prevent and address it.

Innovate!

You've heard the phrase "Necessity is the mother of invention", and it's true, some of the best innovation comes from these moments of chaos and busyness. These are the moments when clunky, broken, or burdensome processes really seem to pop out at us. So take time to talk about what's not working efficiently and effectively with your team and dedicate time to innovating and solving it. Re-creating processes, engineering tooling, or otherwise innovating can help your team get tasks done easier, and in turn, help to avoid burnout from clunky, ineffective work tasks. And don't forget – we want to hear about those creative solutions for our Build a Better Mousetrap program! ☺

It's About Fuel.

Merriam-Webster also has a second meaning for the word burnout: the point at which a rocket has used all of its fuel and has no more power. Public works is the **ROCKET** that keeps our towns and cities moving, the **ROCKET** that propels our economy, communities, and industry. It's critical that you and our teams not burn out. So take time to check your own fuel gauge and that of your team members. And, if you're running out of fuel, don't wait until the rocket has no more power and is dropping; work now to address and prevent burnout. Find what fuels you, and what fuels your team, and be sure to work in opportunities and practices to increase that. Uncover what depletes your fuel most rapidly, and at minimum be aware of those times and tasks, and at best, work to positively influence change to them. Take care of yourself, and take care of one another. Public Works Makes It Happen, and we need strong, healthy, resilient teams to do so long into the future.

As always, if UNH T2 can help with any resources or training, or you have other ideas on how we might help, please reach out!



Email Etiquette



SENDING EMAIL

- Everyone is busy – be respectful of recipients' time by investing your own time in writing and reviewing emails before you send.
- Format your email for the reader's convenience – organize it by request/action, background, or other appropriate sections.
- Use clear and succinct bullets.
- Summarize the purpose of your email at the top with clarifying information & specifics below.
- Identify what is necessary for the reader to look at – highlight it, format it in bold, or otherwise call it out. Need the entire message read? Request that the individual read the full message trail. Call out the required action in the subject line.
- Use @Individual or bold names to call out ownership of actions or information.
- Use "Urgent" tags with thoughtful discretion. Priorities or deadlines can be designated in the subject line such as "Response required today" or another subject line that clarifies your email "ask" without needing to read the full email.
- Informational only? Not urgent? FYI? Include a "low priority" tag or denote that in the subject line.
- Don't use stationary or background – it may be difficult for some to read, including those with vision impairments, and can be challenging to reply to or forward.
- Informational only? CC the person and leave only those who have specific actions required on the To line.
- Have an attachment? Consider its size, and whenever possible, include links rather than attachments.
- Be sure questions or action items are not "lost" in a paragraph or the message body.
- Don't overuse "high priority" (!), Read Receipt, Receipt Delivery, and don't send an angry message. Be sensitive to when it's best to pick up the phone – including if a trail has circled around a few responses, or it would otherwise be faster to have a conversation.



REPLYING TO EMAIL

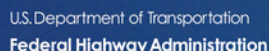
- It can be helpful to keep attachments on emails when replying – use Forward and readdress the email or use Reply All and attach the original file.
 - From the email containing the attachment, right-click on the attachment and then click on ‘Select All’.
 - Once the attachment(s) are highlighted, select ‘Copy’.
 - In the reply email message body, right-click and select ‘Paste’, to re-attach the file(s) to the reply email.
 - Even easier? Use drag and drop to drag the original attachment from the original email over to the reply email, then “drop” the attachment on the reply email.
- Replying to a distribution list message? In most cases, it’s appropriate to reply only to the original sender, and not the full distribution list. Consider whether to Reply All or Reply directly to the sender.
- Ask yourself- have I answered all the necessary questions? Are there any other questions I can anticipate my reader may have, and perhaps address them now?
- Adding or removing recipients from the trail? Include a +/- and their names at the top, as well as a quick note of why the add or deletion, such as “+Mary Ellen for her approval of the final design” or “- Bill Jones until details are finalized.”
- Indicate if you’re commenting inline and use a different color font to denote your response.
- It’s usually best not to change the subject line since the thread may become disjointed then. If you do change the subject line, note that in your email body.
- Did the thread become disjointed? For instance, if various responses were received simultaneously, part of the trail could be missing. If helpful to the message, pull the pieces back together in your response, and note that (“Below trail consolidated to reflect all responses received.”).



