Kansas RTAP Celebrates 25 Years of Service to Kansas Agencies!

By Pat Weaver

The year 1987...a gallon of gas was 89 cents. The average price for a new car was just over $10,000. Ronald Reagan was President of the United States, and John Carlin was Governor of Kansas. In April, Congress passed an $87.5 billion highway and mass transit bill which also included permission for states to raise the speed limit on rural interstate highways to 65 miles per hour (in place of the 55 mph). Elizabeth Dole, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation, resigned in September 1987 to help her husband Senator Bob Dole seek the 1988 GOP nomination for President of the United States.

Five years prior to 1987, Kansas RTAP was not yet in existence, Continued on page 2

What Does a Mobility Manager Do All Day?

By Chris Wichman

Over the last few years a growing profession has evolved in the transit management field. According to United We Ride Ambassador JoAnn Hutchinson, the term “mobility manager” has only recently come to refer to a profession of its own. Is your agency prepared for this new direction in regional transit coordination? In truth, mobility managers may be new in title alone. The day-to-day activities of a mobility manager are common to most coordinated transit agencies, or as Ms. Hutchinson stated, “You may very well be a mobility manager and not even realize it.” This article will further describe the work of mobility managers, discuss an existing mobility management program in southwest Kansas, and provide a set of resources for transit managers considering mobility management for their agency, Continued on page 3
but its seeds were being planted at the KU Transportation Center. From 1983-1987, the KUTC provided training and technical assistance services to agencies around the state in partnership with the Kansas Department of Transportation through Federal Highway Administration's Rural Technical Assistance Program. The program was targeted to roads, bridges and public transportation. At the time, the rural public transportation program—then the Section 18 program—was the responsibility of the Federal Highway Administration.

One newsletter was published to cover all the transportation issues, whether that be road maintenance and bridge inspection, or transit issues like coordination and driver training and bus operations. Training was spread out between both public works agencies and transit agencies.

In the mid-80s, the Section 18 (now Section 5311) program moved to the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (now Federal Transit Administration), and in October 1987 the Rural Transit Assistance Program was born, basically a sister program to FHWA's training and technical assistance program to local road and bridge agencies. Kansas became one of the only states, for many years, in which both programs were housed in one location, with administrative costs shared between the two programs.

While national and state training and technical assistance resources for rural transit agencies seems commonplace now, those resources weren’t so commonly available back in 1987. Every rural transit agency manager had been pretty much on his or her own to develop training programs for agency employees—no number to call, no website to look at, no resources to download. Defensive driving was based on automobile standards rather than for oversize vehicles.

While wheelchair securement today can be challenging, it was primitive and rough on wheelchairs 25 years ago, before any real securement and training standards had been developed. The Americans with Disabilities Act was still four years away from passage.

One of the first tasks for KUTC’s expanded training and technical assistance program in 1987 was to establish a Kansas RTAP advisory committee. Managers from around the state, as well as KDOT staff, provide guidance on the direction for the program—what services are needed and how they should be delivered.

Kansas RTAP also began to produce the Kansas Trans Reporter in 1987, specifically targeted to the transit agencies in Kansas. The first issue of the newsletter included articles announcing the new program, a new transit program manager at KDOT (Jim Van Sickel), and articles on taxis as another form of rural transit, accessible cabs (remember, still prior to ADA), innovative financing, driver insurability and ridesharing.

Of particular note was an article on a new accounting manual that had just been produced by the Transportation Accounting Consortium, a consortium made up of several State DOT transit programs. The purpose of the manual was “to remove administrative barriers to coordinated community transportation through a suggested uniform chart of accounts that could be used by all human service agencies providing transportation to move us towards better coordination.”

As you can see from the article in this issue of the Kansas Trans Reporter on “Sharing the Costs of Coordinated Human Service Transportation,” common reporting standards present a challenge that is still not completely solved 25 years later. With more recent work on cost allocation and some of the technology now at our disposal, we are optimistic that Kansas transit is on the brink of a system of transportation that can meet more needs than ever.

Today, Kansas RTAP offers more than 45 driver training workshops each year on topics that include defensive driving for drivers of passenger transit, pre-trip vehicle inspection, passenger assistance, emergency procedures and advanced mobility device securement skills. The program includes manager training and technical assistance to agencies throughout the state.

Kansas RTAP also produces this quarterly newsletter which has received formal recognition twice: once from the National RTAP Program in 2003 and the Blue Pencil Award Recognizing Outstanding Government Publications from the National Association of Government Communicators.

Kansas RTAP has served as a training ground for dozens of graduate and undergraduate students who have gone on to work in the transportation field with a greater sensitivity to needs of rural communities. Many have communicated that their work on those rural issues and helping create products for RTAP were some of their most rewarding experiences.

