Traffic Incident Management NEWSLETTER

MDOT MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

CHART

All Lanes Open: Moving Maryland

Issue #3 - Fall 2019

Message from the Director

'Tis the season – I find the end of the year is a good time to reflect on our accomplishments and focus forward into the new year (and next decade) to even greater opportunities. Safety for all our incident responders remains our #1 priority!

With the turning of the leaves and the temperatures getting colder, CHART too has evolved, once again, and reached yet another new milestone. Through the proven effectiveness of our entire TIM team, CHART will be expanding its response footprint to now include the Eastern Shore of Maryland, returning to our roots where we first began 30 years ago with our "Reach the Beach" program. Five Emergency Response Technicians and a Regional Supervisor are in place on the Eastern Shore to provide permanent and regular patrols. While scheduled coverage will be Monday-Friday from 5:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m., our Eastern Region team are residents of the peninsula and will be available to respond to incidents quickly and efficiently. I very much look forward to the services we can provide the Eastern Shore and the wider margin of safety we can afford our shore responders, as well as the new partnerships that will be forged, and current ones that will be enhanced.

This expansion is just one of the things I am excited about – there are many things coming in 2020 and the next decade that will improve safety and the driving experience for our responders and customers alike.

I truly wish you and yours the best in health and happiness in 2020 and beyond.

Joey Sagal
Director, MDOT SHA Office of
CHART and ITS Development

MDOT SHA Gearing Up for Winter Response

MDOT SHA is gearing up, literally, for this year's Winter Response, and is using a combination of tools and equipment to keep our fleet and customers informed and moving during Winter weather.

MDOT SHA began Phase II of its pilot project maintaining a Mobile Advanced Road Weather Information Sensor (MARWIS) on 50 vehicles - a combination of CHART Response Vehicles and SHA's snow fighting fleet. The sensor takes measurements 100 times per second collecting data on temperature, relative humidity, dew point, and road conditions. The sensors can determine if the road surface is dry, moist, wet, covered with ice/snow, or chemically treated as well as calculate ice percentages and weather-related surface friction. The data can be viewed in real-time by the Statewide Operations Center to assist in messaging and relaying information to maintenance shops.

MDOT SHA will also activate its Statewide Transportation Operations Response Map, better known as S.T.O.R.M., again this year. This public facing website: https://maryland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=063bc92489094dbc8d34c9c2001a38a4, allows users to view the location of snow fighting resources on State-owned/maintained roads in real-time.

When it comes to incident response, commercial vehicle incidents can add hours to expected roadway clearance times because of the special equipment required to clear the road. To help expedite response, CHART will deploy contractual heavy-duty tow resources at strategic locations to help relocate commercial vehicles that are disabled or involved in minor crashes not requiring recovery.

CHART Unveils Fleet of Utility Trucks with Stingers

CHART's newest fleet of trucks allows our drivers to haul materials and equipment as well as tow vehicles with a wheel lift system, commonly known as a stinger. While our tow trucks have superior lift and winch capability and our Custom Response Vehicles (CRVs) can carry the greatest volume of supplies and gear, it made sense to combine capabilities on our new fleet to best serve incident response and our drivers. The chassis size was increased to an F-550, and we specified a diesel engine for additional torque, weight, and fuel mileage. Additionally, a "hide-a-way" wheel lift, that can be remotely and wirelessly controlled, was installed. We look forward serving our drivers and customers more efficiently with these functional additions to our fleet.

INCIDENT RESPONSE BY THE NUMBERS

January-September 2019

INCIDENTS

21,254	78
Total	Daily Average

DISABLED VEHICLES

24,906	91
Total	Daily Average

| AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME	AVERAGE LANE CLOSURE TIME
7:47	28:40
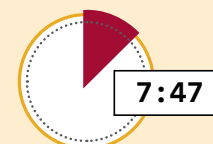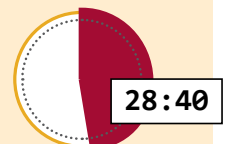
MDOT SHA Partners with Waze

MDOT SHA has officially joined the Waze Connected Cities Program (CCP), and is now one of the 70 other North American Waze partners participating in the program. According to Waze, "The CCP brings cities and citizens together to answer the questions "What's happening, and where?" We exchange publicly available incident and road closure reports, enabling our government partners to respond more immediately to accidents and congestion on their roads. In turn, we aggregate our partners' data on the Waze platform, resulting in one of the most succinct, thorough overviews of current road conditions today."