ORGANIZING EMAIL

- Use Folders effectively in Outlook. Too many can cause confusion, not organization.
- Need to respond but don’t have time in the moment? Acknowledge receipt of the message and provide a timeline for a more thorough response.
- Avoid a cluttered inbox by minimizing “touches” to a message – read it and move it to the appropriate folder if no further action is required, move it to Tasks, or otherwise flag it for follow-up if needed.
- Email organization and productivity is a balancing act – find out what works for you, but don’t become obsessed with finding or reworking the system.
- Urgent and Important? Can it wait? Is someone else likely to take ownership for this and respond meanwhile? Take 30 seconds to scan your email and pick out at least one message you can respond to and finish. Try “scheduling” email time so it doesn’t bleed through your day.
- Use Signatures and Out of Office to position important messaging and information for your audience – program, and initiative reminders can be communicated in your signature (including with logos or other artwork), and an Out of Office can point to some self-service links addressing the most common questions, and such.
- Have a common FAQ or response that you share? Rather than copying and pasting each time, build it as a Signature to facilitate a quicker response.





Agencies have experienced the following benefits after LRSP implementation:

25%
reduction in county
road fatalities in
Minnesota.

17%
reduction in fatal and
serious injury crashes
on county-owned roads
in Washington State.

35%
reduction in severe
curve crashes in
Thurston County, WA.

For more information on this and other FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures, please visit <https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/provencountermeasures/> and <https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/LRSPDIY/>

Local Road Safety Plans

A local road safety plan (LRSP) provides a framework for identifying, analyzing, and prioritizing roadway safety improvements on local roads. The LRSP development process and content are tailored to local issues and needs. The process results in a prioritized list of issues, risks, actions, and improvements that can be used to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on local roads. FHWA has developed several resources including an LRSP Do-It-Yourself website which further explains the process and includes resources local agencies and their partners need to create and implement an LRSP.¹

Approximately 75 percent of rural roads are owned by local agencies.² While local roads are less traveled than State highways, they have a much higher rate of fatal and serious injury crashes.² Developing an LRSP is an effective strategy to improve local road safety for all road users and support the goals of a State's overall Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP).

Although the development process and resulting plan can vary depending on the local agency's needs, available resources, and targeted crash types, aspects common to LRSs include:

- Stakeholder engagement representing the 4E's: engineering, enforcement, education, and emergency medical services.
- Collaboration among municipal count, Tribal, State, and/or Federal entities to leverage expertise and resources.

- Identification of target crash types and crash risk with corresponding recommended proven safety countermeasures.
- Timeline and goals for implementation and evaluation.

Local road agencies should consider developing an LRSP to be used as a tool for reducing roadway fatalities, injuries, and crashes. LRSPs can help agencies create a prioritized list of improvements. LRSPs are also a proactive risk management technique to demonstrate an agency's responsiveness. The plan should be viewed as a living document that can be updated to reflect changing local needs and priorities.



Infographic showing the LRSP process. Source: FHWA

¹ <https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/LRSPDIY/>

2 Anderson et al. Noteworthy Practices: Addressing Safety on Locally-Owned and Maintained Roads A Domestic Scan, FHWA-SA-09-019. (2010).

3 Developing Safety Plans: A Manual for Local Rural Road Owners, FHWA-SA-12-017, provides guidance on developing an LRSP.

LUNCH2GO WORKSHOPS

Free for local agencies! 30 minutes in the classroom followed by 90 minutes in the field. Bring your own lunch!



