



May 2021 | Volume 11 | Issue 5 | [SHARE](#)

Timber bridge construction underway in Chester Twp.



Ottawa County Road Commission crews are utilizing a unique approach to replacing an old bridge in Chester Township.

Crews are currently installing a new timber bridge on 32nd Ave. between Coolidge and Gooding streets.

Timber bridges have a lifespan of 50 years or more, with minimal maintenance and a resistance to freeze/thaw cycles.

Additionally, timber bridges can be very cost-effective solutions to replacing aging infrastructure.

Savings are typically 25-50 percent over traditional bridge options, and timber bridges can be designed for roads with almost any average daily vehicle traffic.

A 45-to-60-foot three-span timber bridge will cost \$400,000



to \$500,000. By comparison, a standard concrete bridge over the same span is likely to be \$800,000 to \$1 million.

To document the process OCRC crews are taking to construct this new bridge, we're shooting time lapse video for the duration of the project, and will periodically upload new footage to the Internet. This footage will highlight the demolition of the old bridge, site preparation, and the construction of the new bridge, all in a short span of time. Be sure to check our social media pages for new clips!

OCRC takes home three IMPRESS Awards



The Ottawa County Road Commission was the recipient of three IMPRESS Awards from the County Road Association of Michigan (CRA).

The awards were given out during a virtual awards

ceremony hosted by the CRA on Friday, April 23.

Seal coat (chip seal) program

The OCRC received an IMPRESS Award in the "Operations" category for its work to expand its seal coat (chip seal) surfacing program, utilizing its own crew and equipment.

In 2020, this goal was realized when the OCRC purchased its own chip seal equipment to meet demand and increase productivity as we continue to expand this program.

To get the Ottawa County Road Commission's chip seal program rolling, we have invested \$276,000 in equipment.

This equipment includes the purchase of a chip spreader, two rollers, and two distributors. A portion of these funds were also used to pay for the rebuild of a truck to aid in the chip seal process.

During the summer of 2020, the Ottawa County Road Commission was able to perform its first year of operating with its own chip seal equipment. In total, the OCRC performed more than 45 miles of chip seal work over the summer maintenance season.

Over the next 5 years, the Ottawa County Road Commission intends to utilize its fleet of chip seal equipment to perform more than 289 miles of chip seal work. This will result in a total investment of more than \$8.5 million, utilizing both MTF revenue and some county road millage dollars.

COVID-19 testing site partnership

The OCRC was awarded an IMPRESS Award in the "Collaboration" category for its partnership with the Ottawa County Department of Public Health to conduct COVID-19 tests at three of the OCRC's four maintenance garage locations in 2020.



While the two organizations have very different goals and objectives, the collaboration between the OCRC and the Department of Public Health to conduct these COVID-19 testing sites was a natural fit.

The Health Department needed space to conduct mass testing, and fortunately, three of the OCRC's garage locations had the room needed to allow the Health Department to conduct indoor testing in a socially distanced manner.

In addition to meeting the size and space requirements, the locations also allowed the OCDPH to target different areas of the county, as each garage location is based in a different quadrant of the county.

The OCRC was appreciative of the opportunity to partner with the OCDPH on this important community event to assist in trying to curb the spread of COVID-19.

Multi-county COVID-19 joint response plan



Finally, the OCRC was also awarded an IMPRESS Award in the "Collaboration" category for its involvement in a 14 county COVID-19 joint response plan.

One area of concern shared in West Michigan by many road agencies focused on what would happen if the COVID-19 pandemic swept through a road agency's maintenance facility,

impacting operations during the winter plow season.

Knowing that any loss of workforce would mean area transportation infrastructure would be severely impacted during a winter storm, the 14 West Michigan road agencies worked together to formulate a Joint COVID-19 Storm Response Plan.

Regional road agencies participating in the effort were:

- Allegan County Road Commission
- Barry County Road Commission
- Clinton County Road Commission
- Eaton County Road Commission
- Gratiot County Road Commission
- Ionia County Road Department
- Kent County Road Commission
- Montcalm County Road Commission
- Muskegon County Road Commission
- Newaygo County Road Commission
- Oceana County Road Commission
- Ottawa County Road Commission
- Shiawassee County Road Commission
- Van Buren County Road Commission

Utilizing the region's ongoing mutual aid agreement shared between road agencies, a supplemental COVID-19 component was created. This new joint response plan allows agencies to work collaboratively across jurisdictional boundaries while following COVID-19-related health and safety guidelines.

