NEWSLETTER

New Jersey
Local Technical Assistance Program

Dear readers,

The 2025 calendar has reached the last page, and that means we are full steam ahead getting prepared for 2026 activities. Rutgers Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation was recently awarded the New Jersey Local Technical Assistance Program contract for 2026-2030 by the New Jersey Department of Transportation, which means they continue to support local public agencies by sponsoring education opportunities and other valuable resources. We are very honored to continue as the stewards of this program, which was recently featured in the Rutgers School of Engineering news. There will be no disruption in the services to the local public agencies we proudly serve – and – there are some exciting opportunities to grow our offerings to you, such as the addition of a heavy equipment virtual training lab.

What's next? Our training will have a hiatus between mid-December and the start of February. If you are looking for sone on demand e-learning over the winter, please visit the library of on-demand courses available from the Federal Highway Administration's Center for Local Aid Support website. Registration for classes will be open very soon. There will be some exciting new courses! Two important dates to save are the Annual NJ Work Zone Safety Conference that will be in person on April 8th in West Windsor, NJ and the Public Works EXPO and Education Program in Edison, NJ on April 22nd.

The New Jersey LTAP team looks forward to seeing you again soon and wishes you a safe, happy and healthy holiday season!

NJLTAP Expands Training Capabilities with Caterpillar Virtual Simulators

The New Jersey Local Technical Assistance Program (NJLTAP) is pleased to announce that the Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation (CAIT) has recently purchased Caterpillar® virtual equipment simulators, significantly expanding its high-quality training opportunities for customers across the state.

The virtual simulators provide a realistic and immersive training environment that allows operators to gain hands-on experience with heavy equipment—without the risks, costs, or logistical challenges of traditional field-based training. These simulators replicate real-world machine behavior, controls, and jobsite scenarios, helping trainees build confidence and competence before operating actual equipment.

The addition of virtual simulators reinforces NJLTAP's ongoing commitment to providing innovative, practical, and cost-effective training solutions for New Jersey's local governments and transportation agencies.

To read the full article, please visit https://cait.rutgers.edu/simulators/

NJLTAP and the 110th Annual League of Municipalities Conference

In November, the NJLTAP participated in the three-day New Jersey State League of Municipalities (NJSLOM) Annual Conference in Atlantic City, NJ. The event, which included over 700 exhibitors and 175 education sessions, was attended by some 16,000 local government officials and affiliates.

We partnered with the New Jersey Chapter of the American Public Works Association, which is the official public works affiliate to the NJSLOM, to deliver two workshops to conference attendees on Wednesday, November 19th. Both workshops awarded Certified Public Works Managers license credits to participants.

NJLTAP also exhibited over the course of the event to promote training offerings and technical assistance referral services to local public agencies. Among the publications available at the booth were informational materials about NJLTAP and upcoming workshops, roadway safety proven countermeasures resources, and Build a Better Mousetrap competition entry forms. Our presence at the NJSLOM conference was a great networking opportunity to meet new public works, engineers, and public safety professionals while also reacquainting ourselves with others.

We are looking forward to the 2026 conference.

To learn more about the two sessions and for pictures from the event, please visit our webpage.

27th Annual NJDOT Research Showcase Recap

The 27th Annual NJDOT Research Showcase brought together New Jersey's transportation community. The event highlighted ongoing research and technology transfer initiatives conducted by NJDOT partners, including institutions of higher education, public agencies, and private-sector organizations. The event took place in-person at Mercer County Community College—with a livestreaming option—from 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM on October 29, 2025.

This year's theme, "Preparing the Workforce for the Future," shaped the morning plenary session. In the afternoon, the Showcase featured presentations on infrastructure, safety, and strategic workforce development and knowledge transfer, delivered by research faculty, staff, students, and private-sector representatives. NJDOT also presented several awards recognizing research and implemented innovations.

For a full recap and a link to a recording of the event, please visit the NJDOT Tech Transfer Website.

Local Public Works Honorees Include NJLTAP Team Member

On December 3, 2025, the New Jersey Chapter of the American Public Works Association held its annual awards ceremony to recognize deserving individuals and organizations in the field of public works. New Jersey Local Technical Assistance Program Research Program Coordinator, Omid Sarmad, was presented with the President's Recognition Award. This award recipient is selected by the Chapter President and approved by the executive board. The President's Recognition Award is designated for those who have made exceptional contributions to the Chapter over an extended duration of time.

We are also happy to congratulate many of our education program participants for their 2025 recognition awards. This includes Greg Whitehead, CPWM, Director of Public Works in Lawrence Township. Greg was awarded the Edward P. Decher Award, which recognizes more than 25 years of service in public works and a minimum of 10 years of membership in APWA. Greg has been the public works director for more than 27 years, and is also the township's ADA and Recycling Coordinator. Greg is a well-respected and appreciated member of the public works community.

A full recap of the ceremony can be seen on the NJLTAP website.

Jacob's Junction

Question #1

What are the conditions for an LPA to assist as a supervising agency?

You must include all Federal requirements in the contract and ensure compliance and you must be adequately staffed and equipped to complete the work to the satisfaction of the contract. In other words, you must perform project administration, including inspecting the construction. Consultant engineers and inspectors may be hired to assist with this, but cannot make critical decisions on the public's behalf. There must be an "employee in responsible charge" for each project.

As an instructor for NJLTAP, Lloyd Jacobs draws on four decades of experience when he teaches professional development courses and trainings. See what he has to say today!

Question #2

What kind of documentation do I need to provide to help support a project's need for a change order?

You will need Accurate records that show the time, labor, equipment, and materials, as well as cost estimates prepared by the agency that can be compared to the costs in the proposed. Also include an evaluation of construction schedule modifications needed and incorporated into the change.

New Jersey's Build a Better Mousetrap *Competition*

People involved in the transportation industry often find better ways to do their job. Whether it's a new gadget that improves the quality and safety of a project, or an innovative process that reduces costs and improves efficiency, it is typically the people on the front lines that often realize the latest and best practices.

Now is the time to share those new ideas with others in New Jersey's **Build a Better Mousetrap Competition**. We are looking for submissions from any employee of a **local** or **state** public agency (municipalities, counties, parks commissions, NJ Department of Transporta-

tion, NJ Transit) that has created an alternate or better way of doing something in a transportation project. We will gather the best ideas from around the state and judge them using a 5-point rating system. As a reminder, this competition is open to **any** local, county, or state transportation agency, including NJDOT and NJT employees. Two winners will be selected: one for the best local agency and another for the NJDOT/NJT submission.

https://cait.rutgers.edu/mousetrap/

Download the entry form today!

Happy Holidays!

May your holiday season be a source of joy and inspiration.

(Image from Hillsborough, NJ Department of Public Works, created by managers Jeff Huxley, Dan Davenport and sign shop opera-

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