MAY 10 - POT HOLE FILLING

**MAY 18 - PAVEMENT DISTRESS
IDENTIFICATION**

**JUNE 8 - PAVEMENT CRACK
SEALING**

**JUNE 22 - PEDESTRIAN SAFETY
COUNTERMEASURES**

**JULY 13 - LOCAL ROAD SAFETY
PLANS**

**JULY 26 -
KNOTWEED ID AND MANAGEMENT**

**AUGUST 17 -
SEEING YOUR STREETS THROUGH
OTHER USERS EYES - ADA
& ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL USERS**

**SEPTEMBER 20 -
LOCAL AGENCY BRIDGE
PRESERVATION**

**OCTOBER 3 & 5 -
SALT SPREADER CALIBRATION**

**OCTOBER 12 -
SIGN RETROREFLECTIVITY**

**NOVEMBER 7 & 9 -
SALT SPREADER CALIBRATION**

WWW.BIT.LY/T2LUNCH2GO

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

In October, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) released its Promising Practices for Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-Making document, a first-of-its-kind guide for DOT funding recipients and partners that conduct public involvement in the transportation space.



Transportation practitioners have the power and obligation to incorporate the voices of their communities in transportation decision-making. The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) developed Promising Practices for Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-Making to help funding recipients meaningfully involve the public in various stages of transportation decision-making and build their organizational capacity to do so. Public involvement from the beginning and throughout a project's lifecycle has the potential to help projects come to life faster and to better meet the needs of the community. This set of promising practices provides a shared definition of meaningful public involvement and promising practices to help address barriers to inclusion in transportation decision-making.

What is Meaningful Public Involvement?

The Department defines meaningful public involvement as a process that proactively seeks full representation from the community, considers public comments and feedback, and incorporates that feedback into a project, program, or plan. The impact of community contributions encourages early and continuous public involvement and brings diverse viewpoints and values into the transportation decision-making process. This process enables the community and agencies to make better-informed decisions through collaborative efforts.



Provide Feedback

The Department considers the guide a living document and welcomes feedback and real-life examples of funding recipients that have been able to implement these practices. They are accepting public comments on the guide via docket DOT-OST-2022-0115 to inform potential future updates. When submitting feedback, please specify the relevant page number(s). When submitting a real-life example of meaningful public involvement using these and other techniques, please include the following information:

- 1 Name of organization that conducted the public involvement
- 2 Technique(s) used
- 3 Intended audience
- 4 When the outreach occurred (e.g., Spring 2021)
- 5 Description of outreach (How was the technique used? What was the outcome? How did you know it was successful?)
- 6 Link to webpage with more information
- 7 Contact information

FAQs

As discussed in the guide, public involvement costs should be included in project budgets. They can also be supported through other Federal formula funds that State departments of transportation, metropolitan planning organizations, or transit agencies may receive. On the DOT Navigator, you can now find a new set of frequently asked questions (FAQs) to help you understand what types of costs may be eligible for public involvement activities.



ROAD SAFETY ADVOCATE PROGRAM

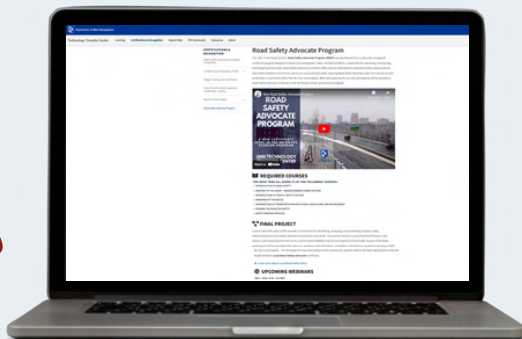
**NEW
PROGRAM!**



The UNH T2 NH Roads Scholar Road Safety Advocate Program (RSAP) was developed from a nationally recognized certificate program designed to build a knowledgeable, safety-minded

workforce, responsible for operating, maintaining, and designing local roads. Road Safety Advocates prioritize safety and are motivated to implement safety improvements that reduce fatalities and serious injuries on rural and local roads. Aspiring Road Safety Advocates take core courses as well as develop a Local Road Safety Plan for their municipality. When all requirements are met, participants will be awarded a Road Safety Advocate certificate in the NH Roads Scholar achievement program.