While we believe a lot has been accomplished in our 25 years, there is always more to do. We value our relationship with managers throughout the state, as well as with KDOT staff. One of the fundamental principles of Kansas RTAP is to be as responsive as possible to the information, training and technical assistance needs of transit agencies in the state. If there is a service we’re not offering now that you think would be useful, let any of our staff know and we’ll follow up. The entire staff stands ready to assist you: whether it’s technical information you need, training, or an answer to where to find a resource, just give us a call!
What does a mobility manager do? Continued from page 1

What is mobility management?
Mobility management has developed at the intersection of health-care, human service provision and public transportation. It seems that every national organization promoting mobility management defines it differently, depending on whether the focus is at the customer level or at the system level. A relatively concise definition comes from the National Resource Center for Human Service Transportation Coordination: “a process of managing a coordinated community-wide transportation service network comprised of the operations and infrastructures of multiple trip providers in partnership with each other.”

A common responsibility of the mobility manager is to identify and collaborate with the disparate providers in their region. At the customer level, Hutchinson describes a mobility manager as a community travel agent—someone who identifies all available service providers to make recommendations for the customer to reach his or her destination in a number of different ways, by a number of modes. Just as a person might deliberate among several airlines for an upcoming vacation, it is ultimately left to the individual rider to choose the preferred transportation option to get to their destination in a timely and efficient manner.

At the system or organizational level, the mobility manager might not work one-on-one with customers; rather this person would be responsible for working within the service area to identify gaps and help to close those gaps by facilitating inter-organizational agreements, identifying additional resources or bringing additional transportation partners together. Mobility managers might work at a community, county or regional level to help improve transportation service.

Mobility management is unique in this balancing act of both customer needs and operating efficiency. It requires an adept professional to meet the individual service needs of customers without compromising the bottom-line of partnering service providers. The right person for this job is out there and might even be one of your current staff members. The following section will identify the skills and characteristics that define an effective mobility manager.

Key traits of mobility managers
As state and local budget cuts to public services continue around the nation, any manager who can simultaneously provide a high level of service while cutting costs will be held as an asset to their organization. This holds true for mobility managers. In fact, the profession is built on the principle of coordination to maximize efficiency. As a result, the field is growing, with more and more successful programs to be found around the nation.

To reach a cost efficient level of service that also meets customer needs, the American Public Transportation Association has outlined three main goals of any mobility management professional:

1) Creating partnerships between a diverse range of community organizations (public, private, non-profit, for-profit, etc.) to ensure that transportation resources are coordinated effectively.

2) Using these partnerships to develop and enhance travel options for customers in the community or region.

3) Developing ways to effectively communicate those options to the public to inform customers’ decision-making, focusing on enhancing customer service.

Who are mobility managers?
The ideal professional to fulfill these goals does not always come from within the transportation industry. Hutchinson stated that mobility managers are not typically transportation people, rather a lot of them come from health care and human services. In her opinion, it really just takes a good facilitator, a good salesperson, someone who is willing to identify resources, and beg, borrow and steal until they see a result, while nurturing other people to continually solve problems. The ideal mobility manager would have the ability to lead, ability to be flexible, be an advocate for all people, have no fear of failure, be open to nontraditional options, be compassionate, and think outside the box.

A “Day in the Life”
Kathy Denhardt was hired as the mobility manager for the City of Dodge City and Ford County, Kansas in January 2011. This brand-new position was created to meet the need for better transit coordination in the region. With a new focus on mobility management, the Dodge City and Ford County partnership pursued and received a federal grant to fund what became Denhardt’s position as a mobility manager.

Once on the job, Denhardt’s first task was to figure out what a mobility manager would do. Her background was not in transportation. She had worked primarily in organizational management as a professor and as a consultant to local governments. To educate herself in mobility management, she relied on resources from the Kansas RTAP and the American Public Transportation Association. With these tools at her disposal, Denhardt soon became familiar with the philosophy of mobility management and what needed to be done on a day-to-day basis.

Denhardt realized that as a mobility manager...
What does a mobility manager do? Continued from page 3

A second model, the mobility manager is outside of the transit agency, working for a city or county government, perhaps, with a primary responsibility to build partnerships among all possible providers to meet the service needs of an area.

Denhardt has found it helpful that her position is outside the context of day-to-day transit operations. In her opinion, it may be difficult for a mobility manager to be effective in building and nourishing the types of partnerships and relationships necessary for systems-building while also being responsible for supervising staff, drivers and focusing on fixed-routes in smaller geographic areas. To Denhardt, the mobility manager is better served spending time thinking more broadly across systems, but she noted that what works well for her may not be true in all cases. There is no “one” model to follow, as each rural area faces unique geographic, demographic and administrative challenges. Denhardt’s advice is to get educated on best practices from programs around the country and to piece together a program that works well in your region.