The OCRC was glad to be able to work with its neighboring counties and communities to address what might happen if a COVID-19 outbreak impacted our operations.

Be sure you take the steps to dig safe!



Starting a job - big or small - without first getting utilities marked could result in serious injury, service disruptions for you and your neighbors, and a hefty fine. Follow these steps to make sure you are in the clear:

1: Contact MISS DIG 811 online or by phone

At least 3 business days prior to digging on your property contact MISS DIG 811:

- By placing an e-Locate at e-suite.missdig811.org

- Or by calling: 811 1-800-482-7171

You will receive an email with your ticket number to use later to check Positive Response status from the underground facility owner/operator (utility company, OCRC, local municipalities, telecommunications, etc.)

2: Wait 3 business days for utilities to be marked

The owner/operators have 3 business days to go out to your property and mark where their utilities are located.

They will use paint and/or flags to identify the approximate location of their lines.

Then the facility owner/operator must go online to MISS DIG 811 Positive Response to record the status of what they did to your property when they marked utility lines.

Some lines will not be marked because they are not owned by the utility company. Those will need to be marked by a private locator.

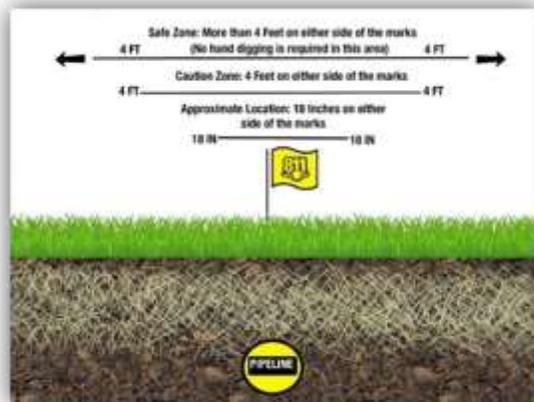
3: Check status online to confirm all utilities have been marked

- You must wait 3 business days for a response from all facility owner/operators (the Utility Company), so they have time to mark their facilities with flags and/or paint.
- After the 3 business days you must go online to status.missdig811.org to verify that ALL utilities have been marked. Enter your ticket number and review the responses from the facilities.
- ALL the facility responses must be green before you can begin digging.
- If you see a yellow or red response from a facility owner/operator and your start work date and time has arrived, then you will need to contact MISS DIG by dialing 811.
- Ask the operator for additional assistance from those facility owner/operators who have responded with yellow or red response.
- [Positive Response codes](#)

4: Hand dig when digging within 4 feet of paint or flags

You are ready to begin your project if all facilities are marked, your start work date and time has arrived, and Positive Response statuses are all green!

Make sure you know where and what facilities are in your workspace.



Look around to make sure all facilities have been marked. If you see a pedestal, meter, transformer, fire hydrant, etc. on site and no flags or paint coming from them, a facility may have been missed. Call 811 for additional assistance.

5: Dig with care

Most importantly keep yourself, family, and friends safe. Make sure you are digging in the Safe Zone (more than 4 feet out on either side of facility markings). If you are closer than 4 feet out from facility markings (in the Caution Zone) you must first hand expose the facility lines to determine their exact location before digging to ensure you do not harm yourself or cut off service.

Do NOT remove the flags until the work is complete or after 21 days.

Note: If a homeowner has hired a contractor/excavator for excavation on their property it is the responsibility of the contractor/excavator to contact MISS DIG 811 for a locate request per PA 174.



In observance of

MEMORIAL DAY

The OCRC offices will be closed on Friday, May 28, and Monday, May 31. We will reopen at 7:30 a.m. on Tuesday, June 1.

Important Dates:

May 6, 2021 | 9 a.m. | Board Meeting

May 20, 2021 | 9 a.m. | Board Meeting

May 28 & 31, 2021 | Office closed in observance of Memorial Day

[View Meeting Minutes & Agendas](#)



14110 Lakeshore Drive | Grand Haven, Michigan | 49417
616-842-5400 | [Contact Us](#) | Office Hours: Monday-Friday; 7:30AM-4PM

The Ottawa County Road Commissioners:

Tom Bird | Tom Elhart | Betty Gajewski | Kurt Van Koevering | Jim Miedema

Managing Director

Brett Laughlin

STAY CONNECTED. [SUBSCRIBE.](#)

Who manages the roads and how are they funded?

The Ottawa County Road Commission manages the roads. 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. Questions? Use their [contact](#) form.