Mastering the highways

Oakland road chief tackles tough job

Art Witt isn't a media personality, but he has appeared on television 20

but he has appeared on television 20 times.
Witt performs on a different kind of stage as superintendent of the Oakland County Road Commission's Southfield maintenance garage.
Local newspersons from nearby television stations are interested in how Witt and his road crews tackle the tough job of taking care of many main roads in southern Oakland County.
Nestled between a rush of cars on 1-505 and Northwestern Highway, the Southfield maintenance garage is a becliive of activity for busy road crews.

Southment manifeatance garage; as to been we activity for busy road crews.

They patch potholes, mow grass, sweep curks, plow srow and spread de-icing sall from Woodward, the eastern boundary, to Haggerty on the west and Fourteen and Eight Mile bordering the north and south.

"I believe our district carries more traffic than any of the other live road commission districts around Colkland County," Witt said.

Telegraph, 1465 and IUS-10 all carry large volumes of traffic in and out of the district every day, Witt said.

WITT, WHO claims he thrives on being active, said every day he must decide where to place a 20-member crew and fleet of bright orange trucks, road sweepers and other maintenance equipment.



roads can interrupt my routine any time," he said. "Hazardous road con-ditions demand my immediate atten-tion, as well as my road crews, day or width.

tithin, as well as my road crews, day or no. Whenever the road buckles because of heat. I immediately send a crew to the site. Mosture under the neads is heated to the point of expanding, swelling the pavement and causing a blow-my.

Road crews use a cement saw or jackhammer to relieve the pressure on either side of the blow-up and the raised portion is removed. With said.

The concrete slab is then allowed to

fall back into place and an asphalt sur-face is applied until permanent repairs

fall back into place and an asphalt surface is applied until permanent repairs can be made, he said.

A typical day for Witt usually starts at least an hour before the crew members start work at 7:30 a.m. The superintendent first prepares the daily work and the said of the said of

Patricia McLaughlin, of Farm-

calls," he said. "We handle complaints through the Department of Citizen Services, 858-8494."

Every day, foremen Tom Price and Howard O'Shaughnessy partot the district, checking on road crews and keeping an eye out for areas that need work on the 202, two-lane miles of roads in the district.

Witt said his efforts can be hampered at any time by equipment fallure or absentee workers. But he said there's a certain amount of flexibility in the two-week schedules to allow for unexpected problems.

in the two-week schedules to allow for inexpected problems. Curb sweepers are invaluable pieces of equipment in the completely paved district, Witt said. Curb must be swept clean to prevent dirt from wash-ing down into sewer catch basins, he said.

said.
"WITH THE large amount of traffic in the district, certain dangers are inherent in road repair," With said.
"Men and equipment are exposed daily to cars and trucks rushing by. Cars colliding with road commission equipment is a very real hazard."



Daniel Cafolla, of Farmington, has been awarded the Chartered Life Underwriter diploma and professional designation by the American College of Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. An employee of the Canada Life Assurance Co., he is a member of the Million Dollar Round Table, Life Leaders of Michigan and the Association of Life Underwriters.





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