A profession of networking

A national organization of mobility management professionals, called the Partnership for Mobility Management, has grown to around 400 individual members in the last few years. In speaking with Sheryl Gross-Glaser, director of the Partnership, she emphasized the importance of peer-networking and idea-sharing for effective mobility managers. She has noticed that many mobility managers work in isolation without much opportunity in their community or surrounding rural regions to network with professional peers.

It is important for mobility managers to be aware of all the resources out there and not try to “reinvent the wheel” in their own programs. To facilitate idea-sharing, the Partnership has formed a LinkedIn group and assembled various online resources including archived webinars, training sessions, and links to partnering organizations.

At present in Kansas there are only a handful of transit professionals who identify themselves as mobility managers, so it is especially important to look elsewhere for mobility management inspiration. Hutchinson advises transit agency managers who are thinking of incorporating mobility management into their programs to take the following steps:

1) Join the Partnership for Mobility Management. This is a joint effort of seven national organizations that work with national, regional, state and local leaders and organizations to realize the possibilities of improving transportation options to under-served populations. A (free) membership allows professionals to interact and share ideas with colleagues in mobility management from around the country. The first step in developing a mobility management program is to look at what is being done and what has worked elsewhere. Visit the Partnership at: http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anviewier.asp?a=1790.

2) Partner with local governments and explore funding opportunities through FTA. A significant factor in the growth of the mobility management profession is support for transit coordination by Congress and the federal government. The Federal Transit Administration has shown leadership in encouraging public...
transit agencies to move into a broader transportation-planning role in their communities and to coordinate a full range of mobility options that get both private and public operators on board (Dalton). The efforts of FTA were only reinforced when mobility management activities were made eligible for receipt of federal funding under SAFETEA-LU. See chart below for major sources of funding from FTA. Visit the FTA for more information on funding: http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants.html.

3) **Attend the 2nd annual Mobility Management Conference to be held May 9-10 in Long Beach, California.** The conference will feature sessions and workshops on performance measurement, forming partnerships with different organizations, non-emergency medical transportation and brokerages, customer focus, information technology, and integration of facilities. To register visit: http://www.apta.com/mc/mobility/Pages/default.aspx

4) **Explore educational resources.** In particular, sign-up for a free National Transit Institute (NTI) membership. The stated mission of the National Transit Institute is to provide training, education, and clearinghouse services in support of public transportation and quality of life in the United States. This membership will provide access to a variety of classes on mobility management best practices, a transit trainers’ workshop and “Connecting Communities” webinars. To register visit: https://www.ntionline.com/user/

---

### Funding Sources for Mobility Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary FTA Grant Programs for Mobility Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program Title</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type / Match</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mobility Mgmt. Activities Eligible?</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other FTA Grant Programs for Mobility Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program Title</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type / Match</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mobility Mgmt. Activities Eligible?</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


---

### Sources

- Phone Interviews: JoAnn Hutchinson, February 9, 2012; Sheryl Gross-Glaser, February 15, 2012; Kathy Denhardt, February 17, 2012.
Coordinating objectives are best accomplished when participating providers agree on an accounting structure and apply consistent methods to record, report and analyze financial and non-financial data.

**Management**

By Nate Vander Broek

In our October 2011 issue, our article titled “The Economic Impact of Public Transportation in Rural Kansas” highlighted the benefits and costs of transit coordination. Benefits include: providing access to more funds and more sources of funds; filling in service gaps within existing budgets; and improving the quality and cost-effectiveness of services. A significant need for coordinating services is the time to develop a cost allocation plan that distributes costs across a regional area fairly. This article will show transit and financial managers how to get started with such a plan.

**Common reporting problems**

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, there are approximately 44,000 government agencies at different levels—each with its own laws or regulations—and thousands of nonprofits, private companies and individuals involved in transportation service provision in the United States. With so many organizations and regulations involved, it’s no surprise that it’s difficult to have a uniform system of collecting data and reporting costs.

Other reasons for a lack of a uniform system of collecting data and reporting costs are:

- Major federal programs often have very different data collection and reporting requirements;
- States impose their own accounting and reporting practices; and
- Local service administrators create their own sometimes complicated reporting process.

These inconsistencies in accounting procedures make comparing services and costs among organizations like comparing apples and oranges and may cause the managers of one organization in a coordinated service to wonder if they are unfairly paying more of a shared service than other organizations. Furthermore, without a uniform system, there may be an incomplete knowledge of all the programs’ costs and services, leading to poor decisions.

For example, Richard Garrity, an expert in transit and paratransit planning and co-author of the TCRP report *Sharing the Costs of Human Services Transportation*, says that when all costs are not recorded or fully understood, effective management is compromised. For instance, when recording costs for coordinated transportation, if only out-of-pocket costs like gasoline or vehicle maintenance are recorded and other costs, such as administrative personnel or utilities are not reported, then the overall costs are under-reported.

