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Inside The Box Thinking

Williams County Solution to Roadway Repairs

- Dale C. Heglund, PE/PS, ND LTAP Director

Synergy is the creation of a whole that is greater than the sum of its individual parts. When Dennis Nelson, Williams County Highway Superintendent, and Rodney Ness, Swanston Sales Representative, discuss roadway improvements synergistic results are the expected outcome.

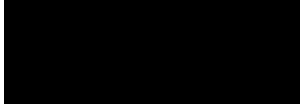
Roadway patching typically means activating a large crew with inherent safety risks for those working on the pavement. That can be a problem in areas like Williams County where the side effects of oil prosperity are high truck traffic volumes and a shortage of workers. Dennis and Rodney found a solution by a bit of 'inside the box thinking'. The Dura Maxx patching truck, delivered to Williams County this spring, provided the opportunity to reduce crew size and at the same time eliminate the workers on the roadway. By keeping the patching crew inside the cab of the truck, the risk from vehicle traffic was greatly reduced. And 'crew' means 1 operator!

The evolution from the trailer style Dura Patcher to the automated truck style Dura Maxx came at a perfect time to meet the needs of Williams County.

Steve Chase, North Dakota Local Technical Assistance Program Safety Circuit Rider, recently met with the Williams County staff to see how the unit was performing. With only 4 hours of training, Bob Olson, Williams County lead operator for the Dura Maxx, was off and running. His efforts are obvious on roadway surfaces around the County. During Steve's visit, Bob was training coworker Paul Sannes with hopes that additional operators in queue would mean less idle time for the machine. NDDOT staffers familiar with the trailer style Dura Patcher have been good allies, sharing information with Bob on best aggregate and oil types for the equipment and our climate. The NDDOT typically uses a CI 43 material with a CRS-2p oil. Bob has been using a local pit run aggregate with fair results. Through continuous improvements methodology he has been able to use the low cost local aggregates.

What have you done to improve crew efficiencies and safety? Think inside the box!

This article is not an endorsement of the Dura Maxx system, rather it an endorsement of automated equipment advancements that improve



working environments and organizational efficiencies.



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If you have any comments or suggestions for this publication please contact NDLTAP.

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