



# INFORMATION RELEASE

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### **Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department Skid Resistance Project Honored with a National Roadway Safety Award**

**WASHINGTON DC (12-17)** – During a national awards ceremony on Capitol Hill last month, the Roadway Safety Foundation and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) honored the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) for its efforts to decrease the number of dangerous wet weather crashes along a four-mile section of Interstate 30. AHTD's project was one of 10 recognized with a 2015 National Roadway Safety Award.

AHTD identified 70 crashes over a four-year period that were caused by wet weather and resulted in roadway departures. The Department implemented cost-effective countermeasures by installing an Ultra-Thin Bonded Wearing Course (UTBWC) pavement treatment to the roadway surface to increase traction and reduce the risk of skidding. The improved pavement texture lowered wet weather crashes from 70 to five on the four-mile segment of I-30; a 93% reduction of crashes over four years.

The crash reduction potential of Arkansas' interstate pavement surface treatment was so dramatic that the Department authorized the program to be expanded. Five additional locations were treated with UTBWC in 2013. Additional locations will be identified in the future.

"More than 32,000 people died in traffic crashes in 2013 and millions of individuals suffered injuries," said Federal Highway Administrator Gregory Nadeau. "Innovative roadway safety programs are a critical part of saving lives and preventing injuries on our nation's highways.

"The innovative highway safety projects honored here are vital because deficiencies in the roadway environment contribute to nearly one-third of all traffic deaths," said Roadway Safety Foundation Executive Director Greg Cohen. "The National Roadway Safety Awards are an opportunity to recognize the unsung heroes who plan, engineer and implement creative measures to help save lives on a daily basis and rarely receive credit for doing so."

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“The Ultra-Thin Bonded Wearing Course has been proven to be an effective safety improvement to reduce wet weather crashes on our interstates,” said AHTD Director Scott Bennett. “Because of its effectiveness, we have identified additional locations for this treatment and believe this not only supports our strategic goal but also helps Arkansas move one step closer Toward Zero Deaths.”

The National Roadway Safety Award recipients were evaluated on effectiveness, innovation, and efficient use of resources. The awards were separated into the categories of Infrastructure & Operational Improvements and Program Planning, Development & Evaluation.

This year’s Blue Ribbon Panel Judges included:

- Gregory M. Cohen, executive director, Roadway Safety Foundation
- King W. Gee, director of engineering and technical services, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
- Mike Griffith, director, Office of Safety Technologies, FHWA Office of Safety
- Peter Kissinger, president & CEO, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety
- Bernardo Kleiner, senior program officer and transportation safety specialist, Transportation Research Board
- Jennifer Smith, director, Image and Brands, Michelin
- Marie B. Walsh, PhD, director, Louisiana Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP)
- Terecia Wilson, senior fellow, Clemson University Institute for Global Road Safety and Security