



State of Illinois
Pat Quinn, Governor

Illinois Department of Transportation
Gary Hannig, Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
January 19, 2010

CONTACTS:
Marisa Kollias 312.814.4693
Paris Ervin 217.558.0517

Illinois Department of Transportation Recognized for Exceptional Sustainable Practices

*IDOT Makes Strides in Effort to Help Improve the
Environment*

SPRINGFIELD - Illinois Transportation Secretary Gary Hannig announced today that the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) made exceptional progress in 2009 in a statewide effort to become a more sustainable agency.

Among the list of accomplishments, Illinois Department of Transportation received the Green Government Award in December from the Illinois Green Government Coordinating Council during the Annual Sustainable Symposium held in Springfield. The award was in the Sustainable Transportation category.

“We are pleased to have received this award,” said Secretary Hannig. “We work hard each day to ensure our construction projects adhere to the highest environmental standards, while maintaining the safety and effectiveness of our roads. Our efforts to improve construction methods, promote fuel conservation and enhance green practices all are a part of our overall effort to build a cleaner, greener Illinois.”

The award was presented by Governor Pat Quinn’s Director of Sustainability, Kate Tomford. Accepting the award at the Sustainable Symposium were IDOT’s Director of Finance and Administration, Ann Schneider, and IDOT’s Acting Sustainable Practices Manager, Steve Massey.

-more-

54**10



Illinois Department of Transportation

The award was based on several practices and efforts that IDOT initiated. One of the strides that IDOT made was creating a more environmentally friendly vehicle fleet. The fleet includes 741 alternative vehicles, 36 gas/electric hybrids and one E85/electric. The diesel fleet is now 100 percent capable of burning biodiesel fuel.

IDOT also was recognized for a recent project on the Bishop Ford Expressway in Chicago (I-94). This project utilized recycled shingles that made up approximately 5 percent of the 22,000 tons of mix used for the roadway surface materials.

Secretary Hannig created the position of IDOT Sustainable Practices Manager to identify sustainability and resource savings opportunities. The position also makes policy recommendations to executive staff and works closely with the long-term planning staff on sustainability issues.

IDOT was recognized for the greening of rest areas and welcome centers by installing rain barrels at some locations. The rain barrels were made by Illinois Correctional Industries. The use of green cleaning products at these areas also has begun.

The award highlighted IDOT's efforts to promote the use of PrePass. IDOT partnered with the Secretary of State's office to get the word to truckers about the PrePass system. PrePass enrolls carriers and collects required data and safety ratings to automatically determine the carrier fee to weigh stations. About one mile from the weigh station, the PrePass reader identifies the transponder in the windshield of the truck and transmits the data to the computer site. If all data is acceptable, the carrier gets a green light signaling approval to bypass. If the carrier gets a red light, truckers must enter the weigh station. PrePass in Illinois has reduced emissions by decreasing greenhouse gases, saving fuel and increasing efficiency and safety.

IDOT in the fall initiated and worked closely with the Department of Natural Resources to develop the Illinois Fallen Soldier Tree Memorial in Illini State Park in Marseilles, which was dedicated on November 10, 2009. The tree memorial has 250 oak trees planted on 2.5 acres of land in the park. A natural granite monument stone weighing about 7 tons was added to the site with a bronze memorial plaque memorializing Illinois soldiers killed since the beginning of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. A five-car parking lot and memorial with handicap accessibility was built and natural limestone benches were placed in the memorial park area.

The Illinois Green Government Coordinating Council has members from 15 state agencies and was created to improve sustainable practices under the Green Governments Illinois Act. The council annually presents awards to state agencies that have shown an exceptional commitment to improving the environmental quality of Illinois.

For more information on Illinois' green initiatives, visit www.green.illinois.gov.

