

RTAP NEWS

New Hampshire RTAP Quarterly Newsletter

March 2015

Vehicle Preventive Maintenance: The Key to Safe Service

According to the Merriam Webster dictionary, the definition of SAFETY is “the condition of being safe from undergoing or causing hurt, injury, or loss.” While there are many State and Federal regulations to address safety, the ultimate responsibility for ensuring safety rests with the organization providing services. A properly maintained fleet is a very important part of the safety equation and can be the key to ensuring the on-going safety of not only the riding public, but also of your drivers. Even an aging fleet of vehicles can continue providing safe and efficient service with appropriate maintenance programs.

The beginning of any good maintenance program is a comprehensive, daily driver pre-trip inspection to identify potential problems and concerns before they become a safety issue or too costly. The emergency exits, wheelchair lift, and securement equipment should be a part of the daily pre-trip ritual, and drivers should be given adequate time to conduct them thoroughly and report any deficiencies to the appropriate transit personnel.

Beyond the daily driver pre-trip inspection, New Hampshire rural transit grantees are required to ensure the good working order of all FTA/NHDOT-funded equipment. Section 5311 subrecipients are required by the NHDOT to provide a written vehicle maintenance plan that verifies that the subrecipient will maintain vehicles to original equipment manufacturers’ standards at a minimum, and maintain ADA accessibility features to the standards required by ADA regulations. (NHDOT Public Transportation Programs State Management Plan, page 8) Section 5310 subrecipients are also required to maintain vehicles to original equipment manufacturers’ standards at a minimum and also provide a written vehicle maintenance plan.

Developing and implementing a preventive maintenance plan helps ensure that minimum manufacturers’ standards for each vehicle are identified and that all personnel understand the preventive maintenance requirements for all vehicles in your fleet. The following link provides examples and templates of preventive maintenance plans that can be used as a refer-

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Preventive Maintenance

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Dear RTAP

Dear RTAP,

I have been trying to identify what is required to be in a bloodborne pathogens kit for our transit vehicles. All of the vehicles we receive through the Section 5311 or 5310 programs come with these kits. However, when it is time to replace them or a portion of their contents, I'm not sure how to determine what items are required for the kits. I want to make sure my vehicles are in compliance and that my drivers have the tools they need and are protected in event of an incident. Any assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Kit

Dear Kit,

The RTAP offices have received several calls over the last few years regarding the required contents for bloodborne pathogens kits. Unfortunately, there is no regulated list of specific items that must be included in the kits. While OSHA standard 29 CFR 1910.1030, "Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens," outlines requirements for employers to implement an exposure control plan and provide education and personal protective equipment to employees determined to have an occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials, it does not provide a recommended list for items to be included in a kit.

There are, however, general standards for choosing personal protective equipment (PPE), such as it must be chosen based on the anticipated exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials. And, employers must provide training in the use of the appropriate PPE for the tasks or procedures employees will perform. Employers are also responsible for ensuring that the appropriate PPE is available and employees are aware of the PPE's location. The standard identifies personal protective equipment to be considered "appropriate" only if it does not permit blood or other potentially infectious materials to pass through or reach the employee's clothing, skin, eyes, mouth, or other mucous membranes un-

der normal conditions of use and for the duration of time which the PPE will be used.

The following is a recommended list of personal protective equipment that should be included in a bloodborne pathogens kit for public and specialized transportation vehicles:



- Latex gloves, face shields, eye protection, shoe covers and an apron.
- Hand sanitizer.
- Dust pan and brush.
- Disinfectant spray or spray bottle with one part Clorox to ten parts water.
- Two-fluorescent orange or orange/red bags with biohazard printed on them (red bags without a symbol or text are also permitted under OSHA regulations).
- Solidifying powder that can be used to turn a liquid spill into a gummy spill. Anything that absorbs liquid will do: sawdust, kitty litter or commercially prepared absorbent powders, for example.
- Antiseptic hand wipes for use after removing the latex gloves.
- Container for sharps (It must be sealable, leak proof, puncture resistant, and cleanable).
- Paper towels.