Garrity warns that this may give managers a false picture of operating costs and lead to unwise decisions, especially when comparing alternative options for providing service.

**The components of a uniform system**

A system that accounts for all services provided and costs incurred will give agencies the tools to compare, analyze, and determine program effects. By using a system that requires all the necessary data (financial and non-financial) to be pulled in a consistent manner, transit agencies may be able to identify areas with performance problems and quickly make changes before the situation worsens. Having these essential data also helps with long-term planning and decision-making by accurately knowing current costs and better predicting future costs. And finally, organizations that use this method will likely already have all the data and information required for future funding from state and local governments.

According to *Sharing the Costs of Human Services Transportation*, to create a comprehensive cost accounting system for a coordinated transportation service, you must:

- Describe in detail all costs that have been incurred and all services provided.
- Describe in detail how the funds of all participating agencies have been spent. (This description should be designed to satisfy the audit and regulatory requirements of each participating agency.)
- Provide the opportunity to distribute the costs of transportation services among those receiving services based...
What data are required for a comprehensive cost accounting system?

- **Total dollar costs.** This includes labor, fringe benefits, purchased transportation, contracted services, materials and supplies, general administrative expenses, utilities, casualty and liability costs, taxes, leases and rental, capital expenses, depreciation and amortization, and miscellaneous expenses.

- **Total vehicle miles.** This is the number of miles a vehicle is scheduled to or actually travels from its point of departure to when it pulls in from service.

- **Total vehicle hours.** This is the number of hours a vehicle is scheduled to or actually travels from its point of departure to when it pulls in from service.

- **Total passenger trips.** These must be unlinked trips, meaning that passengers are counted each time they board a vehicle, no matter how many vehicles they use before arriving at a destination.

- **Total unduplicated persons served.** Unlike total passenger trips, where each unlinked trip is counted, total unduplicated persons served counts the number of unique individual persons who receive transportation services during any reporting period. For example, if two passengers take a trip involving three vehicles, then: total passenger trips = 6 (2 passengers x 3 unlinked trips) and total unduplicated persons served = 2.

Note that number of persons served is generally available from demand-responsive but not fixed-route operations, and is more commonly recorded for human service programs than for transportation programs.
Sharing the costs of coordinated transportation  

Continued from page 7

A Cost-Sharing Model

The TCRP report 144 includes a free downloadable Excel tool called the Human Services Transportation Cost Sharing Model designed to help you learn your organization's total costs of a specific service or program. The tool, which can be downloaded at http://www.trb.org/Publications/Blurbs/165015.aspx, runs on Excel 2003 or 2007 and requires the use of macros.

The Human Services Transportation Cost Sharing Model requires that the user enter the following data:
- Total service outputs – miles, hours and passengers from prior years;
- Line item expenses from the previous year or the coming year as projected;
- The anticipated number of miles, hours and passengers for the service alternative being considered.

Based on this data, the model automatically assigns each expense as variable or fixed costs. Variable costs are those that change with the amount of service provided, such as fuel and maintenance costs. Fixed costs, such as salaries and facility depreciation, do not change based on the amount of service. Next, the model calculates the costs of the services, and then calculates a price per mile, per hour or per passenger.

To establish a unit rate for each purchasing agency, repeat these calculations for each agency that purchases transportation services. For detailed instructions on the cost sharing model, how the calculations are made, and definitions of the terms used in the model, download the TCRP Report 144 Volumes 1 and 2 at http://www.trb.org/Publications/Blurbs/165015.aspx.

Report 144, most of the state agencies contacted were not aware of how the local grantee was collecting data from the transportation providers. The more aware the agencies are of their inconsistencies with other agencies, the more likely they will work together with other agencies and agree on a standardized reporting system. In Kansas, representatives for state agencies interested in human service transportation, including KDOT, Kansas Department on Aging, Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, Kansas Department of Commerce, and others meet in a quarterly basis to discuss coordination issues among the agencies.

Contact your KDOT Program Consultant if you encounter a specific obstacle in reporting requirements.

Conclusion

Using a systematic approach to documenting transportation services and costs not only helps managers better understand the programs’ costs and services, but opens up the possibility to coordinate services in a fair and cost-effective way. A free cost sharing model (see sidebar above) will provide you with the real service price, whether per mile, per hour or per passenger, helping you make an informed decision when purchasing transportation services.

Sources

Communicating With Elected Officials

Advice for rural transit managers.

By Nora Fairchild

No one is born with the innate ability to network. It takes effort and education, not to mention a little reevaluation of your own skills. If you’re anything like me, you don’t breeze through social functions and easily mingle with local, state and federal officials. Communicating with elected officials is important though, because many times you are the only person with the information needed by elected officials to make appropriate decisions concerning public transit.

