



INDIANA DISPATCH

*A Newsletter for Indiana's
Transportation Professionals*



Issue 1, 2018

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EDITOR'S NOTE: To ensure that
this newsletter is relevant to your
needs, we would appreciate your
input. Please send us article sugges-
tions, agency news, coordination ac-
tivities, "best practices," etc.

Do you know of someone from
another agency who would like a
copy of this newsletter? Do you
want to be removed from our
mail list? Give us a call.

INDIANA RTAP HAS MOVED INTO 2018

With the New Year comes new beginnings, and the Indiana RTAP pro-gram has exciting news to share. The RTAP offices have a new home lo-cated at 811 Lindsey Street in Columbus, IN, right across the street from the ColumBUS Transit transfer facility and offices. This is not just new of-fices—this is a state-of-the-art Transit Training Center equipped with the latest AV technology for high quality professional training options.

The Training Center has I-Serta comfort seating for up to 60 participants at 28 tables. There will be one 75-inch interactive monitor, and two 70-inch displays on either side with a ceiling mounted sound system that will en-sure everyone has the best seat in the house. The Training Center will have video conferencing and webinar capabilities as well.

Plans are also underway to install a fully functioning wheelchair lift and securement platform in the Training Center for conducting Passenger As-sistance Techniques classroom training (PAT) from beginning to end. This will allow the RTAP staff to conduct PAT training year round to meet eve-ryone's needs without having to schedule a vehicle for the practicum or worrying about/dealing with inclement weather.



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INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Driving Indiana's Economic Growth

2018 TRAINING CALENDAR



Happy New Year! As we bring in the New Year at the new Indiana RTAP Office and Transit Training Center, we are close to completing the finishing touches. We hope to see more drivers attending trainings here at

the RTAP facility. The new facility offers greater capacity to fit many more participants on a weekly rotating schedule of two trainings: PAT, as an all-day standalone training one week, and Defensive Driving/Pre-Trip & Emergency Evacuation Procedures the next. By having each of the two trainings rotate weekly on the RTAP Training Calendar, you will be able to send new drivers or existing drivers for re-certification, without any (or little) wait. The idea is to offer these particular trainings year round at the RTAP Training Center. We are anticipating registration will begin mid-February. Following confirmation of dates with transit managers, the first official training will be scheduled the first week in March.

With a New Year comes new and better opportunities. As well as having weekly trainings at the RTAP Training Center, drivers will now have the opportunity to take advantage of RTAP's three new E-Learning online training courses: Dealing with Difficult People, Stress & Fatigue, and Safety & Security. We anticipate the E-Learning online courses to be available online mid-February. Our Customer Service training will still be an in class training.

Please remember in order for your drivers to qualify as a Master Driver, they must attend and pass five trainings; four of those must be core trainings: PAT, Defensive Driving, Pre-Trip, and Emergency Evacuation Procedures. Training is anticipated to begin in early March and continuing into November. Once dates are confirmed with the various transit managers, the first official scheduled training is expected to occur in early March.

On-site trainings around the state will also continue to be offered and conducted.

As in the past, please contact me to RSVP your driver(s). Please also consider when you RSVP for PAT at a host agency the numbers are limited; 10 minimum and 20 maximum. When an RSVP is requested and confirmed, that slot(s) is locked; if you do not send your driver(s), a vacancy is created resulting in another agency's driver(s) being denied the training. If you know in advance that a driver will not be attending, please let me know as soon as possible so that I can advise another agency of the opening.

Megan Gatterdam
Indiana RTAP Training Coordinator
(812) 372-3794 or (800) 709-9981

**RTAP Office and Training Center Address:
811 Lindsey St., Columbus, IN 47201**

INDOT News & Notes

2017 Annual Report Surveys will be distributed to each system on January 15 and will be due back to INDOT no later than February 15.

NTD Reporting: INDOT must submit 2017 Operating Data to National Transit Database no later than April 30, 2018. Systems may be notified by INDOT prior to the deadline requesting validations (supporting information) for any data that exceeds 10 percent above or below 2016 operating data. Please be prepared to provide validations to INDOT upon request to avoid late submittal to NTD.