Certain items are also recommended in addition to the above list, depending on the transit system's policy regarding administering CPR and First-aid:

- CPR micro shield mouth barrier
- Multi-trauma compress

Complete kits may be purchased through companies that provide equipment for emergency responders such as Galls, ULINE, or Global Industries, for example. These kits will include some form of each of the items listed above.

I hope this adequately answers your question. If you have additional questions or need further assistance, please contact the NHRTAP office at (603) 731-5196.

SAVE THE DATE:
Tri-State Transit Conference 2015, September 9 through 11, 2015

How to Avoid Potholes

How to avoid potholes and the damage they could cause to your vehicle

Potholes are often a masked menace, hidden from view until the depths of their damage-causing dips are too late to avoid. How do potholes form?

Roads freeze and thaw, which erodes the dirt beneath them, weakening the blacktop in the process. Add frequent traffic to the mix, and the road begins to crumble. Eventually, the street erodes even more and develops a crater we know as a pothole.

Pothole damage accounts for nearly 500,000 insurance claims each year, including:

- Tire puncture, damage, or wear
- Wheel rim damage
- Premature wear on shocks and struts
- Suspension damage, including broken components
- Steering system misalignment
- Exhaust system damage
- Engine damage



How to Avoid Potholes

Potholes are inevitable in our climate, so the best offense, is a good defense. Use these strategies to avoid potholes whenever possible:

- **Steer clear.** The best course of action is to steer clear of potholes. If you can do it safely, simply swerve around them. This will help you avoid damage altogether.
- **Leave space.** When driving, leave enough room between you and the vehicles ahead of you. Doing so will help you spot potholes and give you enough time to avoid them.
- **Watch for water.** Pay special attention to potholes filled with water, which can be especially dangerous, since you won't know their depth until it's too late.
- **Slow down.** If you are travelling on a pothole-filled road, slow down. Driving slowly can minimize the damage to your car if you hit a pothole.
- **But, don't slam on the brakes.** At some point, despite using the utmost of precaution, you might hit a pothole. To minimize damage, resist the urge to slam on the brakes. Hitting the brakes tilts the

vehicle forward and puts extra stress on the front suspension, which is usually the first part of the vehicle to strike a pothole.

Spotting Damage from Potholes

If you are unable to avoid a pothole, look for damage right away. Identifying damage early may help you avoid more costly repairs later. The first thing to check is your vehicle's alignment and shock absorption systems. Shocks and struts tend to take the brunt of the damage because they compress and expand using hydraulic oil to alleviate the effects of driving on uneven surfaces. When a jolt is transferred to the vehicle, it travels from the tire and wheel directly to the shock absorber. Large potholes can cause the shock or strut to bottom out completely. The shock is then transferred to the coil or leaf spring of the vehicle. Over time, the shock-absorbing springs and struts become less resilient. You'll notice a much rougher ride and less responsive steering.

Your vehicle's alignment can also be damaged by potholes. A misaligned car tends to pull to one direction instead of maintaining a straight path. Proper wheel alignment is important to maintain the lifespan of tires and ensure safe handling in an emergency.

If your vehicle hits a pothole and experiences a significant jolt, get it inspected, especially if you experience these signs of trouble:

1. **Low tire pressure.** Tires should maintain optimum pressure to work properly. If you hit a pothole, tire pressure might be affected. Routinely check the pressure in your tires and monitor their appearance for signs of problems, like bulges or blisters on the sides. Spots of rust on tire rims may signal that your rims have been bent, which will also lead to pressure leaks.
2. **Your vehicle is misaligned.** If your vehicle pulls to one side when you're trying to drive straight, your alignment is probably out of sync.
3. **You have less control of your vehicle.** If you feel your vehicle swaying or rocking during turns, bouncing quite a bit or if you bottom out on the road after hitting a few potholes, the shock absorber and suspension may be damaged.

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National Transit Database: What Is It and Why Do We Need It?