**LEARN
MORE**



www.bit.ly/T2RSAP

7 REQUIRED COURSES

All Courses are virtual

**May 1 • RSAP Module 1 -
Introduction to Road Safety**

**June 5 • RSAP Module 2 -
Anatomy of the Crash -
Understanding Human Factors**

**July 10 • RSAP Module 3 -
Introduction to Traffic Safety
Culture**

**August 7 • RSAP Module 4 -
Overview of the MUTCD**

**September 11 • RSAP Module 5 -
Intersection of Transportation
with Public Health and Law
Enforcement**

**October 2 • RSAP Module 6 -
Reading the Road for Safety**

**November 6 • RSAP Module 7 -
Safety Analysis Process**



Final Project

**Develop a Local Road Safety Plan
for your municipality**

**The development and
presentation of the community-
specific LRSP is the final
requirement in the NH Roads
Scholars Local Road Safety
Advocate certificate.**

Build a Better MOUSETRAP

National Recognition
Program for Transportation
Innovation

Source: FHWA

Share your innovative idea, because it could help another public works team work safer, more efficiently, or to save time or money!

The Build a Better Mousetrap (BABM) national recognition program highlights locally relevant innovative solutions and provides a platform to share innovations to everyday challenges that local and tribal transportation professionals encounter on local roads. These local road solutions range from the development of new project delivery or design processes to the invention of new tools, equipment, or modifications that increase efficiency, enhance safety, reduce cost, and/or improve the quality of transportation on local roads.



4/28/23 - Drawing for April
Build a Better Mousetrap prize

5/9/2023 - Last date to submit a Build
a Better Mousetrap 2023 innovation!

Monthly drawing prizes include:

