

TRANSLINES EXPRESS

Jan. 5, 2022

Winds, fires close highways, cause damage

By Kim Stich, Headquarters, and
Lisa Mussman, District Three

High winds on Dec. 15 closed part of I-70 and more than 25 other sections of highways in western and central Kansas because of low visibility from blowing dust, downed power lines and crashes blocking the roadways. The wind storms caused widespread damage, including the knocking down or shearing off of traffic signs, including stop and other regulatory signs, primarily in central and western parts of the state.

KDOT crews began to replace missing signs at the same time overall assessments began of the numbers of signs down. KDOT areas that did not have signs affected provided materials and assistance, but many lost or damaged signs had to be ordered.

The missing/down sign problem was widespread across northwest and southwest Kansas – hundreds of signs were affected in every county to some degree. It was estimated that 100 signs were missing in and around counties surrounding Great Bend, and about 100 signs were missing or down in north central Kansas. Northeast and southeast Kansas had minimal losses.



Above, workers from the District and Salina Subarea replace broken posts on speed limit signs along I-135 in Saline County. Below, wildfires burn in a portion of Rooks County. Photos by Ashley Perez and Ricky Runnion



Story continued on page 3

More photos on pages 2, 3

Dust, smoke blows across Kansas



Garden City Highway Maintenance Supervisor Hector Terrones took these photos along U.S. 83 in Finney County on Dec. 15. Above, blowing smoke reduced visibility due to downed power lines along both sides of the highway, which then caused fires. At left, dust and smoke can be seen behind the destroyed sign.

KHP Trooper Tod Hileman took this photo showing reduced visibility on I-70 on Dec. 15. Dust and vehicle crashes closed I-70 from Colorado to Salina for much of the afternoon.



TRANSLINES EXPRESS

Published by the
**Kansas Department of
Transportation**

Office of the Secretary
Eisenhower State
Office Building
700 SW Harrison
Topeka, KS

Transportation Secretary
Julie Lorenz

Deputy Secretary
Burt Morey
Maggie Doll
Lindsey Douglas

Administration
Allison Sedore

Aviation
Bob Brock

Communications
Steve Hale

Engineering and Design
Calvin Reed

Field Operations
Clay Adams

Innovative Technologies
Mike Floberg

Planning & Development
Chris Herrick

Policy
Joel Skelley

**Interim Program & Project
Management**
Pete Van Sickle

Project Delivery
Greg Schieber

Safety
Troy Whitworth



At left, signs across central and western Kansas, like the one below, were damaged in high winds on Dec. 15. Below, burned ground lines both sides of U.S. 281 in northern Russell County.

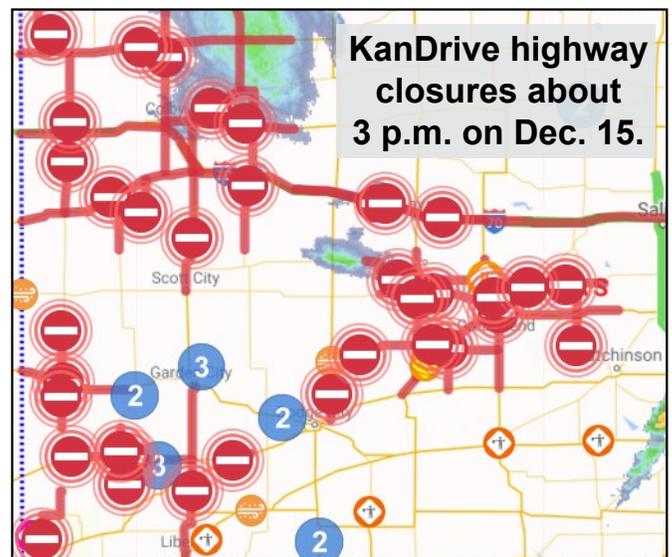


At left, Minneapolis Subarea employees Richard Adams (left), Equipment Operator Midpoint, and Shiloh Studt, Equipment Operator, replaced a mile marker sign on U.S. 81. Below, an image from the KanDrive.org website shows the numerous highway closures that were taking place across the state about 3 p.m. on Dec. 15. Photos by Ashley Perez and Lisa Mussman

Winds, fire cause damage

Continued from page 1

The weather also prompted the closure of I-70 in both directions from Salina to the Colorado border for several hours. Blowing dust created near-zero visibility conditions and high winds toppled vehicles that blocked the roadway. KDOT crews were stationed at closure gates in several locations so KHP troopers could respond to emergencies as needed. Wildfires also broke out in District Three, the largest being the Four County Fire that burned nearly 163,000 acres in Ellis, Osborne, Rooks and Russell counties. The Stockton Subarea crew assisted with flagging traffic while firefighters battled a blaze near K-18 west of Plainville.