If you are providing public transportation in New Hampshire and have received funding through an FTA Rural Area Formula (Section 5311) grant, then you have also received a message from the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) reminding you to submit your report for the National Transit Database (NTD). It can be a time-consuming process to compile and submit that information, and you may wonder what exactly is this NTD anyway. Where does this information go? Is anyone really paying attention to all of this data?

We thought it might be helpful to give a little history on what the NTD is, how the data that you submit every year is used and, most importantly, how you could potentially use this same data to assist you in improving your service.



The NTD is the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) primary database for statistics on the transit industry. Congress established the NTD to "help meet the needs of . . . the public for information on which to base public transportation service planning . . ." (49 U.S.C. 5335). Each Each year, performance data from these submissions is used to apportion over \$7 billion of FTA funds for grants through the Urbanized Area Formula (Section 5307), Rural Area Formula (Section 5311), Tribal Transit Formula, Bus and Bus Facilities Formula (Section 5339), and State of Good Repair (Section 5337) programs. This data is made available on the NTD website at www.ntdprogram.gov for the benefit of the public, transit systems, and all levels of government. This data is also used in the annual National Transit Summaries and Trends report, the biennial Conditions and Performance Report to Congress, and in meeting FTA's obligations under the Government Performance and Results Act. Reporting requirements are governed by a Uniform System of Accounts (USOA) and the NTD Reporting Manual that are issued each year. Both the USOA and the Reporting Manual are available for review on the NTD Website at www.ntdprogram.gov. (Taken from the NTD/FTA Website <http://www.ntdprogram.gov/ntdprogram/>)

Agencies receiving Federal funding under the FTA Sections 5307 (Urbanized Area Formula) and 5311 (Rural Area Formula) Programs must submit data to the NTD. There are many forms which cover most statistical aspects of operating transit service, such as agency characteristics, inventory of rolling stock, level of service and patronage, and system finances. Data must be submitted through the NTD Program on-line portal, and format requirements are strict to ensure the quality of the data.

Although the NTD existed for urbanized area transit systems for decades, the collection of rural transit data began in 2006 using a model that was developed in consultation with states. In keeping with the sentiments of the states, and the intent of Congress, the NTD offers streamlined and reduced reporting requirements for rural reporting relative to the NTD requirements for urbanized area reporting.

Specifically for recipients of Section 5311 funding, the FTA requires that each recipient submit an annual report containing information on capital investment, operations, and service provided with funds received under this section, including: total annual revenue; sources of revenue; total annual operating costs; total annual capital costs; fleet size and type, and related facilities; revenue vehicle miles; and ridership.

Here in New Hampshire the NHDOT is the sole recipient of Section 5311 funds and is responsible for collecting and providing data regarding each Section 5311 subrecipient in the state.

For the 2012 reporting year, over 2,800 transit systems across the nation reported their data to NTD to be eligible for over \$6 billion in federal funding. Of those, 1,703 Section 5311 subrecipients submitted data to the NTD through their respective State Departments of Transportation.

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Vehicle Preventative Maintenance: *Continued from Page 1*

ence for developing and/or revising your own plan: [GSIL Maintenance Plan](#). It is also important to remember that all preventive maintenance plans should include a specific reference to accessible lift inspection and maintenance.

Another important and sometimes overlooked aspect of a successful preventive maintenance plan is the establishment and maintenance of detailed vehicle maintenance records. All preventive maintenance work conducted on a vehicle should be recorded and these records must then be made available for review by NHDOT, upon request. The records should include vehicle pre-trip and post-trip inspection logs, vehicle maintenance logs, and accessible lift maintenance logs. Links to examples and templates of

vehicle maintenance record templates include [CATS Maintenance Plan](#), and [Braun Lift Inspection](#).

The FTA's Transit Bus Safety website, <http://bussafety.fta.dot.gov/splash.php>, is informative and includes some excellent resources on preventive maintenance.

For questions or additional information on transit system safety, preventive maintenance, or related training, please contact the NHRTAP staff at (603)731-5196.

New Hampshire DOT Updates

It's Spring Auction Time!

The State of New Hampshire 2015 Spring Auction of State Surplus Property will be held on Saturday May 16, 2015.

