SPR PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PROJECT NUMBER:
01453

PROJECT TITLE:
Utility Pole Safety

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS:
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PROJECT OBJECTIVE:
The overall objective of the proposed project is to help the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) meet its safety goal by reducing crashes, injuries, and deaths by 20% in the next 10 years. Specifically, this project will develop a plan to enhance safety by treatment of existing pole locations as needed and as cost-effective, to help meet ALDOT’s safety objectives.

PROJECT ABSTRACT:
Between 1994 and 1998, there were 150 deaths in Alabama resulting from automobile impacts with utility poles. That statistic placed Alabama 13th among the 50 states in the number of such deaths. Off-road crashes have more deaths and injuries than on-road crashes, so diminishing the number of such crashes or reducing the severity of these crashes has a high payback for each safety dollar invested. The ALDOT Utilities Manual provides placement requirements for new utility facilities, and for utilities moved during a highway construction project. These provide a high degree of safety for motorists. However, the Manual does not provide specific guidance for treatment of existing utility facilities. Such a program will be developed in this project.

PROJECT TASK DESCRIPTIONS:
1) Organizational meeting
2) Coordinate with other states
3) Meet with utility companies
4) Define the degree of safety problem using crash data
5) Identify potential sites for remediation
6) Develop a cost-estimation procedure
7) Prepare final report

MILESTONES AND DATES:
Task 1: Feb 15, 2001
Task 2: Feb 15 – Apr 15, 2001
Task 3: Apr 1, 2001 – Feb 15, 2002
Task 5: May 1 – Jul 31, 2001
Task 6: Sep 1, 2001 – Feb 15, 2002
Task 7: Feb 1 – Feb 28, 2002

TOTAL BUDGET:
Alabama Department of Transportation: $94,297

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT:
One graduate student and one undergraduate student will contribute to the research effort.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER RESEARCH PROJECTS:
UTCA has conducted no other projects involving utility pole safety. The principal investigator was one of the investigators for two ALDOT projects in 1987-89 that produced their current utility manual and that trained over 1200 individuals in the use of new procedures contained in the manual.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ACTIVITIES:
None are anticipated from this project.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT:
This project will add another aspect to the network of safety efforts underway throughout the state. If it had been completed earlier, some of the 150 lives lost in utility pole collisions in the 1994-1999 period would have been spared, along with countless injuries.

TRB KEYWORDS:
Utility pole safety, clear zone, cost effectiveness treatments, permits, safety remediation