Two free workshop seats or PW First Responder hoodie

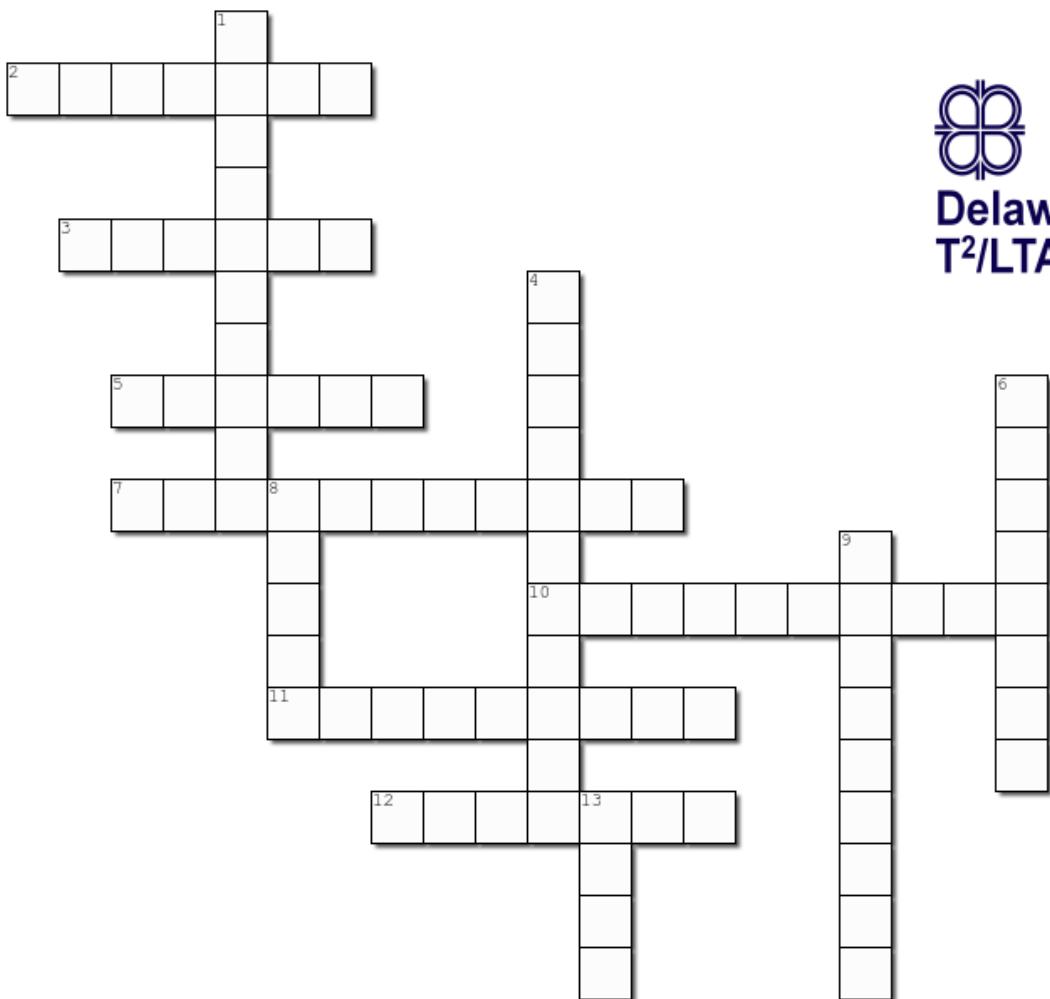


**NHDOT employees can also submit innovations
for Build a Better Mousetrap through UNH T2!**

Have you or someone on your team created a locally relevant innovative solution? We would love to hear about it! Please reach out to lee.cooper@unh.edu. UNH T2 will help you submit your innovation!

Excavation and Trenching Safety Crossword Puzzle

For help, consult OSHA and NIOSH at <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/trenching/>



**Delaware
T²/LTAP**

Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

2. Engineering controls, protective equipment, and safe work practices can reduce _____ to workers
3. Trenches 4 feet or more in depth should be provided with a fixed means of _____
5. When it comes to trenches, OSHA says Slope It, Shore It, or _____ It
7. The OSHA standard for excavations, including trenches, describes the _____ needed for safe excavation work
10. Between 2011-2018, _____ and trench cave-ins caused 137 deaths
11. Never enter a trench unless it has been properly inspected by a _____ person
12. Spacing between _____ must be such that a worker will not have to travel more than 25 feet laterally

Down

1. Trenching standards require _____ systems on trenches deeper than five (5) feet
4. Before entering a trench, check for problems and never enter an _____ trench
6. Trenches 20 feet deep or greater require a protective system designed by a registered professional _____
8. One _____ yard of dirt weighs the same as a compact car
9. Evaluation of the soil by a Competent Person to determine its _____ is essential to preventing trench collapse
13. Soil and other materials must be kept at least two (2) feet from the edge of a trench

SUBMIT YOUR COMPLETED ENTRY TO T2.CENTER@UNH.EDU BY 4/28/2023 FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A FREE WORKSHOP SEAT!

Handling Multiple Projects with Success

From **OHIO LTAP** | Local Technical Assistance Program



Many of you have probably asked the question: “How can they give me more duties and projects to manage when I’m already stretched as far as I can go? How do I add more hours to my workday or workweek to accomplish the extra projects when I am not approved for overtime? How do I handle my own duties plus juggle everyone else’s without missing any deadlines?”

There has been much debate about the concept of multitasking. Studies have found that multitasking can actually reduce productivity by up to 40% because the human brain cannot give its full attention to two tasks at once. In addition, a variety of potential risks, hazards, and negative health effects associated with multi-tasking have been identified. The disadvantages can include lack of focus, memory and learning impairment, increased frequency of errors/mistakes, and increased stress levels to name a few.

As with all things in life, there must be a balance. When it is necessary to make progress on several work items within a short timeframe, knowing how to PRIORITIZE is the key.

