

Montana Department of Transportation



The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) is involved in all modes of travel. From cars and trucks to airplanes, buses, railroads, and bike and pedestrian paths, we cover it all.

There are many facets to the work we do, including information services, human resources, accounting, payroll, budgeting, purchasing, and auditing. MDT is a diverse organization with over 2,000 dedicated individuals striving toward a common goal — to provide Montana residents, businesses, and visitors with a safe and modern transportation system.

On the road . . .

Have you ever thought about what goes into building and maintaining Montana's highways?

Plan It

Building a major road project takes years of research, planning, design, engineering, and budgeting.

- MDT prepares the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, which lists all planned federally funded transportation projects.
- MDT prepares a long-range construction program that addresses statewide transportation needs.
- Keeping the public involved in the planning is a priority.
- Environmental impacts, safety, community input, and traffic patterns are all part of the planning process.



Build It

The construction staff coordinates the project. Their duties include:

- preparing the construction packet for the contractor's bid
- managing construction work
- monitoring the project during construction
- ensuring all materials meet rigid test criteria
- conducting formal post-construction reviews



Maintain It

MDT's Maintenance Division includes 125 crews that maintain 25,000 land miles of roadway.

In addition to maintaining major roads, the Maintenance staff provides information to the traveling public:

- An on-line travel information site showing up-to-the-minute weather conditions at 60 sites across the state.
- Photographic images of current conditions at key locations
- Rest area information
- Weather forecasts
- Winter travel and summer construction information



MDT District Offices

The five district offices provide services within each geographic area. MDT employees oversee construction projects, work closely with contractors, conduct surveys, inspect work, and monitor traffic control.

Transportation Commission

The Transportation Commission is a panel of five citizens, appointed by the Governor to staggered terms. They represent the people of each district and work with local government officials, legislators, and individual citizens.

In the air . . .

Did you know that MDT is involved with air travel?



Aeronautics Division

The Aeronautics Division staff:

- inspects all public-use airports.
- provides capital planning, engineering, and financial assistance to public-use airports
- operates 15 state-owned public-use airports, including one in West Yellowstone.
- maintains many state-owned navigational beacons, air-to-ground radios and nighttime airway beacons
- administers a loan and grant program for airport development and improvement projects



Aeronautics Board

The Aeronautics Board, a nine-member advisory board appointed by the Governor, oversees spending of all airport grant and loan funds.

Administration

MDT participates in the Essential Air Service Program, International Northwest Aviation Council, the National Association of State Aviation Officials, and Montana aviation organizations.

Safety and Education

MDT is responsible for registering Montana's 1,800 pilots and 3,000 aircraft. Staff also oversees and promotes air search and rescue operations and aviation safety and education.



Commercial Trucking . . .

Have you ever wondered why the commercial trucking industry is regulated?

Weight restrictions on commercial trucks protect Montana's highways and help ensure the safety of the traveling public.

Trucks put additional stress on Montana's roads, which is why truckers pay extra fees to use them.

MDT's Motor Carrier Services (MCS) regulates commercial trucking by operating weigh stations and sites across Montana. MCS officers check commercial vehicles for proper licenses, size and weight permits, and they inspect vehicles to ensure they meet all safety regulations.

- MCS officers weigh more than 600,000 trucks and inspect more than 35,000 commercial vehicles each year.
- Proceeds from truck permits and fuel taxes provide up to 20% of the funding used to construct and maintain Montana's highway system.



Dyed Diesel Enforcement

MCS officers also regulate the use of dyed diesel, which is used primarily by farmers for off-road equipment (tractors, combines, etc.). Because the equipment is not used on the road, the dyed diesel fuel is not taxed to pay for road maintenance and improvements. It is illegal to use dyed diesel on public roads.

MCS officers may stop noncommercial diesel-powered vehicles on the open road and "sample" their fuel tanks for dyed diesel fuel. Noncompliance may result in civil or criminal penalties.



On-line Permitting

Using on-line permitting, MCS employees register over 30,000 commercial vehicles and issue over 60,000 permits each year. Licensing and permit technicians provide "one stop" service to the motor carrier industry for

- commercial vehicle licensing
- registration
- fuel
- single-state registration insurance
- over-dimensional/overweight permits

Weigh-in-Motion PrePass

MCS also uses PrePass, an automatic vehicle identification (AVI) system that allows participating transponder-equipped commercial vehicles to bypass designated weigh stations and port-of-entry facilities. PrePass weigh stations employ weigh-in-motion (WIM) scales to electronically weigh the vehicles while AVI antennas verify the truck's identity and compliance. MDT is integrating this option into several of its weigh stations.



Trains, buses, bikes & more . . .

Did you know MDT is so diverse?

Here are more areas MDT oversees:

- Freight and passenger rail planning
- Public and specialized transportation
- Rest area planning
- Statewide and urban planning
- Bicycle and pedestrian activities
- Project programming
- TranPlan 21, Montana's statewide transportation plan



MDT Also

- Collects and analyzes various types of transportation data
- Funds local enhancement projects through the Community Transportation Enhancement Program, including bicyclist and pedestrian paths and landscaping projects
- Maintains and publishes city, county, state and urban maps, including the state's official highway map
- Plays an active role in tourism and economic development activities



Transportation Awareness Program

MDT strives to improve public safety and employee morale and participation through the Transportation Awareness Program.

TAP team members give public presentations about maintenance activities, construction work zone safety, and other MDT activities. Team members also play a key role in educating Montana's teenage drivers by participating in driver education classes.

Funding . . .

Have you ever wondered where the money comes from to build and maintain roads?

As a rural state with a large transportation system, Montana is heavily dependent on federal transportation funding. MDT works with Montana's congressional delegation to ensure federal policies continue to recognize Montana's needs.

State taxes and fees are another way MDT collects funds to build and maintain roads. The main source of taxes is Montana's Motor Fuel Tax, collected from the sale of gasoline and diesel fuel.

Licensing and permits fees from commercial trucking provide additional funds.



For more information . . .

After reading this overview about our department, you may have specific questions that haven't been answered. Below is a listing of MDT staff who are knowledgeable about the issues listed. If you don't see what you're looking for, please call the Director's office at 444-6201, and we will direct you to the appropriate staff person.

Administration

Administrator, Larry Flynn..... 444-9418
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Aeronautics

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District Administrators

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Highways and Engineering

Administrator, vacant..... 444-6206
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Maintenance

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Rail, Transit and Planning

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Transportation Commissioners

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