The auction is one method of having a public process for the disposal of vehicles. Listing the vehicle in newspapers, Craigslist, etc., is also acceptable. Agencies cannot just give it to a local dealer, mechanic, or junkyard without having a competitive process

to ensure the market value is obtained.

See the flyer below for more information on including your surplus vehicles into the auction.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
Inter Department Communication

To: All Agencies and Interested Individuals

Date: January 16, 2015
At: State Surplus
144 Clinton Street
Concord NH 03301

From: John Supry, Manager

Subject: 2015 Spring Auction of State Surplus Property

2015 SPRING AUCTION INFORMATION
Saturday, May 16, 2015 has been scheduled for the Spring Auction.

Preview of "VEHICLES ONLY" will be held on Friday, May 15, 2015, 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM. Preview of all other items at 7:30 AM on the day of sale, May 16, 2015.

Sale of Miscellaneous items begins at 8:00 AM. Sale of vehicles begins at 8:30 AM.

The State Surplus Property Warehouse will remain open until 3:00 PM on March 30, 2015 for selection of surplus items by the Public.

State Agencies and Municipalities will be able to continue to purchase items and vehicles and State agencies will be able to turn in surplus items and vehicles until April 10, 2015 at 2:30 pm.

Form P-11 "Declaration of Surplus Property" must accompany all surplus property. In addition, a supplementary checklist and title must accompany each vehicle P-11. Please refer to NH Purchasing Rules Manual for turn-in procedures and requirements. Additional fees will be charged for missing titles, missing keys, adding fuel, vehicle cleaning and decal removal.

Municipal surplus property submissions will be scheduled for Thursday and Friday, May 7-8, 2015 only during the hours of 8:00 AM until 3:00 PM.

NOTICE: State Surplus will re-open to serve State Agencies on May 20, 2015.

Municipalities, Non-Profits and the Public can participate beginning June 8, 2015.

National Transit Database: What Is It and Why

Do We Need It? *Continued from Page 4*

Here are just a few highlights of the data from those 2012 reports:

- 124 million rural trips made nationally
- Ridership increased by 39.3% from 2003 to 2012. During the same period, Federal assistance applied to transit increased by nearly 41.7% (2012 constant dollars)
- Fixed-route bus service remains cheaper per vehicle-hour than rail services
- Salary and fringe benefits continue to be the largest operating expense of any mode of public transit, and fringe benefits have increased faster than inflation for all modes

2012 National Transit Summaries and Trends

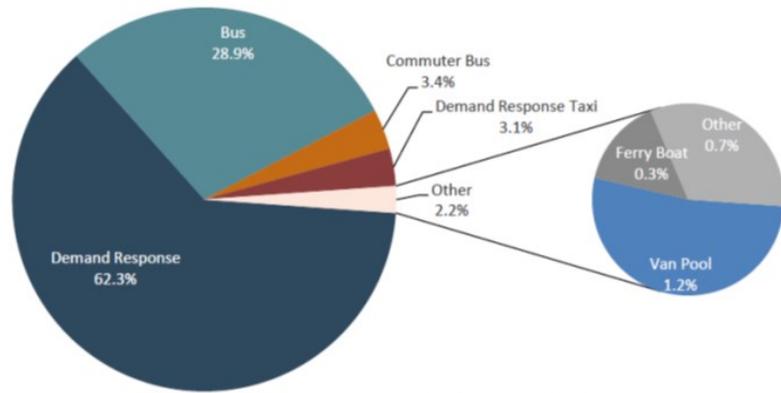


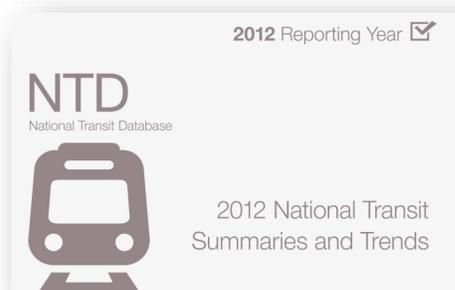
Exhibit 11: Breakdown of Rural Service by Mode (2012)

It is important for NH transit agencies to understand that this NTD data is being used to apportion **their** FTA funds. If accurate ridership data is not being recorded, it can negatively impact New Hampshire's apportionment and, ultimately, the amount of funding they receive.