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		URGENT	LESS URGENT
Determine what is URGENT and IMPORTANT – Based on the Eisenhower Matrix or the Urgent-Important Matrix, here is a way to categorize tasks or activities.	IMPORTANT	DO FIRST	SCHEDULE
	LESS IMPORTANT	DELEGATE	DON'T DO

This categorizing helps you to focus on the most critical items first so you can direct your time and energy accordingly. A video tutorial is available online at:
<https://www.eisenhower.me/eisenhower-matrix/>

✓ **Avoid Distractions** – Too many distractions rob you of valuable time from the workday. Whether working from home or in a company environment, try to minimize those things that keep you from accomplishing your goals. What is a distraction to some people may be a benefit to another. For example, working with noise in the background, like music or a news program. Some may find it relaxing while others are hindered. Certain people like busier surroundings and others like peace and quiet to get things done. Sometimes, in a work environment, you may not have much control over the noise. However, earplugs or noise-canceling headphones could be a good option for those who need a quieter backdrop to stay in their zone of productivity.

✓ **Do Not Procrastinate** – The task that you are dreading the most may not take very much time to complete in comparison to some of the projects on your To-Do List. Instead of dreading it and pushing it to the back of the pile, just set your mind to FOCUS on accomplishing that one item first thing in the morning. You will find yourself relieved once you've tackled it.

✓ **Keep a Task List** (either on a note form or in some electronic form or program) nearby throughout your day and week with the urgent, important, and necessary items which are required. Make a note near each one of the specific deadlines to have it ready. Check off the list as you get the project or task completed. This will help with the fear of omitting or forgetting a project, and you can also see the progress you have made in your work week.



✓ **Repeat Tasks or Projects** – Items that are required on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis, such as reports, financials, summaries, etc. To manage these items, make a repeating appointment on your calendar for this “report” so that the calendar program will actually do the reminding for you to update/complete it by the due date. Also, investigate your options to find a way to automate this repeated process to make it easier with updates (i.e., auto-email a group of people with additional information, set up a query to run new data, create formulas in spreadsheets to do calculations, etc.).

✓ **“Design Your Roadmap”** – Plan ahead and estimate time needed to accomplish each project/task. Say you are going on a road trip. Everyone loves those! You make certain preparations like planning your route and stopping points (for fun or rest) and allowing enough drive time to reach the destination. It’s the same concept with project management. You make a plan for the amount of time it will require to get from start to finish and block out your time each day to focus on getting to your “destination”. Also, just like when taking long drives, you need to get out and stretch after a few hours in a car, your body and mind need a “mental break” to refresh and regroup. Stepping away for a brief time may even give you more clarity, more energy, or fresh ideas about that project or other items on your TO DO LIST.

NEW!

ADVANCED MASTER ROADS SCHOLAR POINTS-BASED CAPSTONE

UNH T2 is excited to announce our new Advanced Master Roads Scholar Points-Based Capstone Option!



[LEARN MORE](#)



Points-Based Capstone

After completing at least 185 credit hours with UNH T2, begin receiving points for participation in activities that relate to public works. Accrue at least 100 points total, in addition to 200 credit hours of UNH T2 training, to achieve Advanced Master Roads Scholar.

Examples of activities that earn points:

- Submit a Build a Better Mousetrap nomination (10 pts. each, no limit)
- Serve on a workshop advisory committee to assist UNH T2 in providing industry knowledge input, content, and feedback to develop new, or revise existing, workshop titles and content (20 pts. each up to 60 pts)



[LEARN MORE](#)

Traditional Capstone Project

Along with earning the minimum required 200 NH Road Scholar hours, the objective of earning this prestigious level of achievement is to participate in, and help improve, the working lives of your colleagues and the public works community. Your passion for this field is evident by your commitment to professional growth and development.