The partnership provides many opportunities to enhance operations within MDOT SHA's Traffic Management Center (TMC.) One key benefit is the ability for TMC Operations Supervisors to enter full roadway closures into the Waze Map Editor. The Statewide Operations Center will also use Waze data to better detect incidents and disabled vehicles reported by users. Users will also be able to find information on public meetings through "chit chats" created on the platform and in-app messages for major events. This is only one of the first steps MDOT SHA is taking to modernize the delivery of traveler information to the public.
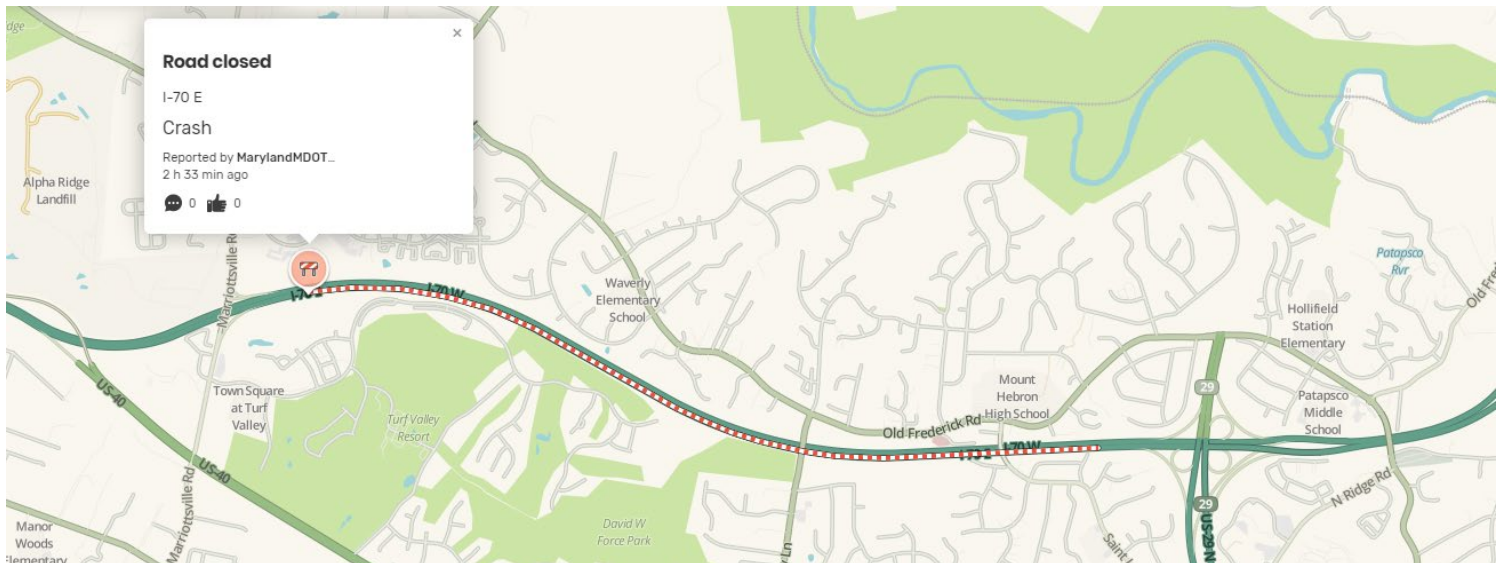
Testimonials

"Gary Tyler was wonderful. I was driving after dark on 270 going south and my tire came apart...Luckily I made it to the side of the road. Difficult because there are so many lanes!! I called 911 for help...after calling Triple A. The dispatcher knew it was dangerous and immediately sent out help. Gary arrived with a huge truck which he parked in back. Told me NOT TO GET OUT OF MY CAR!! He changed my right front tire–very efficiently with great good humor as he had been working since 8 am that morning....a 12 hour shift!! I am sooo grateful. Trooper McCue also came. It was a cold night and I was very fortunate for the State Police and for MDOT. THANK YOU!!!!!!"

Kathleen
November 12, 2019

"[Jason] Swanger saw me stranded on the side of the highway at a busy entrance / exit ramp and stopped to help. The car ran out of gas on the way to the gas station with my two young kids in the car. I was moved to tears when I saw him pull up behind me to help."

Gina
November 25, 2019

"Jeremy was my patrol driver, and he arrived and helped me put a spare on my car. He was fast, efficient, and completely polite. I was really frazzled and he helped calm me down right away."

MJ
December 5, 2019

MDOT SHA Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) Program — System 1 Concept of Operations Moving Forward

To improve traffic mobility and safety for our customers on the highway system of I-70/US 40 between MD 32 and I-695 (System 1), MDOT SHA is looking at implementing a combination of solutions, which includes TSMO strategies, for better incident management, demand management, queue warning systems, dynamic speed advisory, faster incident detection, and repositioning of emergency patrol deployment. This is part of MDOT SHA's ongoing implementation of a System of Systems approach to improving Maryland's road/highway network using a combination of improvements that includes TSMO strategies and technologies.

A combination of solutions will be deployed over time using a phased approach to make improvements, starting with the addition of TSMO technology including installation of CCTV cameras for traffic monitoring, automatic incident detection, and Smart Signals that adapt signal timing based on the amount of traffic and traffic conditions. Environmental solutions such as trimming trees and geometric improvements including changes to pavement markings and signage will also be used to improve the customer experience. MDOT SHA is excited to be moving forward with improvements to the first of our Systems, please stay tuned for more updates and information!

MDOT SHA Connected and Automated Vehicle (CAV) Program – CAV Public Policy Across the US Story Map

For the past 2 years, MDOT SHA has maintained the "Connected and Automated Vehicle Public Policy Across the US" story map. The purpose of this informational tool is to track federal and state policy and legislative actions related to CAV. The rapid development of connected and automated vehicle technology and the need to engage in testing has prompted many states to pass legislation or issue executive orders regarding how they plan to deal with this technology. This story map allows the user to click on a given state on the map and examine the active legislation (introduced and waiting on approval/passing) and/or approved or enacted legislation (signed and passed) that currently exists there. Each piece of legislation listed contains a web link to more detail about that particular bill or order. Links to CAV plan or program websites active in the state are also provided. We encourage everyone to visit the site to learn more about the state of CAV policy and law across the US, and check back periodically as updates are applied on a monthly basis: https://arcg.is/1n59jv.