Don't crowd the plow

Several KDOT snowplows were hit across Kansas during the New Year's snowstorm, like this one in Kansas City. These crashes caused injuries and one fatality, as well as trucks to be out of service for an extended time. This is why we continually stress to the public to not crowd the plow. KDOT crews are out there working to clear the highways, please give them room to safely do their jobs.



First snow of the season



1. On the morning of Jan. 1, crews work to clear the U.S. 83/50/400 bypass around Garden City. 2. Landon Baier, with the District Six Bridge crew, loads salt into the truck later that day. 3. While not as much snow was received as predicted, snow drifts could be seen along U.S. 56 in Rice County on Jan. 2. Photos by Hector Terrones and Randy Miller, District Six and District Five

Salfrank named KDOT Chief of Local Projects

Tod Salfrank has been named the Chief of the Bureau of Local Projects at KDOT. He replaces Mike Stringer, who retired earlier this month.

Salfrank worked in retail for several years, then decided he needed a change. He started at KDOT in 1999 and spent seven years in the Bureau of Design. Salfrank left the agency for a year, then came back as an Engineering Associate III in Local Projects. In 2015, he was selected as the bureau's Assistant Chief where he served until his recent promotion.



Tod Salfrank

“Since the beginning, KDOT has promoted personal life, spending time with family and being flexible in what you need as long as you get the job done,” Salfrank said. “In my previous job, that was just the opposite.”

Salfrank said the new federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Legislation will provide many transportation opportunities for the state. “We plan to work with our local partners in how to meet the challenges of rolling out the new program and see that these organizations get as much benefit as possible,” he said.

He and his wife, Patty, have a son and two daughters and reside in Wamego.

Depperschmidt selected as KDOT Chief of Right of Way

Chad Depperschmidt has been selected as the new Chief of the Bureau of Right of Way for KDOT.

He graduated from Kansas State University and worked at the Johnson County Appraiser's office following college. Depperschmidt has spent the last 16 years as the Budget Director of the Kansas Department



Chad Depperschmidt

of Wildlife and Parks. He was the head of land acquisitions for properties that encouraged tourism, served as the legislative liaison for the agency and managed the engineering crew as well as building maintenance.

Depperschmidt said while the two agencies have different missions, the offices both focus on teamwork to take care of the land. He is excited for the new challenges and experiences at KDOT and is currently working on getting his certified general appraisal license.

“Buying the land has always interested me, and now I look forward to learning about the relocation part where we help people find a place and start with new opportunities,” he said.

Depperschmidt has a son and a daughter and enjoys hunting, fishing and golfing. He resides in Topeka.

Haverkamp retires from KDOT

Bill Haverkamp, KDOT Chief of the Bureau of Right of Way, is retiring after 42 years of service to the state of Kansas.

He started at KDOT in 1977 as a Surveyor in the Bureau of Design. Haverkamp spent most of his time in the Surveys Section, and he served for 27 years as the Survey Coordinator. He retired from that position in March 2017, but the opportunity to serve as Bureau



Bill Haverkamp

Chief of Right of Way brought him back to KDOT in June 2019.

“My career has exceeded any expectations I had,” Haverkamp said. “And having this opportunity to come back to KDOT has been unbelievable. I like working through the process of project development to completion.”

Haverkamp will continue to serve as a Professional Survey member of the Kansas State Board of Technical Professions as well as home and family life adventures.

K-99 shoulders widened

By Priscilla Petersen
District Four

Thirteen miles of K-99 in Chautauqua County is in the process of being widened. Three-foot shoulders have been added to both sides of the highway, starting at Sedan and continuing north to the Chautauqua-Elk county line. The widening project, which also includes pavement patching/resurfacing and the replacement of a box culvert, began in May 2021.

Project activity has been suspended over the winter, with completion expected next spring. KDOT awarded the \$8 million construction contract to Cornejo & Sons, LLC, of Wichita. A prior project, in 2020, made slope improvements and added delineators along the same K-99 section.

The top photo shows K-99 as it appeared in early 2020. KDOT then programmed improvements in consultation with local officials and stakeholders. The bottom photo shows the project close to being finished. KDOT inspector Steve Gibson said he is already receiving compliments from drivers. Jeff Sims' road squad and Brad Rognlie's bridge squad designed the project.