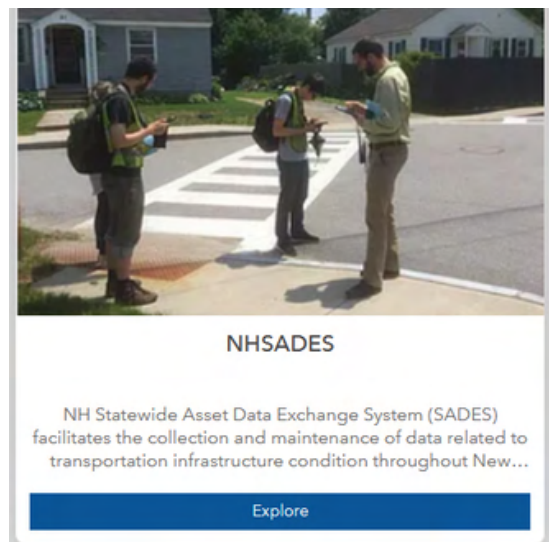
Whether you wish to instruct, mentor, develop outreach programs, inspire teenagers in this field, bring innovations to your community and others, or partner with UNH T2 on one of their many projects, the NH Advanced Master Roads Scholar program encourages you to find a meaningful and supportive way to utilize your expertise and wealth of knowledge to help others in the PW community reach greater levels of professional development and proficiency.

NH GRANIT TRANSPORTATION DATA FEATURES

The New Hampshire Geodata Portal, developed by the NH GRANIT Clearinghouse at the University of New Hampshire, facilitates the discovery and use of authoritative GIS data, web applications, and related geospatial resources for New Hampshire.

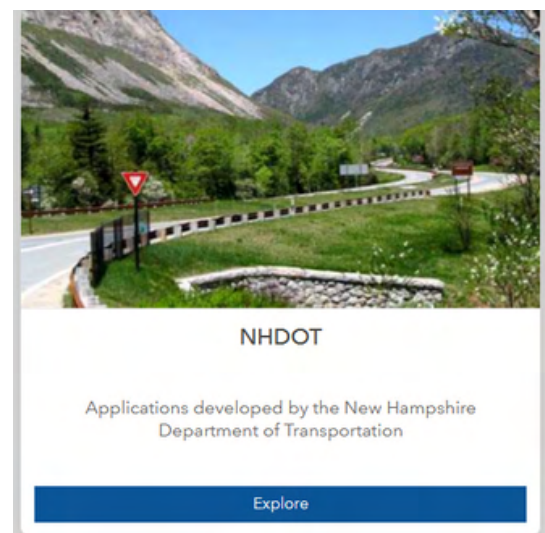
NH SADES

NH Statewide Asset Data Exchange System (SADES) facilitates the collection and maintenance of data related to transportation infrastructure throughout New Hampshire. Data include the location and condition of stream crossings, tidal crossings, road surfaces, pedestrian infrastructure, and culverts and closed drainage systems. A program of the UNH Technology Transfer Center, SADES provides a maintainable condition assessment process for many state and local agencies.



NHDOT

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation has internet-based mapping services available to Department and external customers including the NHDOT roads and projects, 2022 roads and highway facts, NHDOT state and local bridge dashboard, NH geodetic selection form, NHDOT pavement condition map, and historic bridge review map.



LINKS

[NH SADES Website](#)
[Transportation and Infrastructure Apps](#)



CDL THEORY TRAINING FROM OHIO LTAP E-LEARNING

WEBSITE: WWW.TRANSPORTATION.OHIO.GOV/PROGRAMS/LTAP/ELEARNING/CDL

Most individuals seeking to obtain a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) on or after February 7, 2022, must complete Theory training and Behind-the-Wheel (BTW) training. The Ohio LTAP Center, as a program within the Ohio Department of Transportation's Office of Local Programs, is providing CDL Theory training free of charge via eLearning. The CDL Theory training modules were developed by the Clear Roads pooled fund program, with funding from State Departments of Transportation (DOTs).

Ohio LTAP is not providing Behind-the-Wheel (BTW) training. They do not endorse or recommend any training provider for BTW training. If you need to locate a BTW training provider, please visit the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)'s Training Provider Registry

If you have questions concerning whether or not the license type you want to obtain requires Theory and BTW training, please visit the FMCSA's Entry Level Driver Training (ELDT) website to use their online tool which will help you find the answer.

