



News from the Ohio Turnpike

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From Maintenance/Roadway Worker to Superintendent, the Ohio Turnpike's Matt McMullen and Jeff Landel Lead by Example

The Ohio Turnpike's roadway safety preparedness for winter begins with snowplow truck inspections.

BEREA, Ohio (Nov. 7, 2022) – Matt McMullen, who grew up in Brady Lake, Ohio, in Portage County, started his career with the Ohio Turnpike as a custodian at Hiram Maintenance Building in Windham in 1997.

Over the next 25 years, he ascended the ranks on a career pathway that included several promotions from a maintenance/roadway worker to assistant section clerk to assistant foreman at three maintenance buildings to foreman to assistant superintendent and to superintendent in March 2022.

"It has truly been a career," said McMullen. "The Ohio Turnpike is one of the places still around where you can spend your entire working career and advance if you want to. There's a lot of opportunity with competitive pay and benefits, and the work pace is steady year-round."

As superintendent of the Ohio Turnpike's Eastern Division, McMullen oversees 150 employees at maintenance facilities in Amherst, Richfield, Windham and Canfield.

"Having everyone do their part working as a team, especially when it's an emergency or a major snow event, is what I like most about being a superintendent," he added. "From the top to the bottom, it takes a team effort to succeed, which builds a strong work culture."

During the winter snow and ice removal season, the Eastern Division is responsible for maintaining 115 miles of the Ohio Turnpike, which includes the toll plaza interchanges and service plazas, from milepost 126 in Erie County – spanning Lorain, Cuyahoga, Summit, Portage and Trumbull counties – to milepost 241 in Mahoning County.

"When you're behind the wheel you always want to make sure your truck is ready to go with fuel and loaded with de-icing liquid and salt," said McMullen, who spent 14 years working as a snowplow truck operator. "You check the lights and plow blades and clean the windows, and make sure you have a good lunch because it's going to be a long night."

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In preparation for the upcoming winter season, Ohio Turnpike officials from Oct. 18-21, 2022, performed a 136-point inspection of all snowplow trucks and equipment at eight maintenance buildings located across the 241-mile toll road.

“The importance of these inspections is to make sure the snowplow trucks are ready to go for the safety of all our patrons who rely on the Ohio Turnpike for their travel needs,” said Jeff Landel, superintendent of the Ohio Turnpike’s Western Division, which includes the maintenance facilities in Pioneer, Swanton, Elmore, and Castalia. “It’s about the readiness of the fleet.”

The maintenance checklist includes an inspection of all engine parts, plowing equipment, tires, lights, and other components as well as a test calibration of the salt and liquid de-icing systems, and more.

Landel, a resident of Edgerton, Ohio, began his career with the Ohio Turnpike as a maintenance/roadway employee, which included working as a snowplow truck operator, in 1996.

“It’s been a rewarding career,” added Landel, who climbed the ranks with several job promotions over more than two decades to become superintendent in 2021. “You go out there on those nights when it’s snowing heavily, and you know a large number of people traveled safely because of the job you did. It makes you feel good, especially during the holidays when families are traveling and there is increased traffic on the turnpike.”

This year, more than 100 snowplow trucks will be available to maintain the 1,395 lane miles, 31 toll plaza interchanges, and 14 service plazas along the Ohio Turnpike, which traverses through 13 counties in northern Ohio.

“When the snowplow crews are in action, motorists should take every precaution to avoid passing snowplows and allow extra space for the operators to clear the road,” said Ferzan Ahmed, executive director of the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission in Berea. “Don’t crowd the plow. The safest place to be on the road is behind a snowplow.”

During the 2021-2022 season, the Ohio Turnpike handled 55 winter storm events, one more than the previous season. Maintenance and roadway crews worked more than 32,000 hours to keep the turnpike and facilities clear of snow and ice.

More than 309,000 gallons of de-icing liquid and 56,000 tons of salt were used to remove snow and ice from the roadways and bridges in 2021-2022. On average, about 293,000 gallons of de-icing liquid and 65,000 tons of salt are used per year.

“When required, the crews will work 12-hour shifts, seven days a week to provide Ohio Turnpike customers with a safe and reliable roadway during the winter driving season,” Ahmed added. “The entire Ohio Turnpike can be plowed once per hour with the current staffing and equipment levels at eight maintenance facilities.”

Looking For a New Career Opportunity?

The Ohio Turnpike is looking to fill several career opportunities at its maintenance facilities across the Ohio Turnpike.

Positions are currently available for maintenance/roadway workers and trainees to the skilled trades, including electricians, plumbers, mechanics, and body shop technicians.

Regarding what it takes to succeed as a maintenance/roadway worker with the Ohio Turnpike, McMullen offered the following advice: "Come in with an open mind and be ready to learn because it's a unique job. The best way to learn everything that involves the position is experience and spending time with the senior staff who know their way around."

Earlier this year, the Ohio Turnpike launched a diversity and inclusion training program to fill eight entry-level maintenance/roadway worker trainee positions.

"It's a great opportunity for diverse and underrepresented candidates to spend anywhere between one to two years with us and earn their commercial driver's license, learn the Ohio Turnpike way, and possibly come on board as a full-time career," he added.

For a complete list of career opportunities and locations, [click here](#).

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