This data is not locked away only to be used by the FTA, though. Everyone has access to NTD data. All agencies can use this data to help support their grant requests for local match funds. Regional planners use this data for short and long range transit planning. You can use this data to compare your service outputs with peers across the state, the region, and nationally. Utilizing this data can help you better understand the bigger picture of transit, and help you improve your own service. Use the following link to the NTD website to find more information about the NTD and to learn how to access the data stored there: <http://www.ntdprogram.gov/ntdprogram/>. Training modules are also available on the NTD website. In addition, here are some links to reports of NTD data and examples of how the data can be used:

- APTA presentation showing uses for NTD data: <http://www.apta.com/members/memberprogramsandservices/international/Documents/U.S.%20National%20Transit%20Database.pdf>
- 2012 National Transit Summaries and Trends: <http://www.ntdprogram.gov/ntdprogram/pubs/NTST/NTST.pdf>

Get to know the NTD; it can be a great resource for you. Contact the NHRTAP staff at (603)731-5196 with any questions that you might have about this topic.



National Transit Database - NTD

- Established by Congress in 1974
- Primary national database for public transit
- Collects annual transit performance and financial data, monthly ridership, and safety and security data
- Summarizes data in various annual reports



Federal Transit Administration

How to Avoid Potholes *Continued from Page 3*

If you've damaged your vehicle when you hit a pothole, you can submit an insurance claim. The damage may be covered under Collision coverage, and your deductible will apply. Your insurance adjuster will make a determination of fault, based on the details surrounding the loss. Tires are generally excluded in the policy from damage, but the rims may be covered if they are damaged.

Potholes are, unfortunately, inevitable in our freeze and thaw winters. Avoid them whenever possible, and when you can't, identify and address any resulting damage as soon as possible in order to avoid more costly repairs down the road.

Sources:

1. "How Can I Tell If My Car Has Pothole Damage?" WiseGEEK. N.p., n.d. Web. 02 May 2013. <<http://www.wisegeek.org/how-can-i-tell-if-my-car-has-pothole-damage.htm?PartnerID=Ford&RefID=&EmailID=>>.
2. "Firestone Complete Auto Care™." Pothole Damage to Tires and Vehicles.N.p., n.d. Web. 02 May 2013. <<http://www.firestonecompleteautocare.com/cf/tires/pothole-damage-to-tires-and-vehicles?PartnerID=Ford&RefID=&EmailID=>>.
3. Ameriprize Auto and Home Insurance. www.ameriprize.com



CALENDAR

April:

- 4-2-15 NHTA Meeting 10:00 AM Concord
<http://www.nhtransit.com/>
- 4-5-15 Easter Sunday
- 4-11-15 Passenger Assistance Training
Wilder, VT 8 AM-4:30 PM
- 4-18-15 Passenger Assistance Training
Dover, NH 9 AM-4:30 PM
- 4-25-15 Passenger Assistance Training
Keene, NH 8 AM-4:30 PM

May:

- 5-2-15 Defensive Driving & Emergency Procedure
Training Concord, NH 8 AM-4:30 PM
- 5-7-15 NHTA Meeting 10:00 AM Concord
<http://www.nhtransit.com/>
- 5-9-15 Passenger Assistance Training
Berlin, NH 8 AM-4:30 PM
- 5-23-15 Passenger Assistance Training
Concord, NH 8 AM-4:30 PM
- 5-25-15 Memorial Day

The current NHRTAP transit staff training
schedule can be found at:

[http://www.newhampshirertap.com/
Training.html](http://www.newhampshirertap.com/Training.html)

Please contact Terri Paige at (603) 731-5196
with any training needs or questions.

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If you are not receiving this newsletter directly, or know of someone who is not currently receiving it, and would like to, please contact Zach Kincade (zkincade@rlsandassoc.com). This publication is free.

