

Phillips Co. wins second place in 'Build a Better Mousetrap' contest

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

Phillips County Road and Bridge Departments have been recognized for the second place national award in the 2009 "Build a Better Mousetrap" contest for their magnetic road debris collector.

The department designed a hydraulically operated bar magnet which can be attached to the back of county road graders. Once the magnet is lowered, it collects metal objects such as nails, screws, etc. from the roadways while regular maintenance of the roadway occurs. This cuts down on the number of flat tires residents get as they travel the roads in Phillips County.

While the county cannot afford to install a unit on every maintainer, they will rotate machines so all roads get covered.

Federal Highway Administration is attempting to ensure all transportation departments can learn from successful best practices recognized across the nation.

The National LTAP (Local Technical Assistance Program) organization held the first annual national "Build a Better Mousetrap" competition this year. This is similar to the "You Show Us" contest the Colorado LTAP organization has been holding for several years.

The national organization requested solicitations from across the nation for the new contest. Each state was allowed to enter multiple entries. Colorado's LTAP director Renée Killer submitted five of Colorado's previous winners in the Colorado "You Show Me" contest from past years.

Colorado agencies won all three top awards. First place went to the town of Snowmass Village for a low cost drop culvert inlet. Third place went to Boulder County for their paving cleanup system.