

NOTICE OF PROPOSED GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Connector June 2018 newsletter

Pursuant to Wis. Stat. s. 227.112, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation is hereby seeking comment on Connector June 2018 newsletter [Wis. Stat. ch. 348], a proposed guidance document.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

Comments may be submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation for 21 days by:

1. Department's website: <https://appengine.egov.com/apps/wi/dot/guidance-docs?guidDocId=OPA164>

2. Mailing written comments to:
Office of Public Affairs
Wisconsin Department of Transportation
4822 Madison Yards Way
PO Box 7910
Madison, WI 53707-7910

WEBSITE LOCATION OF FINAL GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

The final version of this guidance document will be posted at wisconsindot.gov to allow for ongoing comment.

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State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation

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Work 'n Wheels gets people on road to a better life

Program is proof of how hard work, helping hand possess power of positive influence

[Joe Starr](#) - June 25



Crump at work behind the wheel of an 80-ton dump truck.

Netra Crump understands the importance of being all things to her children, and in her case that has included being a father figure.

While choosing a career path to support her family, the single mother decided on the male-dominated vocation of heavy equipment operator to show her young sons how to be men.

"I have three boys and one girl and their fathers weren't included in their lives so I felt that I needed to set an example."



Crump enjoys working in this profession as a female minority because she stands out, and she uses that contrast to encourage others who might feel they don't fit the mold.

"I want to let them know that it is possible if you only have faith, if you only are determined," says Crump, who recently graduated from apprentice to journeyman heavy equipment operator in the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 139.

It took Crump five years to earn her journeyman heavy equipment operator certification, all while raising four children as a single mother.

As she pays it forward she can't help but look back at those who helped her reach her goals while

working through some very tough times. Among those people is Jeff Segebrecht. Crump met Segebrecht in 2012. Financial ends at the time were far from being met and she knew that change was necessary if she was going to make a life for her family. Crump was a recovering drug addict so it was evident that she had the drive to succeed, but she was lacking a support system. And living without a car in rural southwest Wisconsin, she was at a transportation disadvantage.

That's when she found Southwest Community Action's Work 'n Wheels program and got in touch with Segebrecht, the program's coordinator. Work 'n Wheels helps persons who have poor or no credit, or have been denied by banks or credit unions to obtain no-interest loans to purchase dependable vehicles. The program is primarily funded by the [Wisconsin Employment Transportation Assistance Program \(WETAP\)](#), an effort that awards grants to organizations offering enhanced local transportation services that help low-income people attain and retain employment.

After going through the interview process, filling out an application and having it approved, Crump was granted a loan that was used to purchase a car she used to get to and from her heavy equipment operator apprentice training and work. During this time Crump also started taking UW Extension financial education classes, which were part of the loan deal.

Through the next five years, Crump continued to work through school and traveling to job sites -

many being several hundred miles away. In many cases the distance made a daily commute prohibited, requiring her to remain in the area for the entire week. This meant overnight accommodations were needed. Unable to afford a hotel room, Crump worked with Segebrecht to purchase a van through Work 'n Wheels that she used to make the long commutes and then sleep in at night at nearby campgrounds.

Throughout her apprenticeship, Segebrecht remained in contact with Crump. It was during this time that he saw the drive within her. Even when things were rough and she was feeling down, he said she always kept moving forward.

"Here's this woman, she had everything stacked against her but she never gave up."

Work 'n Wheels uses its \$120,000 annual budget to process between 50 and 60 loans per year. Applicants must meet multiple eligibility requirements, complete financial education training and help others lacking reliable transportation.

Crump's achievements are testament to the program's success, as she enjoys her work and watching her children move forward in their own lives.

For Segebrecht, it's about giving a hand up. Growing up on a dairy farm, working construction and running a dairy trucking business for two decades, he knows the value of working hard. The latter part of his career has revolved around case management and working as a mobility manager to help transportation-challenged persons. He was the first mobility manager in the state of Wisconsin and is currently treasurer of Wisconsin Association of Mobility Managers, a non-profit dedicated to mobility manager training.

