

## Is Your Mailbox Strong Enough?



## We encourage you to Shake Your Mailbox On October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009

On "Shake Your Mailbox Day", please give your mail box an aggressive shaking and a thorough inspection. More often than not, damage to mailboxes is caused by snow pushing

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## Managing Director's Message

As we wrap up our 2009 construction season the Kalamazoo County Road Commission (KCRC) would like to take this opportunity to express a special thank you to our local residents and the motoring public for your patience and support throughout the construction season.

Thanks to your endurance, extra care and precaution when driving through our construction zones, our road crews were able to perform their important work without danger or injury, and our numerous road improvement projects were successfully completed.

We are confident you will find that the many long-term benefits of these road improvements will outweigh any temporary inconvenience you may have experienced while traveling the roadways in Kalamazoo County during this past construction season.

Also, as we complete our *CENNTENNIAL YEAR 1909 - 2009*, we appreciate all those in attendance at our Centennial Open House, Friday October 2<sup>nd</sup>. We are proud to be part of the Kalamazoo County Road Commission and equally proud to walk and work in the footsteps of those that have done so before us. As we plan our 2010 budget, we know there will be challenges ahead as there have been in our past. We will continue to be committed to providing a safe and convenient road system for our county motorists.

Sincerely,

  
Joanna I. Johnson  
Managing Director

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against weakened posts or hardware. If you can shake your mailbox, it probably needs maintenance. Take time now to make any repairs needed so your mailbox will be strong enough to survive the winter. Proper maintenance may help to prevent damage that results in delayed mail delivery, or worse, having to make alternate delivery arrangements.

**Did you know?**

- \* Your mailbox is in the road right of way, and is allowed by road commissions as a convenience to you.
- \* Check our website/Publications tab/for the Mailboxes and Supports Brochure for rules and requirements with respect to the construction and placement of your mailbox.
- \* Flying snow makes it look like snow plow trucks are traveling much faster than they are, but the average speed of travel is about 25 m.p.h. Even at this speed, the force of the snow being pushed off the road can damage mailboxes and other roadside items.
- \* Mailbox replacement policies vary from county to county. If your mailbox is damaged by winter maintenance operations, contact our office or send an email from our website. Check our website/Publications tab/for the Mailboxes & Newspaper Delivery Boxes policy on replacement.
- \* Should the need arise, your local post office may provide suggestions for temporary mailbox placement or alternate delivery options.

## We encourage you to *Shake Your Mailbox* On October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009

*Shake Your Mailbox Day is a joint effort on the part of your county road commission and the United States Postal Service (U.S.P.S.)*

## Winter Maintenance Program

As the Michigan winter season is around the corner - our dedicated employees are available throughout winter and expected to report when their services are needed. With increased costs of fuel and materials, and decreasing revenues, we are vigilant not to waste our resources. We will continue to work hard to provide motorists with safe and efficient roadways.

In an effort to provide the most efficient and effective snow removal on our County roads. Our goal is to provide the maximum level of service to the greatest number of people as quickly as possible.

Our snow removal priorities:

1. **Snow route roads**
2. **Balance of primary roads**
3. **Through local roads**
4. **Subdivision or plat streets**
5. **Dead-end and cul-de-sac roads**

Every-day service is provided to priorities 1, 2 & 3 during snow events. Every other day service is our goal for plat streets, dead-end and cul-de-sac roads. If a storm is long lasting or a second storm starts before clean up on priorities 4 & 5 have been completed, crews will return to priorities 1, 2 & 3.

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**Help us educate the children of our county on the risks presented by snowplows and the dangers of playing on the high piles of snow and ice that are near the roadway during snow removal –**

- Please **KEEP THE CHILDREN AWAY** from roadside piles of snow
- Don't build snow forts, make tunnels, or play in or on snow banks next to roads
- Keep away from the edge of the roadway as you wait for the school bus, get the mail, or watch the plow trucks
- Stay away from the end of a driveway when a snow plow is approaching
- Hidden objects under the snow, when thrown by the plow truck could cause serious injury
- Keep sleds and toys away from the roadways at all times

**Reminders for motorists:**

- Do not park or abandon a vehicle or other object in the right-of-way
- Don't attempt to pass a snow plow vehicle while they're plowing
- Never pass a plow on the right as wing plows are often hidden by the snow cloud being kicked up by the plow
- Plow drivers have limited visibility and they cannot see directly behind their trucks
- Motorists are advised not to travel next to a plow
- Plows can suddenly move sideways from hitting drifts or by cutting through packed snow
- Don't crowd the plow!
- Wear your seatbelt and always allow extra time to reach your destination

Please be advised that it is a violation of the Michigan Vehicle Code, as well as a safety hazard, for contractors, excavators, and homeowners to push snow onto or across a roadway or the shoulder of a roadway.

