

PSC Announces \$140K "Operation: Safety First" Campaign

Contributed by Robert Teets of the Public Service Commission.

"We will maximize our manpower to save lives in West Virginia," State Public Service Commission Chairman Charlotte R. Lane said in announcing a \$140,000 "Operation: Safety First" campaign to increase commercial motor vehicle inspections on accident-prone State highways beginning June 1.

The program will involve all personnel in the PSC Transportation Division, and will lead to the deployment of 42 motor carrier enforcement officers on overtime assignments to high-risk roadways.

"We know that safety inspections which result in corrective action or 'putting the vehicle out of service' helps save lives," Lane said. "Our inspectors are highly trained, and it makes sense to step up the number of inspections now that the busy travel season is approaching."



The Public Service Commission's "Operation: Safety First" Campaign is geared to step up safety enforcement on major roads and highways in West Virginia. Photo courtesy of Robert Teets.

PSC officers will concentrate inspection efforts along sections of 3 major interstate corridors and several State secondary roads that have high numbers of accidents and fatalities.

Through wise money management, Lane said, the agency has been able to accrue from various federal highway safety programs the necessary money it needs to pay its officers overtime.

A PSC study correlated total accidents, injuries, and fatalities for Calendar Year 1998 and identified the top 3 high-risk interstate highways as: I-81 in the Eastern Panhandle, I-64 from Charleston to the Kentucky state line, and the West Virginia Turnpike.

Col. William H. Gavan, general manager of the State Parkways Authority, is helping to coordinate planning for the increased inspections along the Turnpike.

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APRIL 22 WAS A BUSY DAY!

LEFT: Steve Allred, Commissioner of Labor, enjoys a day at work with his daughter, Sarah, for the annual Take Our Daughters to Work Day.

RIGHT: Earth Day was celebrated at the Capitol. Visitors enjoyed displays and informational materials designed to increase awareness of the environmental problems facing our nation.



DOH Issues West Virginia Driver-Alert Zones



During the summer months, it seems the last thing you want to see are orange highway cones blooming under the hot sun. They usually mean long lines and even longer delays.

Fortunately, there are ways to avoid those construction zones. The West Virginia Department of Transportation has an information-packed website that includes such items as Maps & Travel Info, Tourist Info, Road & Weather Info, Statewide Road Conditions, Safe Driving Tips, School Bus Rules, Current Road Conditions, Winter Driving Tips, and Road Construction Zones.

According to information provided on the website, highway construction in West Virginia generally runs from April through November each year. Most construction activities, such as paving and bridge-building, shut down in the winter months, although major earth-moving projects may continue.

The 1998 construction season saw approximately \$525 million in road work completed including 1625 miles of road resurfacing, 85 bridge renovations or replacements, numerous slide corrections, nearly 4 miles of new freeway, and miles of new guardrail.

The following interstate construction projects are either already underway or planned for this summer:

