

A SAFER ROAD TO TOMORROW

October 2011 Newsletter

New Hampshire's Rural Roads- Among the Nation's Worst



New Hampshire, a largely rural state, has some of the worst rural roads and bridges in the country, according to the latest report by The Road Information Program (TRIP). Rural roads and bridges perform many functions in New Hampshire. With only a few major highways running throughout the state, the rural roads and bridges serve the majority of citizens each day on their commutes, errands, and travels. In New Hampshire, 21 percent of those roads are in poor condition, ranking the state as ninth worst in the country. Additionally, rural bridges do not fare much better, with 15 percent labeled as deficient.

Coupling with the condition of the rural roads and bridges, is motorist safety. In 2009, there were 110 traffic fatalities, of which 96 occurred on rural roads. This leads to a fatality rate of 2.16 deaths for every 100 million vehicle miles of travel. According to TRIP, "inadequate roadway safety design, longer emergency vehicle response times, and the higher speeds traveled on rural roads are factors in the higher traffic fatality rate."

AGC of NH's Executive Vice President Gary Abbott, a Safer Road to Tomorrow coalition partner, commented that, "Ranked in the top twenty for the nation's worst rural roads and bridges, it is clear that the State of New Hampshire needs to make these key pieces of our infrastructure a higher priority. The state's Department of Transportation will soon begin planning the next Ten year Transportation Improvement Plan, and I hope that projects to improve rural roads and bridges will be considered in response to this report."

The following table shows the top fourteen states with the worst rural roads and bridges.

	State	% Rural Roads in Poor Condition	State	% Deficient Rural Bridges
1	Vermont	36	Pennsylvania	28
2	Idaho	31	Rhode Island	26
3	Oklahoma	30	Oklahoma	23
4	Rhode Island	30	Iowa	23
5	Hawaii	29	South Dakota	21
6	Kansas	28	Nebraska	19
7	West Virginia	27	Missouri	18
8	Arkansas	23	North Dakota	17
9	New Hampshire	21	Mississippi	16
10	New Mexico	21	Hawaii	16
11	Alaska	20	New Hampshire	15
12	Missouri	20	Maine	15
13	Connecticut	19	Louisiana	15
14	Maine	19	North Carolina	14



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TO TOMORROW

Safety · Quality of Life · Economic Development

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Safer Road Partners

Associated General Contractors of NH

The Associated General Contractors is a non-profit trade organization of general contractors, subcontractors, and industry professionals dedicated to improving industry standards.

NH Good Roads Association

NH Good Roads Association is a non-profit trade organization established to encourage the development of a safe, efficient and environmentally sound highway transportation system.

Safety and Health Council of Northern New England

The Council's mission is to educate and promote safety & health policies, practices and procedures that prevent and mitigate human economic losses arising from unintended causes.

NH Association of Chiefs of Police

The Association secures a closer relationship among commanding officers all over the state, to encourage a cooperative relationship among all police officials.

NH Lodging & Restaurant Association

The Association is a non-partisan organization to promote, protect and educate the food service and lodging industries and to ensure positive business growth for our members.

Business & Industry Association

The Association is NH's leading business trade association. It advocates for business interests with state and federal legislators and regulators.

Public Hearings on Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan Begin

The Governor's Advisory Council on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) has started public hearings on the 2013-2022 Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan. GACIT is comprised of the five Executive Councilors and the Department of Transportation Commissioner. Each Executive Councilor will lead several public hearings in his district from now through October 27th.

The hearings are an opportunity for the public to comment on the draft plan. Every two years, communities, regional planning agencies and the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (DOT) work together to develop the state's framework for improving the transportation system. The 2009-2018 plan included the following priorities: preservation and maintenance, red list bridges, and I-93 reconstruction.



The full schedule of hearings can be found at <http://www.nh.gov/dot/media/nr2011/nr090611typ.htm#sept12>. The Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan is available at http://www.nh.gov/dot/org/project_development/planning/typ/index.htm. Written comments will also be accepted until November 10, 2011, and can be addressed to:

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 Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance
 New Hampshire Department of Transportation
 John O. Morton Building, 7 Hazen Drive
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 Concord, NH 03302-0483

Safer Roads Releases New Booklet on Importance of Infrastructure

The A Safer Road to Tomorrow coalition has released **Modern Mobility & How We Use Our Infrastructure**, a new booklet that illustrates the importance of New Hampshire's Infrastructure. The booklet takes an in depth look at the major systems— roads and bridges, aviation, mass transit, passenger rail and freight, and water— that make up our infrastructure.

The booklet spotlights the role each system plays in citizens' lives, and the quality of life to which we have grown accustomed. A recurring theme throughout the booklet highlights that without roads and bridges, we would not have the mobility we have today. Roads and bridges provide the necessary link between all systems, and is the most commonly used by citizens for their daily needs.

