

AUGUST 2024

# WAYFINDER

*A Message from the Director:*

## **Share the Importance of Safe Driving**

NDOT can build and maintain safe roads, but what we need are drivers dedicated to safe driving to really make our roads as safe as possible. This is even more important at the start of the school year when we have new drivers and increased traffic in our neighborhoods. Recently, NDOT leadership implemented an executive Safety Task Force and have supported the purchase of automated flagging devices that will be making their way to Districts very soon. I encourage you to continue to evaluate how you can influence and create a climate of safety. We all have to do our part – as NDOT teammates, we need your leadership in this movement.

Talk to your friends, family and community members about making safe choices on the road. Tell them about the number of crashes last year that happened in Nebraska because of cell phone distractions (629) and speeding (519). Remind them of the information we all consider daily: **Safe driving means phones down, buckling up and keeping your attention on the road.**

We all know that slowing down in construction zones is essential, but others may need a reminder that making it somewhere on time is less important than another person getting to go home to their family. When we prioritize safe driving choices, we make Nebraska's roads safer for everyone. ▲

*We'd like to hear from you. If you have an update to share, please send it to [ndot.wayfinder@nebraska.gov](mailto:ndot.wayfinder@nebraska.gov) for consideration.*



## AUGUST

**8/14-9/2** NHTSA 'Drive Sober or Get Pulled' Over Campaign

## SEPTEMBER

**2** Labor Day – NDOT Closed

**15 - 21** Child Passenger Safety Week (HSO)

**21** National Check Seat Saturday (HSO)

**DID YOU KNOW?** Nebraska has 20 car seat inspection stations across the state. Find a location [here](#) and tell a friend!

## HR UPDATE



### **Training opportunities in September:**

**"Generational Differences"** is Wednesday, September 11th, from 1:00 to 4:30 PM at the Holdrege (D7) District Office. Learn to maximize the potential of a multigenerational workforce. Register in [Workday](#).

**"Crucial Conversations"** is Wednesday and Thursday, September 25th - 26th, from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM at the Grand Island (D4) District Office. Gain tools for handling high-stakes discussions to improve decision-making and communication across your team. Register in [Workday](#).

## IT UPDATE

If you need to reset or unlock your @Nebraska.gov account, find solutions at [https://id.nebraska.gov/Login\\_Verify.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2f](https://id.nebraska.gov/Login_Verify.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2f)

# INNOVATION CHALLENGE WINNERS

Good Life. Great Journey.



NDOT's 8th Annual Innovation Showcase, held in late July, highlighted 19 impressive submissions, with only 11 votes differentiating the top two entries. The winning innovation was the Rest Area Open/Closed Sign developed by Mark Dillon and Ethan Budke, District 6 Operations. This solar-powered system significantly improves safety for maintenance workers and offers real-time updates for motorists. This innovation removes the need for workers to be near hazardous traffic.

Other winning innovations include:

- **(2nd)** Kasey McArthur and Levi Baughman of District 7 for their Adjustable Grader Screed.
- **(3rd)** McArthur also claimed third place for his Snowplow Calibration/Validation Box.
- **(4th)** Kendell McCarthy, John Peck and Brian Simpson of District 8 secured fourth place with their Grade Blade Changer.



## B.R.A.K.E.S. Returns to Lincoln

NDOT HSO, in partnership with the Nebraska Safety Council, hosted the B.R.A.K.E.S. program in Lincoln for the second year in a row this July, with 122 teens in attendance. This free, hands-on teen driving school aims to save lives by teaching critical driving skills. Though teens make up only 8% of Nebraska's drivers, they account for 18% of crashes, and 81% of teen traffic fatalities involve unbelted drivers. Graduates of the B.R.A.K.E.S. program are 64% less likely to be in a crash within three years.

## Student-Led Initiatives Bring Safer Crossings to Twin River Public School

The Twin River Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) Chapter recently made strides in enhancing safety at Twin River Public Schools. With a Youth Health Equity Grant from Nebraska 4-H, the chapter identified critical traffic concerns, noting that over 65% of students and staff must park and walk across two major highways daily. After gathering and presenting their data to NDOT and Twin River Administration, the FCCLA secured several safety improvements for speed limit radar signs, a stop sign at the student parking lot exit, pedestrian crossing signs and curb extensions at pedestrian crossings.

**THANK YOU,  
NDOT Districts!**

*A big thank you to NDOT teammates who participated in their local parades and celebrations this summer! Your efforts in raising awareness and creating a positive public image for NDOT are greatly appreciated.*