

From ATSSA: 19 new work-zone devices

The newest devices that were displayed at this year's American Traffic Safety Services Association Exhibit

You'd expect to find the most important new work-zone safety devices at an American Traffic Safety Services Association exhibit, and you would be right. Nearly 20 of the latest devices were of special interest to road agencies and contractors, and other exhibits of already introduced equipment reminded us of the wealth of technology that can keep *your workers* safe.

1. Signals

One of the most interesting innovations was Traffic Technology, Inc.'s Unilight traffic signal. This new traffic light technology uses a single box with changing LED display for red/yellow/green. The red light features a highly visible white border that can be programmed to flash. The signal substantially reduces maintenance costs due to a reduced total failure rate. It is half the volume and weight of a traditional signal, minimizing the cost of the support structure. The unit can be powered by battery or solar, as well as traditional utilities, to provide continual service through any unforeseen emergency. Portable versions are used for temporary lights at events, emergencies, in work zones, and for other needs.

Circle 32 on ROADFAX card.

2. Truck-mounted device

Energy Absorption Systems showed the first truck-mounted impact absorption device that can withstand the force of up to 4,410 lbs. traveling at up to 62 mi./hr., meeting both mandatory and optional National Cooperative Highway Research standards. At 13.17-ft. long, the attenuator is attached to the rear of a conventional dump truck that trails

roadway work crews. It functions not only in dead-on collisions, but also provides protection from off center or angle impacts, bringing the vehicle to a safe, controlled stop and preventing it from riding up under the shadow truck.

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3. Channelizer

Cogent Enterprises, Inc. showed the Cordonator, a new traffic channelizing device that folds flat to 4.5 ft. and ships with its lantern attached, reducing worker time in dangerous traffic during set-up and retrieval. The unit is the same size as conventional traffic barrels and works with ballast and beacons currently in use. It will not roll when hit, reducing compounding traffic dangers. In addition, flat surfaces and multiple reflector points improve the visibility of the barrier. The device comes in a variety of colors and configurations suitable for everything from roadway construction to police emergencies and hazard warnings.

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4. Speed bump

Speed Management exhibited the first-ever temporary speed bump for traffic control at roadway work zones and other applications. Inspired by a near-miss during repairs in a roadway manhole, the temporary device effectively slows traffic while maintaining unrestricted access for emergency vehicles. No hardware is needed for installation, so the device prevents road surface damage. The lightweight, 15-lb. unit is made of virgin rubber and performance-tested at speeds up to 45 mi./hr.

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5. Controlling signs

American Signal showed Easyhost 2.1. Two new modes of communication allow a software system to contact and control any number of dynamic message signs at any geographic location, either remotely or automatically (such as auto-detection of traffic conditions like fog, a traffic queue, a Hazmat incident or traffic accident), via Internet, if needed. The system allows an operator to control individual signs, entire networks, or segregated groups within the networks, individually or sequentially up to a virtually unlimited number of signs. Or remote sensing, processing, and communications systems can automatically activate messages depending upon conditions for which the equipment has been programmed. The system also features an Internet interface that allows communication with multiple signs regardless of location.

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6. Markings

Innovative Performance Systems introduced its high-performance pavement marking system that provides durable, more reflective