2018 INDOT Comprehensive Compliance Reviews

- City of Bedford
- Boone County
- Fayette County
- Franklin County
- Harrison County
- Hendricks County
- City of Huntingburg
- Miami County
- City of Mitchell
- City of New Castle
- Orange County
- City of Richmond
- City of Seymour

Systems will be notified 30-days prior to the on-site review.

2018 North/South Training Meeting Dates:

- June 27 – North (Location TBD);
- June 28 – South @ RTAP Training Center: Columbus, IN (Agenda still to be determined)

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For larger meetings and workshops, a kitchen and “break room” are available downstairs with seating for up to 30 participants with tables. This will allow RTAP to host larger INDOT and/or INCOST trainings where meals are also provided.

The 2018 RTAP training calendar will reflect at least one training each week at the new Transit Training Center with the potential for more to be added. Yes, we will still be coming on site to your facilities to conduct training. However, the Transit Training Center provides a comfortable, controlled, professional training environment with the latest technology, allowing the RTAP staff to provide a higher quality of training, and ensuring that your drivers are receiving the best training in the industry.

The RTAP program will be hosting an open house at the new RTAP offices and Transit Training Center sometime in April, and the INDOT South meeting is already scheduled to be held in the new center. So, watch carefully for the open house announcement and plan to come and see what is new with RTAP in 2018.



WINTER IS OFFICIALLY HERE AND WITH IT COMES THE COLD AND FLU SEASON

Yes, winter is here, and so is the cold and flu season. The flu season typically begins in fall and lasts through spring; the cold virus seems to have no season, although winter seems to be the most common time. With the numbers of passengers transit drivers interact with on a daily basis, being exposed to illness is unavoidable. There are, however, some things you can do to reduce your exposure, and in some cases, prevent the illness altogether.

Flu Vaccines

The common cold and the flu are viruses; antibiotics are not effective, and sometimes, if taken, can work to reduce the drug's effectiveness when you do have an infection that needs treating. Taking the flu vaccine each year, while not 100% effective, can significantly reduce your chances of getting the flu. Flu vaccines are administered by one of two ways: injection or nasal spray. Injected vaccines contain no live virus; nasal sprays contain attenuated, or weakened virus. Neither can cause the flu. You may



experience some soreness around the injection site. And, a small number of people may experience fever, chills, or achiness for a day or two. This, however, is minimal compared to coming down with a real case of the flu. Talk to your physician about the vaccine. Today's vaccines are not only available from your physician's office, but also at most pharmacies and walk-in clinics found in grocery stores without an appointment, making it convenient to get the vaccine even with the most hectic of schedules.

Wash Your Hands

Thorough and regular hand washing is one of the most effective means of avoiding colds and other viruses. Wash your hands often with soap, lathering for about 20 seconds, then rinsing and drying with a paper towel or hand dryer. Do this especially after coming into contact with anyone with obvious cold symptoms, equipment or other items used by other individuals, etc.



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IT'S BACK-K-K-K



Although last winter was mild by all comparisons, with snow and below freezing temperatures now a reality, it's a good time to review safe winter driving procedures. The secret to transporting your passengers safely on wet, icy, or snow-covered roads is a little advanced planning to meet winter weather driving conditions. Begin to prepare yourself now by thinking about what changes to your driving habits may be in order and what to do if you are in an accident.

First Things First: Prepare Yourself and Your Passengers

In winter driving, consider both personal preparation as well as preparation of your vehicle for unforeseen conditions. While avoiding driving in known hazardous conditions is the wisest choice, storms may strike with little or no warning. Time spent in preparation is your best defense. If winter weather deteriorates, you are less likely to panic and stress out and more likely to react calmly during an emergency.