Luckily for people like us, Ann Gilbert, executive director of the Arkansas Transit Association, has shared her techniques for communicating and engaging with elected officials. This article summarizes a piece from Digital CT.

Step-by-step successful communication

Gilbert’s advice to transit managers is:

**Be prepared**
- Know your officials before you need them. Getting your foot in the door early will make elected officials more likely to help you when you need it most. You could invite them to your facility for a tour or a special event, recognize them with awards, or send them your newsletter or other publication.
- Do your research and try to find personal connections with your elected officials. If you want your person to person interaction to be more social than work-related, you can put together an outline of your plans to print and let them read later.
- Stay current on key legislation and policy changes that affect transit. The more you know, the more confident you’ll be. Besides, the more you know about your elected officials’ opinions on key issues, the more likely you’ll be to know how to frame your message best. Remember that you’re not a lobbyist; you’re just trying to educate and inform.

**When it comes to meeting legislators...**
- Write and speak as if the person with whom you are communicating does not know transit lingo (acronyms, terms, etc.). Make sure you fully explain key points either in conversation or by giving him or her a handout.
- Work with integrity. Tell the truth, be respectful, and don’t judge an elected official for not agreeing with you on all fronts. Holding a grudge about a settled issue will hold you back from making progress on the topic at hand.

**Network**
- Connect with transit stakeholders.

These people share your initiatives and will support your efforts. They will lead you directly to elected officials.
- Befriend constituents. Gilbert says people who vote in an elected official’s district matter more to that official than those who don’t.

More advice

I asked Gilbert for an example of how her tips have worked in her own favor. She said she has been in and around politics for 40 years, so she had a leg up on the environment. When she became the director of the transit association 23 years ago, she reached out to the governor and legislature to inform them about Arkansas transit. Her greatest success in promoting transit was in 2001, when she requested the legislature approve a five percent tax on all short-term rentals of vehicles, 75 percent of which went to the Arkansas Public Transit Trust Fund. This fund provides operating and capital assistance for nonurban, urbanized and human service organizations.

Making this happen was easier for Gilbert because she already knew some of the legislators, but she also said that her approach worked because of the tight-knit social structures in rural areas. For example, she could simply cite the needs of a particular elderly or disabled citizen whom elected officials already knew. That personal connection helped make the case for supporting the rental car tax.

There’s no telling where Gilbert’s advice might take you. Give it a shot, for the well-being of your agency and the people you serve.

Source

Improving Pedestrian Safety for Transit Riders

By Nick Pappas

Transit providers are not the only agencies responsible for safety for transit riders. Public works departments and private property owners also have a role. A guide published by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) focuses on the safety of passengers before they reach the transit vehicle—or after they leave it—when they are still pedestrians. Providing a safe means of access to transit services improves the quality of the overall service and encourages potential riders to choose transit service as their means of transportation.

The Pedestrian Safety Guide for Transit Agencies, available at the link below, was developed to address the issues of pedestrian safety and accessibility. While transit agencies can address these issues on their own property, they often lack the authority to address similar issues on property they don’t own. The guide says that a crucial step in providing pedestrian safety and access is building partnerships with the other organizations and government agencies—including those responsible for road design and traffic safety.

Tools for assessing pedestrian safety

Chapter 1 of the Guide provides some basic tools for identifying safety and accessibility issues. This includes a Road Safety Audit (RSA), for which your agency could designate a team member. While an RSA team may not be able to directly make changes to the roadway, it can identify issues of safety and accessibility and suggest measures that can be implemented appropriate to the community’s budget. RSAs can be conducted during any construction phase of a roadway, from pre-construction to after the roadway has been in use for some time.

A simple method for identifying safety issues is to observe pedestrians as they access the area near transit stops. For instance, observers might see pedestrians using informal pathways where sidewalks do not exist, competing for bench seating at the stop, or crossing the street at an unmarked area to a transit stop mid-block. They can also observe motorist behavior near and around the area. Transit agencies can then use this information to improve the accessibility of the stop, improve the features of the stop itself, and coordinate with other organizations (local law enforcement) to both educate drivers about pedestrian safety and enforce laws.

The Guide suggests that transit agencies work with local and state transportation and law enforcement agencies to analyze pedestrian crash data near transit access points to find the sites with greatest safety priority. The Guide noted, however, that pedestrian crash data is not always completely accurate in identifying safety problems; police reports do not always include every pedestrian accident, and there may be relatively few pedestrian accidents in areas of higher pedestrian danger simply because pedestrians recognize these conditions and choose to avoid them. The FHWA recommends compiling three to 10 years of crash data to see clear trends, while taking into account any development changes made in the area during the period.