Photos by Steve Gibson and Priscilla Petersen, District Four



Development pipeline, BIL legislation, T-WORKS projects

Transportation announcements benefit Kansas

Governor Laura Kelly joined Secretary Julie Lorenz on Dec. 15 to announce the addition of 26 highway modernization and expansion projects totaling \$750 million to the development pipeline as part of the Kelly Administration’s bipartisan, 10-year Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program (IKE).

“These projects are in every region of the state – and they improve safety, expand economic development opportunities, and strengthen our communities,” Governor Kelly said. “My administration is committed to making short- and long-term infrastructure improvements to benefit future generations of Kansans – just as we rely on investments made by previous generations of Kansans.”

In addition, impacts on Kansas transportation with



Secretary Julie Lorenz (above) and Governor Laura Kelly (below) made several transportation announcements on Dec. 15 in Topeka involving additional projects to the development pipeline, BIL legislation and remaining T-WORKS projects. Photos by KDOT Multimedia

passage of the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Legislation (BIL) and the beginning of the construction process for all remaining T-WORKS highway projects were also announced.



Secretary Lorenz said BIL will direct to Kansas about \$145 million more annually for the next five years for highways and bridges. She said input from Kansans will help determine what investments will be most meaningful to rural and urban communities across the state.

“Early next year, we will host workshops with stakeholders to share new opportunities for Kansas and to discuss delivery strategies,” said Secretary Lorenz. “We will not only view it through the lens of what works best for KDOT. I’ve asked staff to watch for opportunities for local governments, too.”

Please find a list of the new IKE development pipeline projects [here](#). More information is available at www.ksdotike.org.

Projects bringing improvements to U.S. 75

By Kate Craft
District One

December's letting included another project for the northern portion of U.S. 75 between Holton and the Nebraska state border. The grading and surfacing project in Brown County includes widening U.S. 75 to provide left turn lanes at the intersections of 260th Street and 280th Street in Sabetha. It is scheduled to begin in early 2022. Herzog Contracting of St. Joseph, Mo., is the contractor on the \$5.4 million project.

This was the third project let in 2021 for the nearly 40-mile corridor and is KDOT's most recent effort to improve the busy two-lane highway. The first projects were let in February and construction began soon after - one on about two miles of passing lanes in Jackson County and one in Brown County on 2.5 miles of passing lanes. Stephen Bass' road squad and Shawn Schwensen's bridge squad designed the project.

Despite a brief delay this summer caused by nesting swallows (a federally-protected bird species), the mild winter weather has allowed work to continue. The new southbound lane and shoulder have been completed in Jackson County, and contractors were moving dirt, placing erosion control and preparing for a pour - all a few days before Christmas.

The estimated completion in Jackson County is mid-2022, and late 2022 for Brown County. Hamm, Inc. of Perry, is the prime contractor on both jobs with a combined cost of \$12 million.



1. Contractors work on the U.S. 75 southbound passing lane in Brown County. 2. Erosion control is placed on Brown County project. 3. Contractors work on northbound portion in Jackson County. Photos by Kate Craft, District One





U.S. 166 bridge progresses

KDOT drone operator Rowdy Glaser took this aerial photo showing progress on the KDOT project to replace six weight-limited bridges on U.S. 166 east of Chetopa. The first three bridge replacements are complete. Following a winter shutdown, work on the project will resume this spring when the remaining three bridges will be replaced. The Neosho River flows south of the project area, as shown. Greg Gonzales' road squad and Brad Rognlie's bridge squad designed the project.

Students learn about careers at KDOT

By Kate Craft
District One

The future is bright for KDOT. Staff from Headquarters, FHWA and the Holton Subarea shop spent the Tuesday before Thanksgiving with the fourth graders of Royal Valley Elementary School in Hoyt. Students learned about KDOT, built gumdrop bridges and checked out equipment.

The Horton Area office also represented KDOT at Hiawatha High School's Employer Engagement Day. Students learned about the agency's variety of career opportunities and what it's like working at KDOT. The event was hosted by Hiawatha's JAG (Jobs for America's Graduates) group, which focuses on graduating students with the skills needed to become employable individuals. About 50 students attended.



