

The eastern mole is well adapted for tunneling through soil with its soft, dense fur that lies flat, front feet flattened like shovels and nails flattened for digging.

Busy mole has own job, world

WHEN I was a youngster, the only jobs I recall were a fireman, policeman, baker and doctor. Now I know that there are endless job titles and classifications in society. Each person has a specific job to do.

In the natural world, plants and animals have developed to survive in almost every conceivable place.

Bacteria survive in the hot springs of Yellowstone National Park and produce the various colors in the pools. Insects spend their entire life in the upper branches of a tree. Some animals subsist in subzero temperatures of the Antarctic.

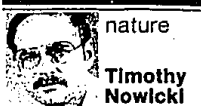
Even the subterranean world is utilized by a mammal.

EASTERN MOLES seldom are visible, but evidence of their presence is frequently seen.

Both the eastern and star-nosed mole are well adapted for tunneling through soil.

They have soft, dense fur that lies flat comfortably, no matter which direction they travel in their confined tunnels. Their front feet are flattened like shovels. Even their nails are flattened for digging.

A mild December had yet to freeze the soil, which explains why I was still seen seeing new excavations: from moles as I walked through the woods. Now that the ground has frozen, moles spend



nature

Timothy Nowicki

much of their time in their deeper tunnels and dens.

SHALLOW TUNNELS just under the ground are frequently used for feeding.

Earthworms, grubs, insects and other small invertebrates make up 80 percent of a mole's diet. They must eat one-third their weight (2-4 oz.) each day.

Sharp, pointed teeth the length of the skull are used for crushing and eating the hard skeleton of insects. Such teeth aren't useful for eating plant material.

Fertilized and well-cared for lawns are good places for moles to find food. Even though moles are not eating the grass, their shallow tunnels are unsightly on a manicured lawn.

Fortunately, moles are solitary animals. Several tunnels in a lawn may be the work of just one or two individuals. Once these animals are removed the problem should be solved.

Bids sought on I-696, I-75

Last link across Oakland due in 1989

Bids will be taken in Lansing Wednesday for construction of the final link of I-696 (Walter Routhier) Freeway and widening of I-75, state transportation director James P. Pitz said.

The I-696 project, extending 0.7 mile from near Southfield east to Meadowood in Lathrup Village, will cost nearly \$12 million. It will be the last link in the 7.9-mile middle section of the freeway across southern Oakland County.

Completion is scheduled for late 1989, when the entire stretch is slated to be open to traffic.

THE OPENING will complete a 28.2-mile bypass of Detroit extending from I-275 at Novi east to I-94 at Roseville. Total cost is an estimated \$420 million, including right-of-way and engineering.

Pitz said MDOT has obtained about \$140 million in federal discretionary funds, in addition to its regular allocation of federal highway funds, in order to keep the work moving ahead on schedule.

An additional \$27.6 million of discretionary funds also will make possible

the widening of the western third of I-696 from Novi east to Lahser Road. Bids will be taken next year to expand the freeway to four lanes in each direction and to upgrade the interchange at Orchard Lake Road. The estimated cost is \$30 million.

That project also is scheduled to open in 1989, coinciding with the opening of the segment under construction to the east.

THE I-75 project will widen nearly seven miles of I-75 from two lanes to four in each direction through Bloomfield Township and Auburn Hills. Estimated cost is \$18.8 million.

The project was scheduled for September bidding but withdrawn after changes were made to improve

traffic flow, Pitz said.

The job includes widening six bridges, new concrete shoulders, median barrier walls, lights and signs along 6.8 miles of I-75 from South Boulevard to Joslyn Road.

Preliminary work will start this winter. The project will be on an accelerated schedule through its expected completion date in November.

Emissions tests still required

The Auto Emissions Testing (AET) program in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties will continue without interruption, according to the Michigan Department of State.

The state Legislature approved an additional \$1.8 million to continue the program before adjourning for the holidays. Sen. Rudy Nichols, R-

Waterford, had reported out a bill to "sunset" the program, but it failed.

If your vehicle fails the test, the maximum you can be required to spend on repairs for a 1988 AET test is \$49 — an increase of \$3 from the 1987 ceiling, the Department of State said.

Any motorist whose vehicle registration

is up for renewal will receive a pre-printed application stating whether the vehicle requires an Auto Emissions Test.

Motorists with questions regarding the Auto Emissions Testing program and those vehicles it affects may call the department's Detroit area number, 569-5080.

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Law office group to meet

The law office and management committee of the Oakland County Bar Association will hold a formation meeting of the Lawyers' Computer Users Group from 4-6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 25, in the probate conference room, Oakland County Courthouse.

If your law office uses computers, either small or large systems, plan to attend this formation meeting. The group will share information on how they are using their computers and will acquire new ideas on how to make their systems more effective. There is no charge.

Men, if you're about to turn 18, it's time to register with Selective Service at any U.S. Post Office.

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