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OCRC takes home hardware at 2018 APWA Snowplow Roadeo



The Road Commission recently wowed the judges at the 2018 American Public Works Association Midwest Michigan Branch Snowplow Roadeo with its Breast Cancer Awareness Month themed plow truck, which was named the winner of the "Pride of the Fleet" competition at this year's Roadeo, which took place October 10.

The winning entry embraces the month of October as being Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The front plow was painted pink by Assistant Equipment Supervisor Rob Franklin and his summer high school help, with graphics created by the Road Commission's sign shop.

The front plow is also emblazoned with snowflakes, an outline of a pink ribbon and the words "Fight the fight, find the cure!" The truck's wing plow is also decorated with pink ribbons and snowflakes, along with a pink blade along the bottom.

The Road Commission also took home top honors in the "Innovative Idea" award category. The OCRC's winning entry was its detachable wing support bracket for its plow trucks.

The detachable wing bracket -- which supports the side wing plow -- is attached via bolts. This allows the bracket to be easily removed in the summer months for use in stone chip seal road work.

In stone seal operation, the truck's buffalo hitch needs to be exposed so that the chip spreader can be attached.

With a traditional setup, the wing bracket is in the way. By bolting on the bracket instead of it being permanently fixed to the truck, the Road Commission is given the flexibility of using its trucks in the winter and for additional work in the summer.



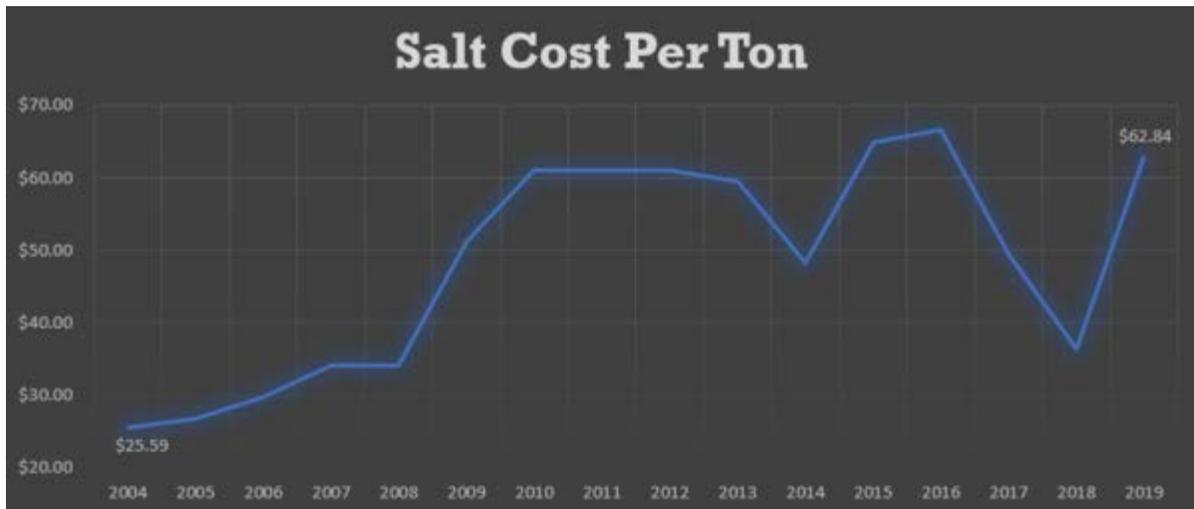
Other accolades

The Road Commission's Coopersville garage placed in the top five of the 30 teams that competed in the Snowplow Roadeo road course.

The competition is an obstacle course designed to simulate actual snowplowing operations where drivers are timed and scored for accuracy, safety and speed. The competition -- which also includes an educational component -- requires each team member to complete the course independently and the scores are combined for a team total.

Each city/county is allowed one team of two drivers for each garage facility, with the OCRC having competitors from all four of its facilities at this event.

Road salt cost increases for 2019 winter maintenance season



The Road Commission will pay \$62.84 per ton for an allocation of 22,500 tons of road salt for the 2018-19 winter maintenance season -- an increase of more than \$26 per ton compared to last season.