Students follow plans to build bridges with gumdrops and toothpicks. Photos by Precious Howard, Headquarters



Matt Watkins and Kevin Strube, from the Horton office, talk about KDOT maintenance work. Photo by Don Hughes, KHP

Training message - minimize exposure to traffic

By Tim Potter
District Five

One of the central ideas of the training that Rusty James imparts to KDOT employees who work out along highways is this: “We want to minimize our exposure to traffic.” That protects KDOT workers and motorists, he said.

James, who has worked in public safety for 45 years, has been instructing KDOT workers as part of Traffic Incident Management training through the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute.

The training deals with surviving any kind of incident out on the roadway – including crashes, fires and violence.

There isn’t room here to cover all the training, but here are some points James cites:

- Wear high-visibility clothing before you get out of the cab.
- Lessen your exposure to traffic by not approaching vehicles on the traffic side if you pull up to check on a vehicle. Take the precaution every time, he said, because “we know that the longer we’re out there, the greater the chance that something’s going to happen.”
- Work with a sense of urgency – “like our life depends on it, because it does. I tell this to every class,” James said.
- Use unified command so that all emergency responders and KDOT personnel are coordinating



Rusty James, leading Traffic Incident Management training for the Salina Fire Department during the week of Dec. 13. Photo by Keith Lindemann, Instructor

efforts to make the best of the situation and keep people safe.

- Try to prevent surprises; keep situational awareness; share information.
- Use all available resources. Know who has what equipment. Take an attenuator to the site because it can shield workers and responders. “It’s the best piece of equipment you can have out there,” James said.
- Think outside the box, looking for new and better ways to do things. All incidents are different, he said. “We have to be open-minded.”

The training is available to all KDOT employees, police, fire, EMS, towing personnel and anyone else who responds to incidents, James said. The training classes are listed on the KU Fire & Rescue Training Institute website by clicking [here](#).

Get rid of all frost on windshields before traveling

By Troy Whitworth
Director of Safety

So, a fall or winter morning arrives, and you notice it's cold as you go out to start your vehicle. The moonlight shows a glistening sheen reflecting off your vehicle windows. It is a morning for frost. All of us have experienced frost on our vehicle's windows during those cold days or nights if parking outside.

Let's talk about frost to better understand what is happening when it occurs. When your vehicle is parked outside, the glass on your vehicle cools down more quickly than other surfaces around it. The air around the glass on your vehicle begins to cool, and the water vapor trapped in the air turns to liquid on the cool glass. The dew and condensation on the vehicle can then freeze into frost when temperatures drop below 32 degrees. (It's similar to what happens in the summer when water drops form on a glass containing a cold beverage.)

With the formation of frost on your windows, there are a couple of things you can do to remove the nasty stuff. First, you can scrape your windows. Sometimes folks will only scrape enough to barely see out. They may believe that within a few minutes the car defrost will warm up the windshield enough to remove the rest. Although that may work in theory, it is against the law. One Kansas statute specifically calls out windows on vehicles not being obstructed and that they must provide a clear view of the highway. Cruising down the

road with an obstructed view can put you and others at risk – make sure to clean all the windows to improve safety.

Sometimes people start the vehicle in the driveway and let it warm up. A lot of vehicles have been stolen from people using this strategy. Some folks have a remote start on their vehicle, which may be a better option. But experts say that warming up your engine is hard on it. They recommend warming it up no more than 30 seconds before heading out. Modern cars with fuel injection don't need to be warmed up like the old,

carbureted vehicles did. Whatever strategy you choose, don't let your car warm up in an enclosed space such as a garage. Carbon monoxide can build up and kill you.

Another idea to reduce frost is to place a windshield cover on your windows the night before. A towel, piece of carpet, cardboard or store-bought windshield cover can all work. You

can also use plastic grocery bags or zip-lock bags placed on your mirrors. A big rubber band can help hold them in place. These remedies can work for ice and snow build up as well.

Most of the time, frost isn't a big deal. A couple minutes of scraping while your car is running can be just the ticket to get you going. Sometimes frost can be a lot thicker, which takes more work and time to remove. So, when you are preparing for those early morning winter commutes, allow enough time to get your windows scraped. Once you do get the windows cleaned and are headed down the road a bit, it will soon be nice and toasty for your trip. For your family and mine.



Trivia!

“The Beverly Hillbillies,” 60th anniversary - premiered 1962

1. What was the name of the show’s theme song?
2. What vehicle model was the Clampetts’ truck?
3. What western movie star was featured in one episode?
4. What movie did Buddy Ebsen star in that made the

casting directors think he was right for the role?

5. The character Margaret Drysdale had a son named Sonny – what was his last name?
6. Who was originally cast to play Granny?
7. What was the original title of the show?
8. After the first show aired, how long did it take before it hit the number one spot in TV ratings?