This booklet is the first in what will become the *NH's Infrastructure Series*, and is meant to open the dialogue about the state's infrastructure system, and how we rely on it everyday. Following booklets will highlight project priorities and requirements attached to federal funding.

This booklet can be found at the A Safer Road to Tomorrow website, www.saferoadsnh.com, under "Publications" and then under "Other Media."



Aviation in NH is comprised of 22 general airports & 3 commercial service airports.



Modern day life depends on the constant, always ready stream of water from the taps.



NH's infrastructure provides families with the mobility they need to work, run errands, and travel. The most common method of travel is on roads and bridges in private vehicles. In fact, travel in private vehicles accounts for 88% of all person miles traveled.

Federal Transportation Funding Status Update



Federal lawmakers have once again extended the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The federal transportation authorization legislation expired in 2009, but has continued due to a series of extensions, the latest one happening just before the legislation expired on September 30. On September 9, the House and Senate agreed to extend the authorization for an additional six months.

If allowed to expire, New Hampshire's transportation projects would come to a halt, as the state would not receive federal funding until new legislation, or another extension, was passed. Federal funding accounts for a large portion of the state's Department of Transportation (DOT) budget, and helps complete a number of projects that otherwise could not be completed. Not only does the federal legislation apportion a certain amount of funds to New Hampshire, it also authorizes the collection of the federal gas tax. Without the authorization, the tax could not be collected, thus causing a significant shortfall of funds, and a repeat of what was seen by the Federal Aviation Administration shut down. The extension will last until March 31, 2012, funding the program at current levels of \$42 billion.

With the extension passed, Congress must now work on passing a long-term transportation reauthorization. However, there is a long road ahead as the Senate and House have diverging plans. The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has put forth a six year plan with funding levels that are in line with revenue projects. Meanwhile, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee has developed a two-year plan maintaining current funding levels, but adjusted for inflation.

Each plan has positives and negatives. The House plan provides longer-term funding, allowing for better planning for state transportation department. The House plan also reduces requirements and streamlines environmental processes to use the funds in the most efficient way. However, the reduced funding levels will lessen the amount states are able to improve their transportation systems. The Senate plan will allow states to continue improving their transportation systems in the manner they have been for the past six years. Additionally, the inflation adjustment will aid transportation departments, as construction and material prices have been increasing significantly over the years. The two-year plan provides more short-term relief than long term however, and will bring Congress back to the reauthorization discussion quickly.

One of the most challenging parts of either bill is funding. Transportation funding is stagnating on both the state and federal level, and has been for some time. For each level of government, the gas tax is the largest revenue driver, but with the economy and more fuel efficient cars, less gasoline is being sold. The two bodies will need to merge their bills before the President signs it, and it will be interesting to see what is agreed upon.

NH's I-95

Open Road Tolling Nationally Recognized

Last year, New Hampshire's Department of Transportation completed New England's first open road tolling facility on I-95. The effort has been recognized by the American Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) as one of the nation's Top Ten Projects in the 2011 America's Transportation Awards. The project was selected for the honor based on judging in three categories: "on time," "under budget," and "innovative management."



The ten finalists in the 2011 America's Transportation Awards will now compete for a national grand prize selected by a panel of judges, and a "People's Choice Award" that will be decided by popular vote. Online voting will continue through October 7 at www.americatransportationaward.org. The winners will be announced at AASHTO's Annual Meeting in October.

The \$17 million project to convert the Hampton toll plaza to Open Road Tolling was successfully completed on a fast-tracked 16-month design and construction schedule. The completion has significantly improved travel on one of the state's busiest highways.

Infrastructure Resources

The A Safer Road to Tomorrow website, www.saferoadsnh.com, is your link to all things infrastructure in New Hampshire. The website has a number of resources that will help you understand the current situation of the state's roads and bridges, as well as reports on national infrastructure problems.

Reports currently available on the website include a video presentation on the crumbling condition of New Hampshire's infrastructure, Building America's Future: Falling Apart & Falling Behind, and the 2011 ASCE New Hampshire Infrastructure Report Card. The website also houses the coalition's own reports and quarterly newsletter. All are available for download.

The coalition encourages you to visit the site, and learn more about New Hampshire's infrastructure.



A Safer Road to Tomorrow
48 Grandview Road
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FEEDBACK Reprinted from U.S. Chamber of Commerce

43 million tons...

move through the U.S. transportation infrastructure daily.

FEEDBACK Reprinted from APTA: Changing the Way America Moves

Did you know... American households spend 17.6% of their budget on transportation.

Brought to you by the Safer Roads Partners:



Safety & Health Council
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