The increase in salt price represents an addition of approximately \$500,000 to \$600,000 in Road Commission winter expenses.

For its 2018-19 contract, the Road Commission is committed to purchasing at least 80 percent of the allocated tonnage – with guaranteed pricing for up to 130 percent -- of the salt at the contracted price. Anything beyond that, and the Road Commission could pay extra.

The Road Commission orders its winter salt supply in April via the Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget's MiDeal statewide purchasing program. Prices aren't known until later in the year once salt companies bid on the contracts.

To offset some of this increased cost, the Road Commission was able to purchase 3,300 tons of salt still available from last season's allocation at a price of \$36.46 per ton. The price was valid through the end of August and should alleviate some of the effects of the new prices.

Price of salt vs. other road commodities

How does the price per ton of road salt compare to other products used by the OCRC throughout the year, such as gravel and asphalt?

Gravel costs range from \$6.95 to \$10.25 per ton, and asphalt prices can range from \$58 up to \$125 per ton, depending on the type of material and quantity purchased.

How road salt works

Ottawa County Road Commission crews do not put salt on the road surface prior to a snowfall, as it's considered a waste of time and money. Salt doesn't adhere to a dry road and will likely be pushed off the road before it's able to do its job.

Salt is most effective while snow is falling and right after snow has accumulated and the temperature is 20 degrees Fahrenheit or more. In these conditions, the salt and snow will mix, melting snow into a slush that can be plowed off the pavement.

If the temperature is below 20 degrees, the salt will have difficulty melting the snow and ice, so other methods are typically used.

In these instances, abrasives (like sand) are often put down for traction. Additionally, calcium chloride or other liquid treatments can be added to enhance the ability to melt the ice and snow.

Stay alert for deer while driving this hunting season



Deer hunting season serves as a good reminder about the risks of car/deer collisions.

Here are some steps you can take to avoid a crash:

- Stay aware, awake, and sober.
 - Vehicle-deer crashes occur year-round, but be especially alert in spring and fall.
 - Signs are placed at known deer crossing areas to alert you of the possible presence of deer.
 - Deer are herd animals and frequently travel in single file. If you see one deer cross the road, chances are there are more waiting.
 - Be alert for deer, especially at dawn and dusk. If you see one, slow down.
- Don't rely on gimmicks, flashing your high-beam headlights or honking your horn to deter deer.

If a crash is unavoidable:

- Don't swerve. Brake firmly, hold onto the steering wheel, and bring your vehicle to a controlled stop.
- Pull off the road, turn on your emergency flashers, and be cautious of other traffic if you exit your vehicle.
- Report the crash to the nearest police agency and your insurance company.

Dead deer removal

There is no statutory requirement for any agency in the state to perform deer removal.

The Road Commission picks up and disposes of dead deer as a courtesy service for the public. However, landfill costs and budget constraints have limited this to just one day per week.

During winter maintenance periods, deer will not be removed until the spring thaw.

To inquire about dead deer disposal, please contact our office at (616) 842-5400.

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Find more information at our
home on the web:
www.ottawacorc.com



Important Dates:
November 8, 2018 | 9 a.m. | Board Meeting
November 12, 2018 | Office Closed, Veterans Day
November 21, 2018 | 9 a.m. | Board Meeting
November 22-23, 2018 | Office Closed, Thanksgiving



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The Ottawa County Road Commissioners:
Tom Bird | Tom Elhart | Betty Gajewski | Tim Grifhorst | Jim Miedema

Managing Director: Brett Laughlin

Who manages the roads and how are they funded?

The Ottawa County Road Commission manages the roads--not the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners or Ottawa County staff. The Ottawa County Road Commission is funded by fuel taxes, vehicle registrations and millage dedicated to the Ottawa County roads. Other property taxes you pay to Ottawa County do not fund road repairs or snow removal. Concerns about roads should be directed to the Ottawa County Road Commission.