Species invade highway rights of way

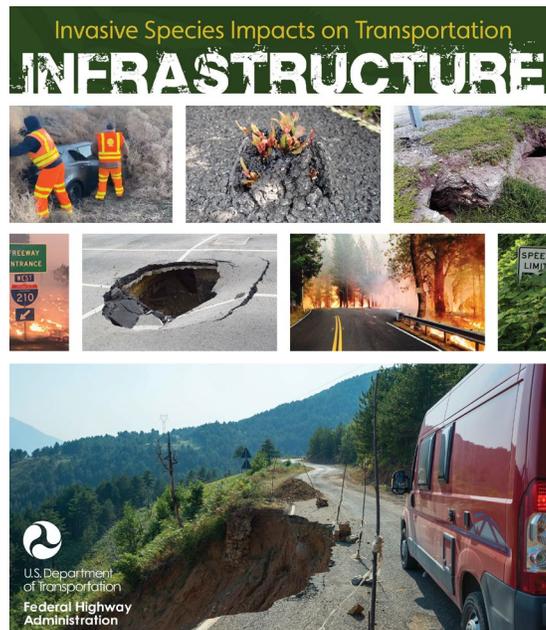
By Tom Hein
District Five

Reports issued by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are not generally page-turners, but this one is unique.

Invasive Species Impacts on Transportation Infrastructure is not just another report - check it out [here](#).

Let’s start with the pictures on the title page: a car trapped by tumbleweeds, Japanese knotweed growing up through pavement, sinkholes caused by Iguana burrows under pavement, a sign covered by kudzu, catastrophic soil erosion and huge wildfires.

Case studies and features in the report illustrate the challenges of johnsongrass in Texas, cheatgrass in



Nevada, Himalayan blackberry in Washington, Brazilian pepper in Florida, phragmites in California, giant hogweed in New York and other invaders across the country.

A list of invasive species affecting transportation infrastructure is also provided. It includes emerald ash borers, gypsy moths, bermudagrass, teasel, Russian olive, kochia and other species found in Kansas.

Non-native species often proliferate in disturbed areas and highway construction (and sometimes maintenance) offer these invaders an opportunity to gain a foothold. Control and eradication cost DOTs thousands

of dollars each year. Start the New Year becoming more aware of some of the threats challenging maintenance budgets.

Trivia answers

1. “The Ballad of Jed Clampett.”
2. 1921 Oldsmobile Model 46 Roadster.
3. John Wayne.
4. Breakfast at Tiffany’s.
5. Adonis.
6. Bea Benaderet. She was the original voice of Betty Rubble on The Flintstones and also starred in Petticoat Junction.
7. “The Hillbillies of Beverly Hills.”
8. Three weeks.

Crews never know what they might find along highways

By Tracy Statton
District Five

Crews often find many different things along Kansas roadways. As the year wraps up and another begins, here is a look at some of the interesting things found and the stories that go along with them.

Pantyhose - Wichita Metro Area
Superintendent David Lechner said crews often found pantyhose along the side of the roads. His theory: Women in the workforce were stripping them off on their way home. However, he adds that he hasn't seen them in years. Perhaps changes in fashion and dress codes have contributed.

Beaver - Wichita Metro East Subarea
Supervisor Ted Coleman said he was disposing of a large dead beaver along the shoulder of westbound K-96 when a passerby stopped and asked if he could have it. He was a dentist and wanted to mount



Wichita Metro East Subarea Supervisor Ted Coleman with his pet chicken he found along the road. Photo provided

it and put it in his dental office. "The beaver had Huge Teeth... HUGE," Coleman said in an email.

Cat - A gray and white cat was saved from a hole about to be filled with concrete. Equipment Operator Senior Ryan Hunter dug three feet to reach the cat. Coleman said they called animal control, and he took the cat home over the weekend. It was later scanned for a microchip and was successfully reunited with its family. Turns out the kitty had been missing for a month and lived 12 miles away in Andover. "The family was thrilled and excited to hear the good news," Coleman said.