The Ohio LTAP Center provides Theory eLearning modules that cover the training and testing required for individuals seeking a Class A CDL, a Class B CDL, and an upgrade from a Class B to a Class A CDL. The required courses for each license type are listed on the CDL Theory Training webpage, along with their approximate time to complete. You must begin with the first module and work progressively through them as each module is a prerequisite of the next module in the series. Once you have completed the final module for your license type, you will be able to take the exam. NOTE: At the beginning of the exam, you must provide your driver's license number, and state of issue and agree to have your information shared with the FMCSA.



CDL THEORY TRAINING FROM OHIO LTAP ELEARNING

WEBSITE: WWW.TRANSPORTATION.OHIO.GOV/PROGRAMS/LTAP/ELEARNING/CDL

HOW TO ACCESS THE TRAINING

- 1** Visit the [CDL Theory Training webpage](#) of the Ohio LTAP website, and review the detailed information provided.
- 2** If you are new to the Ohio LTAP eLearning system, you will need to Request a MyODOT Account to establish your User ID and Password. – Be sure to request a Basic account for LTAP eLearning, and to provide the requested information. Make sure your email address is spelled correctly. – New MyODOT requests are approved during regular business hours, Monday through Friday. If your request is submitted on an evening or weekend, it will be approved during the next business day
- 3** Visit the eLearning login page (blue background), and type in your User ID and Password.
- 4** In the eLearning system, select the Course Catalog tab near the top of the screen. Modules are listed alphabetically below for pages 1 through 20, etc.
- 5** On page 1 under the Course Catalog tab, scroll down to the first CDL module: CDL_A_Module_01. The CDL modules proceed on pages 2, 3 and 4.
- 6** To enroll in a module, click on the Enroll icon (with green plus sign).
- 7** Once enrolled, click on the My Courses tab near the top of the screen. Under the Enrolled tab, click on the Launch icon (with orange arrow) to start the module. For additional information, please visit the eLearning webpage or CDL Theory Training webpage of the Ohio LTAP website.

NATIONAL PUBLIC WORKS WEEK 2023



**CONNECTING
THE WORLD**
THROUGH PUBLIC WORKS

NATIONAL PUBLIC WORKS WEEK

MAY 21-27, 2023

POSTERS
NOW
AVAILABLE
FOR
PURCHASE!

Every year National Public Works Week gets bigger and better. The number of participating municipalities continues to grow, which means the number of citizens who are exposed to the value of public works grows. NPWW is a great time to educate the public about the value and necessities of public works projects.

Tag UNH T2 on Facebook to let us know what your team is doing to recognize NPWW! The official hashtag for National Public Works Week is #NPWW

www.npww.apwa.net

How-To Guide



Social Media Guide



Downloads

CULVERT MAINTAINER WORKSHOPS

Register for these 2023 workshops

May 1 & 2

**Certified Culvert Maintainer
Virtual**

April 26

Certified Culvert Maintainer

September 6

**Certified Culvert Maintainer
Recertification**

August 10


**Certified Culvert Maintainer
Recertification**

Registration details at t2.unh.edu

LET'S TALK BUDGETING!

Learn about how to discuss your budget, presenting and advocating for your PW budget at town meetings, how to manage your budget, and more!

 **April 24 – Municipal
Budgeting 101**

 **Missed *Intro to Public Works
Budgeting*? Let us know if you'd like
us to schedule a second session!**



Registration details at t2.unh.edu

THANK YOU

for

PARTICIPATING IN OUR NH
PUBLIC WORKS COMMUNITY
OF BEST PRACTICES SURVEY!

To complete the survey please visit
bit.ly/nhpwpractices



You **play a role in** work zone safety.



WORK WITH US

2023 National Work Zone Awareness Week

Everyone plays a role in work zone safety. NWZAW highlights the deadly dangers of inattention at highway work areas. The 2023 weeklong commemoration included:

- Work Zone Safety Training Day - April 17
- National kickoff event - April 18
- Go Orange Day - April 19
- Social media storm - April 20
- Moment of Silence - April 21