Interstate & County	Type of Work	Dates
I-64 Cabell	Huntington Mall Rd. improvements	2/99 10/99
	Cabell Repair expansion dams, Kilgore Creek Bridge	9/98 8/99
	Cabell Repair expansion dams, Benedict Rd. Ovrpss.	9/98 8/99
	Cabell Resurface 3.66 mi., Milton-Hurricane	8/99 12/99
	Kanawha Widen deck, 40th Street Bridge	5/99 12/00
	Kanawha Widen to 6 lanes, 40th St.-Institute	3/99 12/2000
	Putnam Replace Hurricane Interchange Bridge	4/99 10/2000
Putnam Renovate Donald Legg Bridge over Kanawha	4/98 9/99	
I-68 Monongalia	Resurface 2.19 mi., Pierpont-Cheat Lake	3/99 7/99
	Preston Resurface 3.32 mi. Brandonville-Hazelton	5/99 9/99
	Preston Rest area site preparation	5/99 5/2000
I-70 Ohio	Install guardrail, Tunnel-Elm Grove	6/99 11/99
I-77 Mercer	Replace superstructure, East River bridges	10/98 11/99
	Kanawha Renovate Allen Fork Bridge	9/98 10/99
	Jackson Replace deck, Kenna Interchange Bridge	5/99 5/2000
	Wood Resurface 7.56 mi., Parkersburg-Williamstown	5/99 9/99
	Wood Replace Mineral Wells Ovrpss. (WV 14)	3/99 3/2000
I-79 Kanawha	Resurface 2.11 mi., Big Chimney-Little Sandy	3/99 7/99
	Braxton Resurface 4.25 mi., Co. 19/21-Flatwoods	6/99 10/99
	Braxton Resurface 4.11 mi., Burnsville-Roanoke	3/99 7/99
	Braxton Renovate Buffalo Creek Bridge	3/99 3/2001
	Harrison Replace deck, S. Lost Creek Bridge	6/98 8/99
	Harrison Replace deck, Brick Church Bridge	6/98 8/99
	Harrison Replace deck, Browns Creek Bridge	6/98 8/99
	Marion Renovate Pleasant Valley Rd. Bridge	5/99 11/99
	Marion Resurface 2.09 mi., Fairmont-Pricketts Fort	5/99 9/99
	Monongalia Resurface 2.85 mi., Monong. River-Westover	3/99 7/99
I-81 Berkeley	Replace Falling Waters Bridge	3/99 3/2000
	Berkeley Construct Dry Run Interchange	8/99 8/2001
	Berkeley Replace N. Martinsburg Interchange Ovrpss.	4/99 11/2000

Is Your IRA Beneficiary Correct?

What happens to the money in your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) if you die before using it? Who you name can make a big difference in who gets your money after you're gone and how much of it they can keep. Follow these tips:

\$ Name **all** beneficiaries and the percentage of the money you want each to have. If you name just one person, indicate another person to inherit it if the primary beneficiary is deceased.

\$ Always complete the beneficiary form. If it doesn't give enough room, attach instructions about additional beneficiaries and the percentage each should receive.

\$ Don't let others decide for you. If you leave the beneficiary form blank, or your beneficiary has died and you didn't designate a contingent beneficiary, the financial institution decides. It could go to your spouse or to your estate if the spouse has not survived. In this case, it could be split among several heirs.

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10 Rules On How To Fly The Flag

Do You Display Old Glory Properly?



The living symbol of this nation, the United States flag, has flown proudly for more than 200 years. It has changed 7 times to incorporate the addition of various states, but the principles for which it stands remain constant. In a land of diversity, whose people come from around the globe, speaking different languages, and worshipping in different faiths, the single, unifying object representing our nation remains our proud standard, "Old Glory."

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\$ Who you name as a beneficiary may determine how fast a deductible IRA must be emptied. If you name a younger beneficiary before you reach age 70½, then (s)he can leave your IRA untouched until (s)he reaches age 70½.

\$ Even if you leave "everything" to someone, that person might not inherit your IRA if not specifically named as the beneficiary.

\$ Update beneficiaries as your life changes. Keep a copy of the form you send to your IRA custodian.

\$ Don't name a small child as a beneficiary. Seymour Goldberg, author of *J. K. Lasser's How to Pay Less Tax on Your Retirement Savings* says: If you die with a 2-year-old as your beneficiary, it will cost thousands of dollars to administer the IRA.

\$ If the institution handling your IRA has merged, check to see if it still has your beneficiary form. In some cases, these forms are lost.

If you have an IRA and aren't sure who your beneficiary is, contact the managing institution and make your wishes known.

1. The flag is always hoisted briskly and lowered ceremoniously.
2. The flag is never allowed to touch the ground or floor.
3. When hung over a sidewalk on a rope extending from a building to a pole, the union stars are always away from the building.
4. When vertically hung over the center of the street, the flag always has the union stars to the north in an east/west street, and to the east in a north/south street.
5. The flag of the United States of America should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when a number of flags of states or localities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs.
6. The flag should never be festooned, drawn back, nor up in folds but always allowed to fall free.
7. The flag should be displayed at half-staff until noon on Memorial Day and then raised to the top of the staff.
8. Never fly the flag upside down except as a signal of distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property.
9. The flag is never flown in inclement weather except if using an all-weather flag.
10. The flag can be flown everyday from sunrise to sunset and at night if illuminated.