Any violation of the Michigan Vehicle Code, Act 300 of 1949, 257.677a "obstruction of safety vision by removal or deposit of snow, ice, or slush prohibited."

## **Vehicle-Deer Crash Coalition Unveils New Website**

(Lansing, MI) — With the two most dangerous months — October and November — for vehicle-deer crashes fast approaching, the Michigan Deer Crash Coalition (MDCC) launched its new website, [www.michigandeercrash.org](http://www.michigandeercrash.org).

The website provides Michigan motorists with tips for preventing vehicle-deer crashes, which account for at least \$130 million in damages annually. "There are approximately 167 vehicle-deer crashes each day in Michigan and motorists can visit the website to learn how to lessen their chances of becoming one of those statistics," said Lori Conarton, MDCC chair.

To increase awareness about vehicle-deer crashes, October has been proclaimed as "Michigan Car-Deer Crash Safety Awareness Month" by Governor Jennifer M. Granholm.

The MDCC encourages motorists to "think deer" whenever they are behind the wheel, and drive defensively, as if a deer can appear at any moment, because it can! And motorists are reminded to always fasten their seat belts. Seat belts often make the difference in surviving a serious crash.

"Most motorist deaths and injuries occur when drivers swerve to avoid hitting the deer and strike a fixed object, such as a tree or another vehicle," said Coalition Chair Lori Conarton of the Insurance Institute of Michigan. "No one wants to see a deer injured or killed, but striking the animal is often the safest way to prevent injuries."

According to the Michigan State Police Criminal Justice Information Center, there were 61,010 deer-vehicle crashes in 2008, down from the 61,907 crashes reported in 2007. However, officials note that many crashes also go unreported, so actual crash numbers are much higher. More than 19 percent of all crashes in Michigan involve deer. Last year, 12 motorists were killed and 1,648 were injured as the result of a vehicle-deer crashes, compared to 11 fatalities and 1,614 injuries the previous year. Nearly half of all car-deer crashes occur in the October-to-December mating season when deer are very active, and crashes spike again in spring when the season's first grass appears along highway rights-of-way.

**If a crash with a deer is unavoidable, the MDCC recommends drivers:**

- **DON'T SWERVE!**
- **Brake firmly**
- **Hold onto the steering wheel with both hands**
- **Come to a controlled stop**
- **Steer your vehicle well off the roadway**

**The MDCC says motorists can help avoid dangerous encounters with deer by heeding the following tips:**

- **Slow down, especially if you see deer along the roadway.**
- **Watch for deer, especially at dawn and dusk when they are most active during the fall.**
- **If you see one deer, assume more deer may be nearby.**
- **Deer that appear calm can dart into the road without warning.**
- **Be alert all year long, especially on two-lane roads.**

*Article Courtesy of the Michigan Deer Crash Coalition*

## **Staffing Highlights**

**Carla Benison** will lead our Finance Department as our Finance Director. Carla has most recently served as Assistant Finance Director for the Kent County Road Commission. We are looking forward to her leadership in our challenging economic environment.

**Neil Higgins (26 Years), John Byrnes (33 Years), Dwight Leeks (34 Years) and Bob DeLeon (26 Years)** were honored for 25 Years of Service and No Loss Time Injuries by the County Road Association Self Insurance Fund. We appreciate their safe practices over the many years at KCRC!

**We are committed to providing a safe and convenient road system for our county motorists. As our customers and as residents of Kalamazoo County you are also entitled to excellent service from us at all times.**

**We aim to provide answers to your service requests. We encourage our residents and the motoring public to report road conditions that need attention. To make sure our service to you is prompt and courteous we strive to continually improve our methods of contact. Office hours are 7:30am – 4pm, Monday through Friday, 269-381-3171 or call 911 for emergencies.**

**Our services on the web can be found at [www.kalamazooountyroads.com](http://www.kalamazooountyroads.com) and are designed to keep you updated on the news and information from our agency. You can contact us via email at [info@krcr-roads.com](mailto:info@krcr-roads.com).**

## **Board of County Road Commissioners of Kalamazoo County**

To better serve our County and local officials, each Road Commissioner has also been assigned as a liaison to various townships we serve as follows:

**Jeffrie Maddox – Chairman; Comstock, Cooper, Ross**  
**Kent McCauley – Vice Chairman; Brady, Climax, Pavilion**  
**Dennis Berkebile – Charleston, Schoolcraft, Texas**  
**Dan Moyle – Alamo, Oshtemo, Richland**  
**Ken Oscarson - Kalamazoo, Prairie Ronde, Wakeshma**