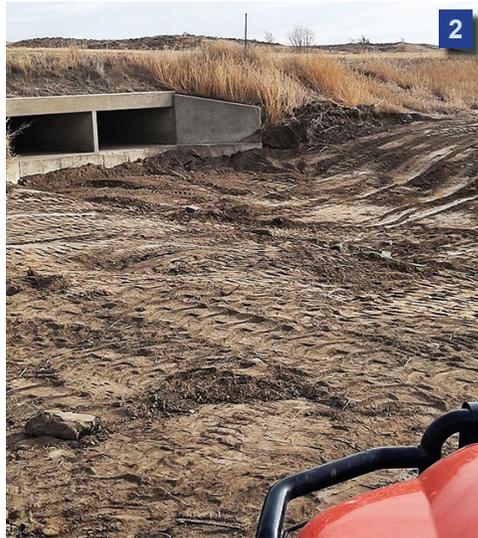
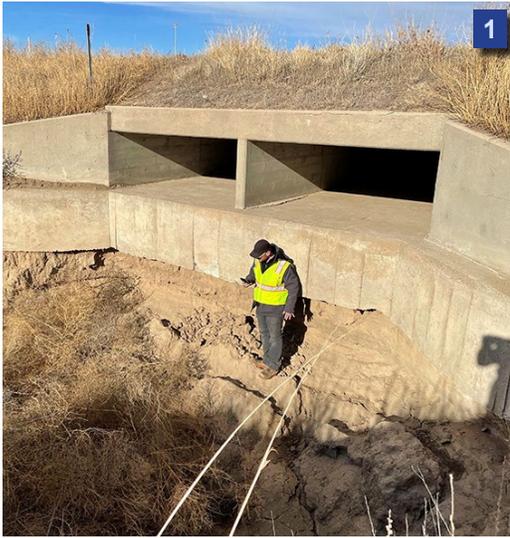
Dog - Coleman also said he once crossed I-135 to save a lost dog.

Chicken - Coleman rescued a chicken on I-135 that he said fell off a semi-truck going to the slaughterhouse to make chicken nuggets. It now resides at his house and is affectionately named Daisy.



KTA

Progress has been made toward KTA's transition to cashless tolling in 2024. The ground work for the first five cashless tolling zones have been completed, with gantries to be placed in 2022. Instead of traditional toll plazas, KTA will have tolling zones placed on the mainline roadway to collect tolls electronically. Five more cashless tolling zones will be constructed in the 2022 construction season.



Erosion repair

1. A location near U.S. 50 in Finney County had major erosion that could have impacted the stability of the box culvert and the downstream area. 2. In late December, the Garden City Subarea crew worked to grade, make repairs and place rock throughout the area. 3. A photo of the completed project. Photos by Hector Terrones, District Six



Thank you for your service

Retirees

Employees who will retire on Feb. 1:

Headquarters

Marvin D. Edwards, Engineering Technician Specialist, Transportation Planning

District One

Lawrence Ubel, Equipment Mechanic Specialist, Wamego

Milestones

KDOT employees celebrating state service anniversaries in January.

20 years

Shawn Brown, Information Systems Manager II, Topeka
Jennifer Ann Distlehorst, Research Staff Engineer, Lawrence
Gary Fox, Equipment Operator, Ottawa
Curtis Haehn, Equipment Operator, Hugoton
Elsit Mandal, Control Section Analysis Engineer, Lawrence

10 years

Terry Larkin, Equipment Operator Senior, Sterling

KDOT projects receive honors

KDOT projects received several awards at the KU Asphalt Paving Conference on Dec. 2 in Lawrence. Below are the KDOT awards receiving first place. In each photo below are Director of Project Delivery

Greg Schieber, left; Kansas Asphalt Pavement Association Executive Director Dan Scherschligt, right; and contractor and KDOT representatives accepting the award.



First place in Overlay, District One - U.S. 59 in Atchison County. Accepting award - Chris Rottinghaus, KDOT; Kyle Phillips and Bryan Jones, Herzog Construction.



First place in Overlay, District Four - U.S. 166 in Montgomery County. Accepting award - Darrin Petrowsky, KDOT; and Mike Roudybush, Cornejo and Sons.



First place in Overlay, District Two - K-57 in Geary County. Accepting award - Becky Newbury, KDOT; Tyler Weigel and Bryan Cruz, Shilling Construction.



First place in Overlay, District Five - K 96 in Sedgwick County. Accepting award - Hideki Fields, KDOT; and Oliver Gattis, Cornejo and Sons.



First place in Overlay, District Three - U.S. 24 in Sheridan County. Accepting award - Linda Liester and Mitchel Johnson, KDOT; Doug Werth, APAC.



First place in Overlay, District Six - U.S. 50 in Finney County. Accepting award - Craig Schlott and Larry Meyer, KDOT; Doug Werth, APAC.