

Oklahoma **LTAP** News

Volume 11, No. 2

Spring 2007

Record Rains Create New Disaster



County Road Crews Face Series of Emergencies

After record-breaking wildfires last summer, and a winter of devastating ice storms, Oklahomans are now facing a new challenge. As a result of weeks of heavy rainfall between late May and early July, thousands of Oklahomans have been displaced and many have experienced substantial property damage. The Department of Emergency Management, Oklahoma Highway Patrol, National Guard and relief organizations worked together to protect lives and property, according to the Governor's office. In Oklahoma style, the challenges were faced with optimism. After heavy rain July 2 in Nowata County, Commissioner Tim Kilpatrick, District 3, traveled by boat to the regular Monday morning meeting.

"They unloaded the boat right in the middle of County Road 419," said Marilyn Alspach-Toth, Safety Director for Nowata County.

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Special thanks to:

Rick Buchanan, Chief Deputy for Ray Vaughn, Oklahoma County Commissioner District 3, for photos on the Cover and pages 3 & 4.

Mike Thompson, Johnston County Commissioner District 2 for photos on page 5.

Tim Kilpatrick, County Commissioner and Marilyn Alspach-Toth, Safety Director, Nowata District 3 for photos on page 6.

Morris Bluejacket, Safety Director Craig County for photos on pages 7-9.

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Publication Number: (USPS 017-702) - Volume 11, No. 2

Published quarterly by the Local Technical Assistance Program at the Center for Local Government Technology at Oklahoma State University
Sponsored jointly by the Federal Highway Administration and the Oklahoma Department of Transportation

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As The Water Rises...

Floods,

(continued from Page 1)

The counties approved for individual federal assistance are Comanche, Ottawa, Pottawatomie, Washington, and Nowata. Individuals in these counties can apply for federal assistance for housing repairs or temporary housing, U.S. Small Business Administration low-interest loans for individuals and businesses, disaster unemployment assistance, and other grants. More than 800 homes were damaged in these counties between Memorial Day and July 4th.

In addition, to individual assistance, federal public assistance was approved for Canadian, Cotton, Grady, Grant, Hughes, Logan, McClain, McIntosh, Pawnee and Tillman counties under a presidential disaster declaration originally issued June 7th. The declaration covers storms that occurred May 4-11.

Under a disaster declaration for public assistance, local governments are eligible to receive aid for repairs of public infrastructure and other costs incurred in responding to the storms.

Gov. Henry has also requested public assistance for Oklahoma counties that incurred damages in storms that occurred later in May, June and July.



“The corner of Highway 74 and 220th in northwest Oklahoma County looked more like a river than a road. No one could drive in or out for days. We had several roads that looked like this and some that looked even worse.”

-Ray Vaughn, Oklahoma County Commissioner District 3

As The Water Rises...

How wet is it?

Or is the real question: How dry was it? According to the Oklahoma Climatological Survey, (OCS) comparing the drought of the previous two years to the flooding rainfall of 2007 is similar to comparing apples and oranges, with one notable exception - both hazards have been disastrous for those affected. The 2006 wheat crop was decimated by drought while the 2007 crop languished in fields too wet for machinery. The drought conditions of 2005 and 2006 spawned destructive wildfires while the torrential rains of this year have flooded homes and businesses across the state. The most unfortunate similarity is the cost in lives, however, whether it be those who were lost fighting wildfires or to the rising floodwaters. With those similarities noted, the statistics between the two periods could not be more striking, according to OCS.



According to data from the Oklahoma Mesonet, the statewide average rainfall through July 16 has already eclipsed the yearly rainfall amounts of both 2005 and 2006. The statewide average rainfall for the year thus far, through July 16, is 29.05 inches. The yearly totals for 2005 and 2006 were 26.93 inches and 28.59 inches, respectively.

The regional averages are even more notable. Central Oklahoma currently leads the state with an average of 37.76 inches - the wettest on record for that part of the state, 16.65 inches above normal. Compare that with identical periods from 2005 and 2006 when the averages were just 16.85 inches and 14.13 inches, respectively.

As a final exclamation point, consider the rainfall statistics from the Oklahoma Mesonet site at Minco, which has recorded 44.00 inches of precipitation through July 16. The same periods from 2005 and 2006 combined added up to 23 inches, a little more than half of this year's total. In fact, to match this year's total, you have to go back all the way to February 24, 2005 - that's February 24, 2005, through December 31, 2006. In other words, it took the rainfall from the previous 676 days at Minco to match this year's total accumulated in 197 days.

Seattle, Oklahoma?

The Oklahoma Climatological Survey (OCS) suggests that Oklahoma City might consider changing its name to Seattle, given how much rain has fallen this year. Rain fell for 17 consecutive days in Oklahoma City, according to the National Weather Service. This breaks the previous record of 14 consecutive days, from May 29 through June 11, 1937.

Since the most recent rounds of rainfall began in Oklahoma on May 24, the state has tallied 9.42 inches of rain (through June 27), on average, which is more than four inches above normal for the period. Central Oklahoma leads the way with an average of 13.38 inches. Now anybody who deals with Oklahoma weather knows that things are rarely average - some places get more and some get less. The "more" side of it totals as much as 19.72 inches at Minco and more than 18 inches at Marena, Medicine Park, Apache, Chickasha and Kingfisher.

