

Tennessee Infrastructure In The News

October 8, 2008

A daily roundup of recent news stories and opinion pieces about Tennessee transportation, water and flood control infrastructure

For the full story, click on the link below the excerpt.

Large cracks appear on U.S. 129 near Chilhowee Dam (Maryville Daily Times)

Large cracks have developed on a section of U.S. 129 near Chilhowee Dam that carries heavy motorcycle traffic to The Dragon. Blount County Highway Superintendent Bill Dunlap who visited the site Tuesday afternoon, said that the 200-foot area of the larger cracks "definitely needs attention now. There has been a good three-inches of settling." "It can be dangerous," he warned. "The depression in the travel lane could definitely throw a motorcycle or cause a four-wheel vehicle to swerve." The Calderwood Highway (U.S. 129) portion that borders Chilhowee Lake leads to Tabcat Creek where the section known as The Dragon is located. The 11.1-miles has 318 curves and is internationally known as a motorcycle rider destination.

<http://www.thedailytimes.com/article/20081007/BREAKING/810075164>

- Opinion -

Editorial: Traffic cameras offer safety, not intrusion, on the streets (Tennessean)

Communities in Tennessee should continue to implement cameras that electronically capture motorists who run red lights. The cameras are an excellent step for safety. Traffic-light enforcement has produced results and controversy in Murfreesboro, where more than 4,000 citations have been issued since the city installed cameras. The idea of the device is when a car runs a red light, the camera automatically gets the picture, and the driver is caught, lead-footed and red-handed. The system is a success in Murfreesboro, but that hasn't stopped complaints about the system. By now, objections to the use of the cameras in Murfreesboro mirror those that have cropped up in other communities. The list of complaints is sometimes unreasonable. One common objection is that the cameras are somehow an invasion of privacy, which is ridiculous in such a public setting.

<http://www.tennessean.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20081008/OPINION01/810080418/1007/OPINION>

Guest columnist: Cameras target blatant violators (Tennessean)

When I was a uniformed police officer, driving a highly marked police vehicle, I was hit by a red-light runner. This single occurrence has shaped my driving habits from that moment on. While in an airport lounge, I engaged a lady in typical waiting-lounge conversation when she asked me what I do. I said "I put cameras on red lights to catch red-light runners." She asked me how in the world could I, after spending 23 years in high-level law enforcement jobs, be doing that "red-light" thing? In the same breath, she said, "I run red lights all the time!" I smiled and told her that she probably ran yellow lights, not red lights. She said that often she is in the middle of the intersection, when the light turns red, and that she did not want a ticket for that. In red-light camera technology, the cameras do not even turn on until the light is red, and they must take the first picture of your vehicle BEHIND the stop line on the red, then take the second picture of you

going through the light, on the red.

<http://www.tennessean.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20081008/OPINION01/810080417>

Guest columnist: Devices make money, can cause crashes (Tennessean)

The Tennessee Center for Policy Research recently issued a revealing policy report on those pesky red-light cameras popping up all over Tennessee towns. What we found was disturbing, albeit somewhat unsurprising. Cities across Tennessee have begun installing cameras at intersections in a purported effort to crack down on red-light runners. City leaders assert safety is their primary objective. Facts suggest, however, that the cameras actually make intersections more dangerous. Further, the true motive for installing these eyes in the sky is not safety but money. A study conducted by the Federal Highway Administration confirmed that while the cameras reduce "T-bone" crashes at intersections, they actually lead to an increase in rear-end collisions. Anyone who has ever approached a yellow light only to see a sign emblazoned with "Photo Enforced" probably will recall slamming on the brakes. It's this sudden stop to avoid a \$50 fine that leads to an increase in rear-end collisions where cameras are located.

<http://www.tennessean.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20081008/OPINION01/810080414>

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