Partnerships for pedestrian safety near transit stops

The Guide encourages transit agencies to develop partnerships with local, regional, and state agencies, community groups, developers, and other transit services in their efforts to improve the pedestrian experience for their riders. Public works agencies are key partners as well. Pedestrian safety issues, including sidewalk and pathway design and street crossings, are often the responsibility of local and state agencies. Transit operations often occur

Source

Fire safety includes learning how to use a fire extinguisher correctly — and much more.

The most important reason for fire safety planning is the protection of your employees and customers. No matter when or where a fire strikes, there is no time to learn evacuation procedures in the middle of the emergency itself. Without proper training and sufficient procedures in place, it is common for people to panic and overreact. The result: an increased risk of making the fire worse or making poor decisions. This article will look at fire prevention strategies in and around the maintenance shop, on vehicles, and through employee fire prevention planning and training.

In the garage

Different types of fire hazards can be found in a maintenance garage. For example, oil soaked rags must be handled differently than general paper trash. Large accumulations of waste paper or corrugated boxes, etc., can pose a significant fire hazard. Materials such as paints, solvents, aerosols and other flammable or combustible materials can cause large fires or generate dense smoke and are easily ignited by matches, welder’s sparks, cigarettes, or may even start from spontaneous combustion.

Fuels and flammable gases used in...
Fire safety at the rural transit agency  Continued from page 11

Pre-trip and post-trip vehicle inspections, as well as an established preventive maintenance cycle, can help reduce the risk of vehicle fires.

have fire detection and alarm systems installed. Employees should be trained on procedures for manually activating the fire alarm system. The system should be maintained, tested and inspected based on the manufacturer’s guidelines.

Electrical safety

Electrical service panels in the shop should be readily accessible, well maintained, and be without evidence (such as melted wires) of overheating. All wiring insulation in outlet and junction boxes should be in good condition and not frayed or loose.

Prevention for electrical fires comes down to how the user operates the equipment and that he/she respects the dangers that can occur from misuse. Vehicle inspections should look for exposed wires that have no insulation, damaged or defective equipment and that electrical tools and equipment are properly grounded and maintained to reduce the risk of explosion or fire. Any issues need to be fixed immediately.

Vehicle safety

National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) statistics show that 75 percent of highway vehicle fires resulted from mechanical malfunctions. Collisions or overturns caused only 3 percent of vehicle fires. What’s a good preventive strategy? Preventive maintenance. Vehicle preventive maintenance does not just happen. Managers, operators, and mechanics must take ownership in the preventive maintenance cycle of inspection, service and repair of vehicles and equipment.

Managers need to implement an overall approach to preventive maintenance. KDOT policy requires drivers of KDOT-funded vehicles to complete pre- and post-trip inspections before each use of a vehicle and providing a written record of any problems with the vehicle to the supervisor. It’s a best practice for any vehicle.

Finally, maintenance staff should establish a preventive maintenance schedule on each vehicle based upon miles driven, days in operation, environmental conditions and manufacturer requirements. Any problems noted by the operator should be corrected before the vehicle is put back into service.

Be prepared

Fire extinguishers are only effective at the start of a fire. Within seconds, fires will outstrip a 10- 20 ABC fire extinguisher’s dousing capacity. (Most fire extinguishers complete their discharge in 8 to 12 seconds.) A typical large vehicle, such as a 16 passenger transit bus, could be totally engulfed in flames within three minutes. There is no time to read instructions or figure out how to hold the extinguisher

Sources


Kansas TransReporter | April 2012
Avoid Copyright Infringement on the Internet

From sample policies, rider guides and legal documents to a cartoon that you want to use in a presentation to your board of directors, it seems that just about anything is available to transit agencies on the internet. The question is, which of these materials are actually available for you to use? Are there limitations and, if so, how do you know what they are? Could any of these items, when downloaded, harm your computer system? This tip sheet from US-CERT (United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team) provides answers to these questions.

Although copyright may seem to be a purely legal issue, using unauthorized files could have security implications. To avoid prosecution and minimize the risks to your computer, make sure you have permission to use any copyrighted information, and only download authorized files.

How does copyright infringement apply to the internet?

Copyright infringement occurs when you use or distribute information without permission from the person or organization that owns the legal rights to the information. Including an image or cartoon on your website or in a document, illegally downloading music, and pirating software are all common copyright violations. While these activities may seem harmless, they could have serious legal and security implications.

How can you tell if you have permission to use something?

If you find something on a website that you would like to use (e.g., a document, a chart, an application), search for information about permissions to use, download, redistribute, or reproduce it. Most websites have a “terms of use” page that explains how you are allowed to use information from the site (see US-CERT’s terms of use for an example; see Sources below for this link). You can often find a link to the terms of use in a website’s contact information or privacy policy, or at the bottom of the page that contains the information you seek to use.

