

**MADISON COUNTY ROAD CREWS**  
**Road Department Procedures Meeting and Training Session**  
**July 22, 2016, Meeting Minutes**

On Thursday, July 22, 2016, a meeting with the Department of Labor & Industries (DLI) came to order at 10:00 a.m. in the Public Meeting Room of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana, with Commissioners Ron Nye, and Jim Hart present. Carolyn Henry, Safety Coordinator, was present to take minutes.

Those people on the attached list were present for the meeting.

Commissioner Jim Hart asked Jim Muskovich, MACo Loss Control Specialist, to begin the discussion regarding snow and ice removal and road maintenance signage issues. Jim referred to MUTCD's designation of grading and plowing as "short duration and/or mobile operations," and continues with:

- Section 6G.02 Work Duration, standard: 22, mobile operations shall have appropriate devices on equipment, or shall use a separate vehicle with appropriate warning devices.
- Also referenced was the option of Standard: 23, for mobile operations that move at speeds of less than 3 mph using mobile signs or stationary signing periodically retrieved and repositioned in the advance warning area.
- And Section 6G.03 Location of Work, Standard: 03, when the work space within the traveled way, except for short-duration and mobile operations, advance warning shall provide a general message that work is taking place and shall supply information about highway conditions. Temporary Traffic Control devices shall indicate how vehicular traffic can move through the Temporary Traffic Control zone.

Jerry Laughery, DLI Compliance Supervisor, clarified the topics to be discussed by introducing the time line of events involving two separate incidences related to snow and ice removal practices. Jerry explained DLI's perception of the hazards which included the snow removal equipment plowing in the oncoming lane in both situations causing a hit and near miss. Also, in both situations a warning sign was posted only at the beginning of the work zone. He further stipulated that regarding residential entrances to the work zone, that signage should be posted at the closest entrance to the work zone, and that work zones should be limited to 1 or 2 miles in length.

Roy Hill, Dist. 3 Road Foreman, spoke to the differences in snow and ice removal as enhancing the road surface vs. road maintenance changing the road surface, and the differences in regards to signage, speed, duration of process, demand and time constraints. Roy explained their proactive measures in relation to unsafe situations, e.g. blind curve, work in the oncoming lane, and slow speed, which included signs and stopping traffic.

There was discussion on scenarios relating to frog jumping, windward and leeward snow drifts, blades crossing the middle line on narrow roads, the danger to crews setting signs, permanent signage, public service announcements, etc.

Jerry voiced his concern regarding due diligence, and Jim M. voiced his concerns on time requirements and operator safety. Jerry stated that when it comes to efficiency vs. safety there should be no cutting corners and that placing signs is not too much to ask. If the equipment is moving over 3 mph and a strobe is going he is alright with that, but blind corners and work in the left lane need signage.

Bryan Page, Safety and Health Bureau Chief, asked what practices had been put in place after the accident to prevent it from happening again. There was discussion on changes that have been made, the possibility that an accident can happen regardless of precautions, safe work practices by code and LTAP training.

Jim M. suggested identifying areas of concern and developing standard operating procedures addressing those concerns. Bryan voiced a concern for unity in practices. Jerry addressed a written procedure, OSHAs ability to make a directive, and that MUTCD is only a guide to safe practices. Jim M. challenged the wisdom of that, and

defended the impact on counties, and resulting unreasonable cost and demands. He went on to clarify LTAP training and Madison County's resulting roster of accomplished Road Scholars.

Roy voiced his concern with blanket procedures due to the diversity of scenarios encountered and reliance on better judgement when necessary. He reiterated the need for common sense in conjunction with technique, and said they have a documented safety meeting every Monday to discuss procedure, safe practices, safety issues, etc. Ray concurred in that practice for his Road Dist.1 crew. Commissioner Nye added that practice is also in affect in Road Dist. 2.

Eric Strauss, Administrator, Employment Relations Division, commented that he was hearing a lot of good things, but again stressed the importance of the best practices being universal in the organization. He asked about training and documentation for new hires and seasonal employees. As a driver, he noted the importance of awareness and direction on a roadway he is unfamiliar with especially involving a work zone. He explained that they have documentation regarding incidents that happen in work zones with no warnings, but nothing that documents how many incidents were avoided with warnings posted.

Commissioner Hart then stated that he felt strongly, and with confidence that the changes needed have been made, and that they are not willing to make a blanket procedure on protocol.

Jerry advised that his Compliance Officers will be diligent in looking for negligence in work zones for speeds at 3 mph or less, working in the left lane, and on blind corners in regards to warning signage posted.

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David Schulz, Chairman  
Board of Madison County Commissioners

Date Approved: May 23, 2016

Minutes prepared by:

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Carolyn Henry, Safety Coordinator

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kathleen Mumme, Clerk and Recorder, Madison County