"I believe in helping people, but I don't believe in giveaways. I just don't. I'll help anybody, but you teach them nothing when you give them everything. That's my philosophy."

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Crump, with Work 'n Wheel's Bill Trainor (left) and Segebrecht, receiving the Courage Award at the 2012 Poverty Matters Conference.

Verona Road Project receives the 2018 Midwestern District Transportation Achievement Award for Design

Steve Theisen - June 20

The major Verona Road (US 18/151) Project in Dane County was recently selected as the recipient of the 2018 Midwestern District Transportation Achievement Award for Design.

The award will be presented at the 2018 Joint ITE International and Midwestern/Great Lakes District Annual Meeting held in Minneapolis August 20 through 23.



Stage 1 construction of the 3-year, \$107 million project was completed on time and under budget in November 2016. Stage 1 work included reconstruction of Verona Road between Raymond and Nakoma roads, and expanding Madison's Beltline from Seminole Highway to Whitney Way. The reconstruction project was successful in providing extensive community involvement, environmental assessment, and innovative solutions to improve safety and mobility for transportation modes throughout the corridor. Wisconsin DOT engineering staff, in coordination with Strand Associates, Inc.® of Madison, designed the Verona Road Project by combining major design elements in ways not before seen in Wisconsin. With 110,000 vehicles that pass through the Madison Beltline and Verona Road interchange daily, this unique design helps save travelers time and resources.

Stage 2 work is underway in the Fitchburg area, and Verona Road will open to all lanes of traffic in late 2019. The entire Verona Road Project is scheduled for a fall 2020 completion. Information on the Verona Road Project can be found on its [511 Wisconsin Projects](#) page and the [project Facebook](#) page.

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Secure loads make for safe roads: strap down, cover up cargo before every trip

Wisconsin DOT - June 20

Roadway debris factored into nearly 1,500 traffic crashes in Wisconsin between 2014 and 2016 resulting in 304 injuries and nine deaths.

Whether driving a semi-trailer, pulling a boat or camper, or transporting anything in a vehicle, proper vehicle maintenance and cargo security are important public safety issues. Furniture, appliances, lumber or anything transported in a vehicle needs to be properly secured before travel begins.



Branches or other items not properly secured may pose a risk of falling from a vehicle and onto the roadway where they become driving hazards.

Securing loads

Use rope, straps or tarps to contain cargo, make sure large objects are tied directly to the vehicle and never overload a vehicle. Wisconsin law provides for a \$200 citation for "[failure to properly secure a load](#)" or for "[spilling a load or waste along a highway](#)."

Maintenance

Preventive vehicle maintenance is also important. Worn wheel bearings, tire tread or improperly inflated tires may lead to blowouts or other malfunctions that create roadside emergencies and leave debris on the road. Exhaust systems and other hardware attached to the vehicle can corrode and detach creating dangerous obstacles for motorists. Have a trained auto mechanic check vehicles during routine inspections to ensure parts are in good working order.

Towing safety

Good load securement extends to anything the vehicle is towing. As with vehicle cargo, all trailer

cargo must be tied down and the trailer itself properly fastened to the vehicle. The ball and hitch coupling assembly must be the same size and latch securely to prevent disengagement of the trailer while the vehicle is in operation. Two safety chains of proper length and strength must be attached between the vehicle and the trailer with just enough slack to allow proper turning. Crisscross the safety chains to create a cradle that can catch the tongue of the trailer and prevent it from striking the pavement if an unexpected disconnection occurs. An [improperly secured trailer](#) can result in a \$200 citation with two demerit points added to a driver's license.

