

Northbound traffic on Woodward moves slowly due to construction that is widening the thoroughfare. MDOT is looking for a timely completion to Woodward and I-696 construction projects, both of which are on schedule.

Top 10

Roadwork bumps up accident stats

By Philip A. Sherman
staff writer

The Farmington Hills police chief says prolonged freeway construction has helped tag the intersection at 12 Mile and Orchard Lake as the most accident-ridden in Oakland County for 1988.

That intersection, along with nine others, was cited by the Traffic Improvement Association of Oakland County on its top-10 accident list. The TIA gets its information from Michigan State Police records; the 12 Mile and Orchard Lake intersection was the scene of 102 accidents during 1988.

"I think the increase is related to construction on the overpass. We've had a lot of problems as it relates to congestion," police Chief William Dwyer said.

THE MAJORITY of accidents are minor and a only few caused injuries, Dwyer said. None caused a fatality at that intersection or any of the others on the list.

John Joy, of the Oakland County Road Commission, said "it's a circumstance. It's simply the congestion the roadway is required to handle," in reference to the intersection.

"You've also got a circumstance where drivers become impatient sometimes. This kind of action takes place, generally speaking, in the heat of rush hour traffic," Joy added. He said during non-peak hours, this intersection and most of the others "are not that bad." Joy expects the situation to ease up when freeway construction ceases and the interchange opens later this year.

In order, the other intersections are:

- M-59 and Airport Road, 100 accidents;
- M-59 and Elizabeth Lake Road, 90 accidents;
- Long Lake and Rochester, 87;
- M-59 and Crescent Lake Road, 86;
- 11 Mile and Southfield, 84;
- M-59 and Pontiac Lake Road, 81;

The majority of accidents are minor and a only few caused injuries. None caused a fatality at that intersection or any of the others on the list.

- Square Lake and Franklin, 78;
 - Maple and Orchard Lake, 78;
 - John R and Maple, 73.
- Bruce Madsen, executive director of the TIA, said "those particular intersections are all very high volume. This is really more a function of exposure more than anything else."

THE TIA is a private, non-profit organization that compiles traffic data. "We primarily focus our attention on helping public officials upgrade their level of performance" by providing them with information they may not find elsewhere, Madsen added.

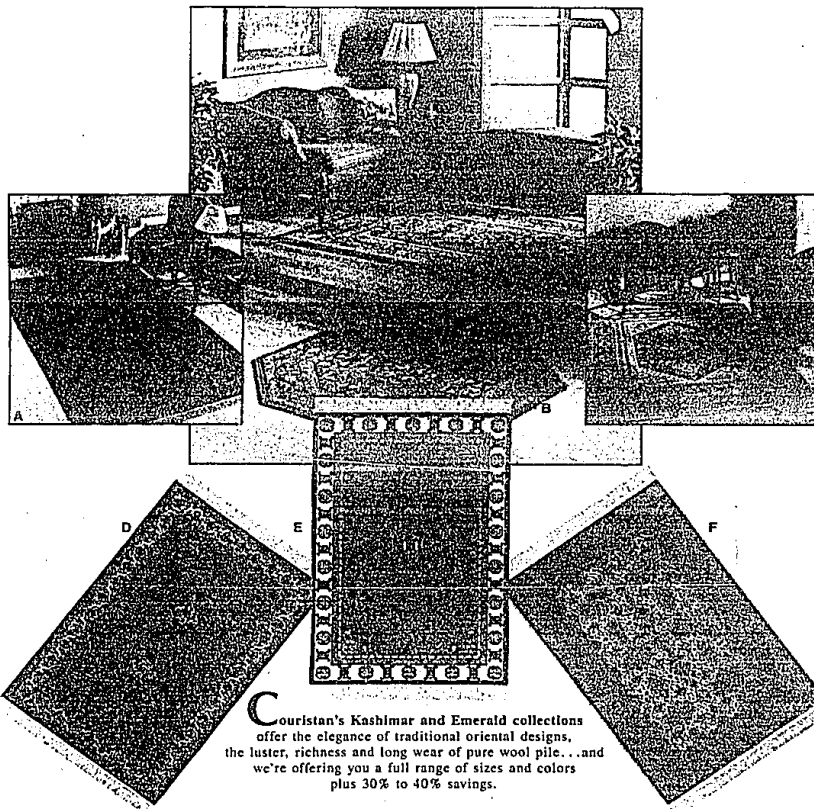
Madsen noted four of the accident-prone intersections listed are on M-59. "We want to look and see if we can find any common denominators" among those accidents to find out why they're happening, he said.

Airport Road and M-59, with 112 accidents, took first place on the TIA's list in 1987. "And for a long time, Maple and Telegraph was not only number one in Oakland County, but it was very high for the entire state of Michigan," Madsen said.

Now, with a shift in traffic patterns, Telegraph and Maple isn't even in the top 10. Besides traffic information, Madsen said the TIA helps Oakland County's 42 law enforcement departments communicate with one another, acts as a clearinghouse for information and assists in master plan development. TIA funding comes from local communities.

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County's most dangerous intersections