There may be restrictions based on the purpose, method, and audience. You may also have to adhere to specific conditions about how much information you are allowed to use or how the information is presented and attributed. If you can’t locate the terms of use, or if the terms seem unclear, contact the individual or organization that holds the copyright to ask permission.

What consequences could you face?

• Prosecution. When you illegally download, reproduce, or distribute information, you risk legal action. Penalties may range from warnings and mandatory removal of all references to costly fines. Depending on the severity of the crime, jail time may also be a possibility. To offset their own court costs and the money they feel they lose because of pirated software, vendors may increase the prices of their products.

• Infection. Attackers could take advantage of sites or networks that offer unauthorized downloads (music, movies, software, etc.) by adding code into the files that would infect your computer once installed (see Understanding Hidden Threats: Corrupted Software Files and Understanding Hidden Threats: Rootkits and Botnets for more information http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST06-001.html). Because you wouldn’t know the source or identity of the infection (or maybe that it was even there), you might not be able to easily identify or remove it. Pirated software with hidden Trojan horses is often advertised as discounted software in spam email messages (see Why is Cyber Security a Problem? http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST04-001.html and Reducing Spam fhttp://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST04-007.html for more information).

Reprinted (legally!) from CERT’s Cyber Security Tip ST05-004 entitled “Copyright on the Internet.” See link to this source below.

Sources / Resources

• U.S. Copyright Office. http://www.copyright.gov/
How To Reach Us

For a free subscription to the Kansas TransReporter or to contact one of our faculty or staff, call toll-free (800) 248-0350 (in Kansas) or (785) 864-2595 (outside Kansas). Send correspondence to:

Kansas TransReporter
Kansas University Transportation Center
1530 W. 15th Street, Room 2160
Lawrence, KS 66045

Send e-mail messages to Pat Weaver at weaver@ku.edu or Lisa Harris at LHarris@ku.edu. Visit our website at http://www.ksrtap.org

AAA and Federal Highway Administration Vehicle Safety Tips

• Watch for fluid leaks under vehicles, cracked or blistered hoses, or wiring that is loose, has exposed metal or has cracked insulation. Have any of these conditions inspected and repaired as soon as possible.

• Be alert to changes in the way your vehicle sounds when running, or to a visible plume of exhaust coming from the tailpipe. A louder than usual exhaust tone, smoke coming from the tailpipe or a backfiring exhaust could mean problems or damage to the high-temperature exhaust and emission control system on the vehicle. Have vehicles inspected and repaired as soon as possible if exhaust or emission control problems are suspected.


Other Services

In addition to publishing the Kansas TransReporter, Kansas RTAP offers a variety of other educational services. Following is a partial list of these services:

• Publication dissemination
• Program planning assistance
• Technical assistance
• Video lending library
• Telephone consultation
• Computer database searches
• Training development
• Referral services
• Website
• E-mail discussion group

Fire safety

Continued from page 12

and where to spray. For this reason, it is important that you participate in hands-on drills to become familiar with extinguishers and their use and to emphasize the importance of evacuating in the event of a fire. Look for an article in the next Kansas TransReporter about the selection, maintenance and use of fire extinguishers.

Fire safety planning

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 29 CFR requires employers of more than 10 people to establish a written fire prevention plan. OSHA standards also require employers to provide proper exits, fire-fighting equipment, and employee training to prevent fire deaths and injuries in the workplace.

The fire safety plan should train employees on the preferred means of reporting fires and other emergencies, types of evacuations to be used in various emergency situations, and how to use the alarm system and fire extinguishers. The plan should also detail emergency escape routes, procedures for accounting for all employees after an emergency evacuation has been completed, and rescue and medical duties for those employees who are able to perform them.

A good way to accomplish this is for your agency to incorporate fire drills into annual and new employee orientation trainings. Talk to your local fire department. Local fire departments often hold fire extinguisher training at no cost or for the cost of refilling the extinguishers.

If you see evidence of a fire under the hood of your vehicle, shut off the power, evacuate the vehicle and call 9-1-1. Do not open the hood; doing so will provide oxygen to fuel the fire.

Never put yourself or anyone else in jeopardy by trying to extinguish a building fire that may be too large to handle. Instead, sound an alarm to other occupants and leave the building, closing all doors behind you. Then, call the 9-1-1 to report the fire. Go to your pre-designated meeting place in case of fire and wait for firefighters to arrive. Never go back into a burning building!

Likewise, with a vehicle, shut off the electrical power, evacuate the vehicle, call 9-1-1 and do not open the hood. Opening the hood of the vehicle provides oxygen to the fire and increases its ability to spread. Once evacuated, move passengers as far away from the vehicle as possible.