Driver awareness

Beyond awareness of what is happening with their own vehicles, motorists should also scan the roadway ahead for potential problems. Pay attention to vehicles carrying cargo and give a safe following distance of at least four seconds allowing sufficient reaction time in case something does come loose and falls to the road. The farther ahead a driver is aware of an object the more time they have to maneuver safely past. If an object comes visible with little time to react, avoid swerving to miss it. Swerving increases a driver's risk of losing control of the vehicle and the potential of a crash. If there is a significant safety hazard on the road, try to safely get by it and find a safe place to stop and contact law enforcement. Even something like a chain or piece of wood lying in the road may be seemingly insignificant to someone in a car but for a motorcyclist it could be deadly, and if an object becomes airborne it can be especially dangerous. Motorists should think twice before attempting to remove road debris themselves as they could be struck, injured or killed by another vehicle.

By ensuring that any vehicle load is properly secured you will avoid costly citations, roadside emergencies – and most importantly – prevent potential tragedies along roadways.

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Wisconsin DOT joins emergency response partners in Dark Sky exercise

Training designed to get participants thinking about personnel, resource coordination

David Hunt - June 12

It all started with a power outage.

Not like the typical rolling brownout where the lights flicker and kick back to life minutes later. This one was going to last for days, if not longer.

Then things got much worse, and in a hurry. Reports of a sniper. A bomb-armed drone over Chippewa Falls. Riots and protests. People stranded in boats. Hospitals in need of evacuation. Crops dying in the fields. Price gouging complaints.



The Dark Sky event had more than 1,000 participants from the state EOC, the Wisconsin Business Emergency Operations Center, the Wisconsin National Guard, county emergency operations centers, municipal command posts, the American Red Cross and federal agencies.

That's a brief glimpse into the emergency operations center (EOC) of last month's Dark Sky Exercise, a statewide, full-scale training exercise held last month focused on long-term power outages caused by physical and cyber-attacks against utility companies and other critical Wisconsin infrastructure. All fictitious, but designed to get key stakeholders from multiple state agencies

thinking about how to best share and coordinate personnel and resources for public safety should such a catastrophe ever occur. The EOC plays a critical role in acquiring, allocating and tracking resources, managing and distributing information, and setting response priorities among many incident sites.

In all, there were more than 1,000 participants from the state EOC, the [Wisconsin Business Emergency Operations Center](#), the Wisconsin National Guard, county emergency operations centers, municipal command posts, the American Red Cross and federal agencies. Their activities were driven by a Simulation Cell made up of 75 participants from state, county, local and private entities. Their goal was to challenge the SEOC and push them to their limits and beyond.

Overall, WisDOT had roughly 50 participants, most from the [Division of State Patrol](#), but also from the engineering and traffic operations areas. In the event of such an emergency, the department is accountable for road closures, detours, and the inspection, maintenance and repair of state highway infrastructure.

"It's an eye-opening experience that provides valuable insight to aid in our planning for any type of emergency we may encounter," said Mike Jungbluth, Wisconsin DOT's Emergency Transportation Operations (ETO) program manager. "The more we can challenge ourselves to think through and prioritize critical scenarios, and the more we can facilitate teamwork and cooperation, the better positioned we are to deal with real-world situations."

Why training matters

To find an example of why this training matters, look no further than 2017's Hurricane Harvey. The storm dumped more than 27 trillion gallons of rain on Texas, according to [Weathermodels.com](#) Meteorologist Ryan Maue, making Harvey the wettest Atlantic hurricanes ever measured. Resulting floods inundated hundreds of thousands of homes, displaced more than 30,000 people, and prompted more than 17,000 rescues, according to a [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration report](#). The disaster response that followed was extraordinary and a perfect opportunity for emergency responders, including those with the Dark Sky exercise, to study and learn from.

Wisconsin DOT participates as part of a statewide team in training exercises that support prevention, preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation activities among transportation stakeholders within the authorities and resource limitations that exist.

Real-life response

Wisconsin DOT and its ETO program have been involved in multiple real-life scenarios in recent years. In July 2016, northern Wisconsin received 12 inches of rain in a matter of hours, causing rampant flooding and leading Governor Scott Walker to declare a state of emergency in Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Price, Sawyer and Washburn counties. Multiple highway closures and washouts required emergency engineering and detour routes, coordination with [511 Wisconsin](#), and restoration efforts required teamwork from several state agencies over the coming months.

