



State of Illinois
JB Pritzker, Governor



Illinois Department of Transportation
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Innovative solutions contest at IDOT highlights creative ideas, inventions that save time, money

Adjustable asphalt screed, DRIVE new employee program among winners

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Transportation is once again recognizing the ingenuity and MacGyver-like skills of its employees in the second annual Innovative Ideas Contest, a statewide initiative that encourages creativity and teamwork to find solutions to common problems. The winning ideas were selected based on improved service to the traveling public and the potential to save taxpayer money.

“Innovation is part of the IDOT culture,” said Acting Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman. “We have the best and brightest employees, who are constantly solving problems large and small. This contest is a showcase for the work they do and the service they provide for the public.”

More than 180 ideas were submitted in the annual contest by employees in two tracks: Technical and Operations.

Projects were evaluated by size and scope of the problem, creativity in developing a solution, ability to implement statewide and potential to save time, money or other valuable resources for the state. Three winning projects were selected in each track.

The Operations Grand Champion entry came from the Wood River maintenance yard for developing an adjustable screed for leveling hot asphalt patches, resulting in a 25% reduction in employee hours versus conventional techniques.

The Technical Grand Champion entry was the District Resource for Informative and Voluntary Exchange (DRIVE) program from District 7 in Effingham. The DRIVE program aims to minimize knowledge loss due to retirements and turnover by establishing onboarding and mentoring opportunities for incoming employees.

Forty finalists showcased their work in March at the IDOT headquarters in Springfield, followed by an awards ceremony honoring the winners. To review the submissions and watch videos of the ideas in action, visit idot.illinois.gov/innovative-ideas.

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