Complete fire prevention includes training as well as preparing and following a fire safety plan. Routine fire audits can help ensure that you are never surprised by any unknown fire violations. The steps you take to adequately prepare for an emergency can make all the difference.
Transportation by the Numbers. Want to take a careful look at the costs of your transportation service? Check out Transportation by the Numbers, a popular NCST (National Center on Senior Transportation) resource that helps service providers identify and evaluate the true costs of providing transportation services. This workbook is a virtual product, accessible through the NCST website and consists of three Excel spreadsheets and an accompanying explanation of how to use the spreadsheets to measure the costs of a transportation program. Download at: http://seniortransportation.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=NCST2_Transportation_by_the_Numbers

Aging in Place: A State Survey of Livability Policies and Practices. Published by the National Conference of State Legislatures and the AARP Public Policy Institute, this report examines state policies that can help older adults age in place. Examples of transportation policies in different states include those covering Complete Streets, pedestrian safety, rural access, human service transportation coordination, and volunteer driver laws. Download at: http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/ppi/liv-com/aging-in-place-2011-full.pdf


Exploring the Role of Regional Transportation Projects as Rural Economy Drivers. With case studies from Alabama, Oregon, and Vermont, this report explores regions where public transit is playing a role in connecting employees to work, getting people to services, and revitalizing downtown areas. Through partnerships at the local and regional level, regional planning and development organizations are facilitating improved mobility, which in turn supports the regional economy. Download at: http://www.ruraltransportation.org/uploads/RegTransit.pdf

Diversity and Senior Transportation: “Safe Steps - Pasos Seguros.” (Flyer). This is a new project by the Alliance for Aging, Inc., in Miami, Florida, to reduce high rates of elder-pedestrian crashes in Miami-Dade County, which are the highest in the state and one of the highest in the U.S. The Alliance for Aging is funded by the Florida Department of Transportation. In English and Spanish. Download at: http://espa-ncst.communityzero.com/dst?go=6029072 or ☐ or check this box and fill out the order form to receive a hard copy from Kansas RTAP.

ORDER FORM

A few of our above resources are available in hard copy for readers who do not have internet access. These resources have a checkbox at the end of the listing. Check the item(s) you would like to receive and fill out the form below. Fax to (785) 864-3199.

Name__________________________________________________________Title__________________________________________________________

Agency_______________________________________________________Phone__________________________________________________________

Street Address______________________________________________E-mail address___________________________________________________

City________________________State___________________________Zip + 4_________________________
University of Kansas
Transportation Center
Kansas TransReporter
1530 W. 15th Street, Room 2160
Lawrence, KS 66045-7609

Return Service Requested

SAVE A TREE!
If you would rather link to our newsletter electronically instead of receiving a hard copy, send your email address to LHarris@ku.edu and we’ll send a notice to you when each issue is published.

Is your mailing information correct? Send any changes to (785) 864-3199 (fax).

Calendar

Rural Transit Training and Conferences — Spring/Summer 2012

Defensive Driving and Emergency Procedures**
April 4 in Salina
April 5 in Emporia
June 13 in Pratt
June 14 in Newton

Defensive Driving and Passenger Assistance**
April 11 in Olathe
April 12 in Atchison

Advanced Mobility Securement Two-Day Workshop (for Managers and Trainers)**
April 17 and 18 in Manhattan

Advanced Mobility Securement Workshop**
April 19 in Manhattan
April 21 in Lawrence

财物Reporting

The Kansas TransReporter is an educational and technology transfer newsletter published quarterly by the Kansas University Transportation Center (KUTC), under the umbrella of KU’s Transportation Research Institute. The newsletter is free to rural and specialized transit providers and others with an interest in rural and specialized service. The Kansas TransReporter is co-sponsored by the Federal Transit Administration under its Rural Transportation Assistance Program (RTAP) and the Kansas Department of Transportation.

The purposes of the RTAP program are to: 1) educate transit operators about the latest technologies in rural and specialized transit; 2) encourage their translation into practical application; and 3) to share information among operators.

April 2012, Volume 25, Number 2. Copyright © Kansas University Transportation Center. All rights reserved. Reproduction of material appearing in the Kansas TransReporter requires written permission.

May 6-9, 2012

May 21-25, 2012
Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) EXPO. Baltimore, MD. Additional information at: http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=2741&z=5

June 26, 2012

August 10-12, 2012

August 13-15, 2012

October 14-17, 2012
20th National Conference on Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation. Salt Lake City, UT. Additional information and registration available at http://www.ribtc.org

**To register for a Kansas RTAP workshop, go to http://www.ksrtap.org. Click on “Register to attend.” Questions? Contact Kristin Kelly at (785) 864-2594 or kbkelly@ku.edu.