Just last month, Wisconsin DOT aided in [the response](#) to the explosion and fire at a Superior refinery by providing coordination space at the Safety and Weight Enforcement Facility near the crossroads of US 2 and 53.

Continued improvements

The ETO program establishes protocols and procedures in cooperation with other first responders on a variety of critical public safety topics such as when to close a road or bridge, how to deal with a hazmat spill on the highway or how to control traffic away from an incident scene.

The department's [Traffic Incident Management Enhancement](#) program provides resources and training to emergency responders including law enforcement, firefighters, emergency medical providers and tow truck operators. Having a uniform approach helps provide the safest possible

work environment for all Wisconsin incident responders, while minimizing the risk for secondary crashes.

"It all comes down to coordination and training," said Jungbluth. "Planning and teamwork are critical to public safety."

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Villiesse receives statewide honors for exemplary public service

David Hunt - June 6

Sandi Villiesse was [one of six state employees](#), and the only from Wisconsin DOT, who received honorable mention at the 35th Annual Virginia Hart Awards, a Wisconsin tradition that gains its name from the state's first female cabinet secretary.



Villiesse, alongside DTSD Deputy Administrator Steve Krebs, accepts her Certificate of Honorable Mention during the 35th Annual Virginia Hart Award ceremony held May 31 at the Capitol.

Villiesse serves a busy and important role coordinating the design and construction activities of the Statewide Local Program, with recent community activities including serving as Girl Scout leader, Sunday School teacher and coach for middle school pom and dance team.

"Recognition and celebration of Virginia Hart's greatness is a very proud moment for all women," Villiesse said. "This honor is especially dear to me as I watch my daughters grow into strong, dedicated women with compassion and commitment."

Virginia Hart served as secretary of the Department of Regulation and Licensing, chairperson of the Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations, and chairperson of the Labor and Industry Review Commission. Upon her retirement from state service in 1983, friends and colleagues established a fund in her name to annually recognize a woman for her substantial contribution to Wisconsin state service.

Villiesse works in Bureau of Project Development within Wisconsin DOT's engineering division. Project Services Chief Wayne Chase called her the epitome of a dedicated and caring employee. Chase and Design Standards Chief David Stertzher - her former Supervisor - nominated Villiesse for the recognition, noting that she'd been taking on additional

responsibilities for more than a year to help the department save money and operate more efficiently.

"Her positive 'can do' attitude provides a calming effect for all who interact with her," Chase noted in his nomination. "Sandi has shown exemplary performance and provides great contributions to the people of Wisconsin, and she deserves to be recognized for her efforts."

"Construction is about progress and engineering is a gift – a promise for continued opportunity to find new solutions and make a difference. I encourage all young girls and women to pursue their

dreams to their greatest potential."

—Sandi Villiesse

To Villiesse, public service is not just a career but a lifestyle. In addition to her work at Wisconsin DOT and numerous community leadership roles, she's exploring a Court Appointed Special Advocate volunteer opportunity, which focuses on protecting and championing the needs of abused and neglected children.

Villiesse's Wisconsin DOT role is contract specialist for the Statewide Local Program, which represents roughly 15 percent of the total state highway program. She acts as a liaison between the department's central office and region offices and is the point person for statewide policy related to design and construction of local road projects.

"It's an opportunity to be part of change," she said. "My reasons to work here grow with each year. It's fulfilling and rewarding to work with so many exceptional people throughout the state of Wisconsin."

In January 2017, Villiesse's former supervisor left the program to take a promotion. Since that time, she's been handling additional duties to ensure day-to-day operations remain seamless and that the greater vision of the program continues to mature.

Bigger picture, Villiesse hopes that her success and recognition will help carry on the Virginia Hart tradition for future generations.

"Construction is about progress and engineering is a gift – a promise for continued opportunity to find new solutions and make a difference," she said. "I encourage all young girls and women to pursue their dreams to their greatest potential."

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