All this rain makes it kind of hard to remember how dry it had been. When you figure the rain total for the last 365 days, it comes up just a bit above average. Southwest, west central, and central Oklahoma come up on the wet side and southeast comes up a bit below normal, with the state overall showing a surplus of 3.94 inches. The recipe? Take about 6 really dry months, about 3-4 near-normal months, and a couple of incredibly wet months and you have "normal," just like you would expect in Oklahoma!

For more information, visit the Oklahoma Climatological Survey website at: www.ocs.ou.edu

More photos of the record rainfall effects in Oklahoma on the following pages.

As The Water Rises...

JOHNSTON COUNTY



As The Water Rises...

NOWATA COUNTY



As The Water Rises...

OTTAWA COUNTY



As The Water Rises...

OTTAWA COUNTY



As The Water Rises...

CHEROKEE COUNTY



Tire Safety Tips

FIVE THINGS DRIVERS CAN DO TO IMPROVE TIRE LIFE



1. Maintain proper tire inflation pressure. This is the No. 1 maintenance issue facing fleets today, regardless of the season. Underinflation leads to increased tire deflection, which leads to increased heat. Heat is a tire's worst enemy. Low inflation leads to reduced tire miles, reduced retreadability, poor fuel economy and even an increase in the number of punctures. Check your tires at least weekly with a calibrated air pressure gauge.

2. Fingertip diagnostics. Running your hand across the tread surface can identify alignment-related wear conditions. For example, if you run your hand across the tread surface and you feel a "stepped" wear pattern (not smooth), you probably have a vehicle toe-in condition. Catching alignment wear conditions early will allow the truck to be corrected so the tire can still achieve high removal miles.

3. Visual tire inspection. Look for signs of sidewall damage and tread area punctures.

4. Train drivers and mechanics in Tires101. Work with your tire professional, who can conduct seminars on basic tire maintenance. Once drivers understand that tires are the highest fleet cost next to fuel, tires become a lot more important. Anything you can do to protect that investment is critical.

5. Don't exceed tread depth standards. Depending on your specific service vocation, make sure your fleet does not exceed removal tread depth standards. If you see a significant amount of off-road service, you may be best served to ensure you have enough remaining rubber before retreading to make sure the casing is protected against stone damage and stone drilling.



On August 8-10, 2007, LTAP held three tire maintenance/retread/tire repair workshops at Oklahoma County District #2 maintenance building. The Tire Retread & Repair Information Bureau conducted the class. The mission of the Bureau is to educate county, tribal and municipalities about the EXTREME importance of properly maintaining tires. There are a number of reasons for doing this.

- *Truck tires that are properly maintained will be more retreadable, and because all major brand truck tires are designed for multiple lives, this will save the trucking industry millions of dollars annually.*
- *Retreaded tires are environmentally friendly and if a tire is able to be retreaded it will continue to help all of us by reducing the need for using (increasingly scarce) oil, since tires contain a large amount of petroleum based synthetic rubber.*
- *Our wish to make road alligators an ENDANGERED SPECIES – a pretty noble goal, if we do say so ourselves.*
- *Last, but not least, properly maintained tires are far less likely to cause accidents and will result in lives saved!*

Special thanks to Harvey Brodsky, Managing Director, Tire Retread & Repair Information Bureau, for the informative three days of training. For more information contact the Tire Retread & Repair Information Bureau -Email: info@retread.org
900 Weldon Grove, Pacific Grove, CA 93950 - Phone: 1-888-473-8732 - Toll-Free 1-888-473-8732 - Fax: (831) 372-9210

2007 Roads Scholars

Roads Scholars were honored at
ACCO Conferences in 2007

July 18, 2007

April 04, 2007

November 07, 2007

Pictured with Oklahoma LTAP "ROADS SCHOLARS"
is Douglas Wright, LTAP Manager



Richard Metcalf, Operator
Grant County District #2



Robert Moss, Operator
Grant County District #2



Danny Schneeberger,
Grant County District #2



Jon Trenary, Mechanic
Grant County District #2



Clarence Lewis, Road Crew
Oklahoma County District #1



Linda Herndon,
County Commissioner
Washington County District #2



Cbad Roach, Road Forman
Alfalfa County District #2



Jeremy Bellin, Grader Operator
Grant County District #2



Brent Rinehart,
County Commissioner
Oklahoma County District #2



Bryan Moore, Operator
Rogers County District #2



Wade Brewer, Operator
Rogers County District #2



Curtis Barnes, Operator
Rogers County District #2



Benny King, Operator
Rogers County District #2



Dennis Webb, Receiving Officer
Oklahoma County District #1



Tommy Holland, Supervisor
Oklahoma County District #1



Jon Swigart, Sign Technician
Oklahoma County District #1



Mike Hill, Equipment Operator
Oklahoma County District #1



George Prince, Operator
Oklahoma County District #1



David Morren, Operator
Oklahoma County District #1



Kenny Vasek,
Noble County District #1



Anthony Spigener, Operator
Oklahoma County District #1



Billy Lewis, Operator
Oklahoma County District #1



Calixto Deligero,
Oklahoma County District #1



Mark Mayfield, Operator
Oklahoma County District #1



Eric Clayton, Operator
Oklahoma County District #1



Wallace Henderson, Operator
Oklahoma County District #1



Gary Choate, Operator
Seminole County District #1



Donald Pippin, Operator
Washington County District #2



Jerramia Westfall,
Logan County District #1



Terry Williams,
Logan County District #1



Ron Camborn,
Grant County District #2



Steve Wilson,
Grant County District #2



Doug Murrew,
County Commissioner
Alfalfa County District #1

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