Make sure as part of your pre-trip inspections during the winter season, that your vehicle is equipped with proper emergency travel supplies. The American Red Cross and the National Weather Service have created a list for these supplies. This list is only a suggestion, and changes are recommended based on your specific service area and/or length of your route, the areas where you are driving, and the number of passengers who are likely to be on board at any given time. The important thing

is to have a checklist and be sure you have everything you need on your vehicle before you start your run. Share this list with your maintenance supervisor and highlight any items that your system may not already include in your emergency winter travel kit:

- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Ice scraper/snow brush
- Blankets
- Fire Extinguisher
- First Aid Kit
- Bottled Water
- Non-perishable high-energy foods, such as granola bars, raisins or peanut butter
- Shovel
- Reflective emergency triangles (3)
- Sand or cat litter (for tire traction)
- Knife
- Pencil and paper
- Candles (even one lit candle can provide emergency heating)
- Matches
- Cell phone
- Red bandana (tie to the antenna when help is needed)



Finally, avoid driving while you are fatigued. Getting the proper amount of rest before taking on winter weather tasks reduces driving risks. Take precautions to avoid colds and flu, to the extent feasible and use prescription and over-the-counter medications with caution (see article "[Winter is Officially Here and With it Comes the Cold and Flu Season](#)").

Review Your Trip Manifest.

An essential tool to use in winter conditions is the trip manifest. Make sure you notify dispatch if you veer from the manifest. On out of town trips, you should notify dispatch of the route you will be traveling and the expected time of arrival. If dis-

patch knows the starting point and time, the route and the destination, help can reach you much more quickly, in the event of an emergency.

You should not only remain alert during hazardous weather to highway conditions, but you should also know where you are on your route at all times. Pay attention to mile markers and highway exit numbers. Know the state, county, or interstate number for the road on which you are traveling. Know what county, city, or area you are near. And, as basic as it may sound, you should know what direction you are traveling, so that you can relay that information to dispatch or to emergency workers at any time.

Bus Prep

In addition to the added dangers that winter driving brings, the change in weather can challenge the vehicle itself. Freezing temperatures, salted roads, and wintery precipitation can gang up on your vehicle if maintenance checks specific to winter driving aren't done. The following steps are suggestions for preparing your vehicle for winter weather. Many of these items should already be a part of a routine, pre-trip inspection. If any of these steps aren't currently part of your transit system's regular winter pre-trip inspection, and if you aren't the person who is responsible for this, share it with your maintenance supervisor.

Check the antifreeze. Your antifreeze is an essential part of your vehicle's winter protection. Your vehicle contains a mix of water and antifreeze. Make sure the level is full and the mixture is close to 50/50 to prevent freezing.

Inspect your tires. Tires are your first defense to prevent crashes. Take

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the time to check the tread depth during pre-inspections and to inquire when the tires were last rotated. According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Board, tires need at least 2/32" of depth to be safe. Also, be sure to check the tire pressure. Tires lose a little pressure when it gets cold, so make sure they are "pumped up."

Replace the wipers. What do windshield wipers have to do with winter weather? Two things: First, anything falling from the sky is going to end up on the windshield, and second, in addition to snow and ice on the roads, you will also be driving on a lot of sand and salt which can end up on the windshield. It takes wipers that are in good shape to keep the windshield clean and safe.

Check the windshield washer fluid. Keeping the windshield clean can take a large amount of washer fluid, depending on the weather. Tip: Don't fill the washer fluid reservoir with anything except washer fluid or it will freeze.

Pay attention to the vehicle's brakes. Report any squealing, grinding, or other indications that the vehicle's brakes might need attention to your maintenance supervisor immediately so that the brakes can be inspected and replaced, if needed.

Check the engine oil. Oil should be

checked regularly as part of a preventive maintenance schedule. Never skip this step, especially in the winter, when both the oil and filter should be checked and changed regularly.

Check the gas gauge. Make sure the gas tank is at least half full to avoid gas line freeze-up.



Change Your Driving Habits in Winter

Roadways can become slippery from rain, snow, sleet, and ice, and even salt and sand. Anticipating potential problems caused from these conditions may mean driving cautiously or in severe, dangerous conditions, not driving at all. Anytime roadways are wet, snowy, or icy, continuously scan the roadway ahead and maintain a "cushion of safety" around the vehicle.

Some road conditions require slow and cautious driving. Slippery roads caused by rain, sleet, snow, ice, or gravel roads make it much for difficult to control a vehicle. Fog, rain, and snow reduce visibility and can cause moisture to form on the vehicle brakes. This will increase stopping distance. These road conditions are especially dangerous because the vehicle may not respond as expected, even though you may respond quickly and diligently. By maintaining a cushion of safety and around the vehicle, scanning and ahead and increasing following distance, there will be more time to anticipate and react to potential adverse weather conditions. Finally, always look and steer where you want to go; do not use cruise control when driving on any slippery surface (wet, ice, sand).