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Officers will also increase inspections on a number of non-interstate roadways, including sections of Routes 219 and 33 in Randolph County, Route 50 and feeder routes in Harrison County, and selected routes in Kanawha, Cabell, Mercer, and Nicholas Counties, Lane said.

Additional roadways may receive priority enforcement over time as accident statistics are compiled, she added.

PSC enforcement officers will focus on 2 main objectives with the Operation, Lane said. "The number one equipment problem we find is defective brakes, and the number one cause of crashes is driver error. Those are the 2 main items we will concentrate on in those accident-prone areas."

Officers will employ a special computer-operated brake checking machine in addition to checking drivers' licenses, log books, medical cards, and other factors, she said.

"Our officers work hard now, performing nearly 20,000 inspections a year in addition to other duties," Lane said. "Even though the amount of traffic has doubled over the past 12 years, the number of accidents has remained disproportionately low, thanks at least in part to these officers' efforts. We know this new initiative will result in safer West Virginia highways."

The agency's enforcement officers routinely perform safety checks on commercial vehicles and enforce federal and State safety and drug laws. Last year, enforcement officers cited defects serious enough to declare 1,615 drivers, along with 6,819 vehicles, out of service. Also, PSC officers discovered nearly 25,000 other defects not serious enough for an out of service citation.

Walk Into a Healthier Life!

It's a known fact that walking will make you feel better, look better, and give you a longer, healthier life. Now is the time to make it a top priority in your schedule. If you just wait until you have a free half hour, it will never happen, and you will never glean the great benefits. Here's how to start:

Week 1:

Walk for 20 minutes at a brisk pace, as if you were actually trying to get somewhere on time. **Technique:** When you swing your arms, you make walking a total body activity. Keep your elbows bent at a 90° angle, and swing from the shoulder. Make your stride long and smooth. Walk at about 60% of your maximum heart rate (220 minus your age, multiplied by .6).

Weeks 2 and 3:

Increase walking time to 30 minutes at the same heart rate. What about bad weather? Move your walk into the mall or a health club with a track or treadmill.

Week 4:

Increase the intensity of your walk to 65% of your maximum heart rate. **Stretch:** At whatever level you're walking, stretching beforehand will warm muscles so they will respond better. First walk for five or ten minutes, then stop and stretch the Achilles tendon and calf. With both hands against a wall or tree, place one foot well behind you. Keeping the rear leg straight and its heel on the ground, lean forward to the wall or tree and hold for 20 seconds. For quadriceps, put the left hand on a tree for balance and with the right, reach behind your back and grasp the ankle of the right leg. Pull it up until you feel tension in the front of your thigh. Hold for 20 seconds, then repeat on the opposite side.

**IF YOU CAN'T MAKE THIS ONE, ANOTHER
PUBLIC EMPLOYEE DAYS COUPON FOR
JULY 17 THROUGH 25, 1999
WILL APPEAR IN NEXT MONTH'S STATELINE.**

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Take the attached ticket to Paramount's Kings Island between June 12 and 20 and enjoy both the big park and our 30 acre water park for only

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Pencil In ...

DOP TRAINING CLASSES FOR JULY:

Understanding the Grievance Procedure

July 13, 9 A.M.-Noon.

Drug-Free Workplace

July 15, 9 A.M.-Noon

Preventing Sexual Harassment

July 15, 1-4 P.M.

Discipline and Documentation

July 20, 9 A.M.-4 P.M.



Parents and others who have contact with small children: **Beware of swallowed pennies.** Pennies minted after 1982 are 95% zinc, which reacts with hydrochloric acid. This is the same acid contained in the stomach and the reaction erodes the stomach lining, which could result in an ulcer, according to Duke University researchers.



Pass the ketchup! July is **National Hot Dog Month!**

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