What to Do in an Emergency

Finally, just a quick reminder of what to do in a crash or if stranded in winter weather conditions.

Call for help. When calling 911 or dispatch for help, remember to give the location first before reporting on the incident. If you were then to lose contact with 911 or dispatch, your location will already be recorded.

Evacuate only if necessary. The National Weather Service reports that

many people die each year when they attempt to leave their vehicle during a storm. Do not leave the vehicle in search of help. The best chance of rescue is to stay with the vehicle. Remain calm and do not panic. Tie a red bandanna to the vehicle antenna as a signal for help.

Keep passengers warm until help arrives. If you are able to start the engine, keep the bus running for 10 minutes out of each hour, and run the heater. Make sure the exhaust is clear to avoid any risk of carbon monoxide poisoning. Leave a window partially open, as an extra precaution. Keep the interior lights on while the engine is running to provide additional heat. Remind passengers to move their arms and legs to the extent possible to help prevent hypothermia.

Make yourself visible to others. Set the emergency triangles. In most cases, set triangle-one 10 feet in front of the vehicle, set triangle-two 10 feet behind the vehicle, and set triangle-three 100 feet behind the vehicle. Turn on the vehicle emergency flashers for more visibility.

Winter driving means preparing in advance the vehicle; emergency supplies; sharpening your winter driving skills; and knowing what to do in case of an accident. Preparing now will allow you to confidently respond to winter weather conditions.

Resources:

AAA Exchange (<http://exchange.aaa.com/safety/driving-advice/winter-driving-tips/#.WkOulminEdU>) Winter Driving Tips
National Weather Service
KansasTransReporter – January 2014

Indiana Rural Transit Assistance Program
 811 Lindsey St.
 Columbus, IN 47201

Who else in your agency could benefit from the Indiana Dispatch?
 Email, mgatterdam@rlsandassoc.com to be added to the list.

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For additional resources, please visit: www.rlsandassoc.com

CALENDAR

Dates in *italics* are tentative and at the INRTAP Office in Columbus, IN.

PAT = Passenger Assistance Training; PT = Pre-Trip; Evac = Emergency Procedures & Evacuations; DD = Defensive Driving; CS = Customer Service

January:

1/15/2018 Martin Luther King Jr. Day

February:

2/7/2018 PAT, INRTAP Office
 2/14/2018 Valentine's Day
 2/16/2018 DD/PT/Evac, INRTAP Office
 2/19/2018 Presidents' Day
 2/21/2018 PAT, INRTAP Office

March:

3/1/2018 DD/PT/Evac, INRTAP Office
 3/8/2018 DD/PT/Evac, INRTAP Office
 3/11/2018 Daylight Saving Time Starts
 3/14/2018 PAT, INRTAP Office
 3/23/2018 DD/PT/Evac, INRTAP Office
 3/26/2018 PAT, INRTAP Office

April:

4/1/2018 Easter Sunday
 4/6/2018 PAT, INRTAP Office
 4/11/2018 DD/PT/Evac, INRTAP Office

4/20/2018

4/23/2018

4/28/2018

4/30/2018

May:

5/8-10/2018

5/11/2018

5/13/2018

5/16/2018

5/22/2018

5/23/2018

5/28/2018

5/30/2018

June:

6/10-15/2018

6/17/2018

6/21/2018

6/25/2018

6/27/2018

6/28/2018

PAT, INRTAP Office

DD/PT/Evac, INRTAP Office

27th Annual Community Transportation Rodeo Columbus, IN

PAT, INRTAP Office

FTA Drug & Alcohol National Conference, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

DD/PT/Evac, INRTAP Office

Mother's Day

PAT, INRTAP Office

CS/PT, INRTAP Office

DD/PT/Evac, INRTAP Office

Memorial Day

PAT, INRTAP Office

CTAA National Rodeo and Conference (Pittsburgh, PA)

Father's Day

PAT, INRTAP Office

DD/PT/Evac, INRTAP Office

North/South Training (North) - TBA

North/South Training (South) - INRTAP Office, Columbus, IN