

Lunsford joins KDOT's Public Affairs Division

Sally Lunsford has joined KDOT as Director of the Division of Public Affairs. She comes to the agency after more than six years as Director of Communications for the Kansas Lottery.



Sally Lunsford

"I've always regarded KDOT as a top-notch state agency," Lunsford said. "I don't think any agency has more of an impact on the daily lives of Kansans. KDOT and Secretary Miller have sterling reputations, and I'm excited to be part of what we're doing with T-WORKS."

Prior to her stint with the Lottery, Lunsford spent six years as Director of Public Information at the Department of Commerce. She's looking forward to applying that experience to her work at KDOT.

"At Commerce we always featured Kansas' excellent transportation system as a selling point when we were courting companies to come here. You would be amazed at how important the state's transportation system is to businesses that are thinking about relocating."

Lunsford spent almost 20 years as a broadcast journalist before entering government service in 1999, including nine years at WIBW in Topeka. She served as a TV reporter, anchor and producer at the station, and was its News Director from 1997-1999.

"I had an opportunity to make a change, and I decided to take it," she said of her decision to leave journalism. "People always ask me if I miss the news, miss being on TV, but I don't. I was ready to do something else."

Lunsford lives in Tecumseh with her husband Paul, who is retired from BNSF. She started at KDOT Aug. 8, and is working hard to get a handle on her new responsibilities.

"It's a steep learning curve, but I'm confident I'll be able to contribute. When I left journalism I was a little afraid that I'd find government boring. Believe me, it's anything but boring." -P.Q.



Equipment Operator Chris Riggs installs a roadside weed barrier along I-135 in Wichita.

Recycling bottles on I-135

By Tom Hein

WICHITA - Normally, plastic bottles along the side of a highway are considered litter and must be picked up. But an experiment on I-135 in Wichita uses a roadside weed barrier material made from 100 percent post-consumer plastic bottles.

WeedEnder is a thin but durable sheet of plastic that deprives vegetation of sunlight yet allows water to infiltrate. It is available in rolls one to six feet wide in a 250-foot roll. It has been used in other areas of the country and has been found to be resistant to degradation by ultra-violet light. It also has a life span of at least 15 years.

Benefits include erosion control, water permeability and less need for spraying weed killer or using a string trimmer, resulting in reduced labor costs. Most useful applications of the product are along guardrails, fence lines and around signposts.

Each mile of WeedEnder keeps 50,000 bottles from entering landfills and may prove to be a good labor-saving green solution along Kansas highways.



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On the...

COVER

District employees participate in flag raising ceremonies across the state (top photo, District Five; middle and bottom left photos, District Two; bottom right photo, District Three). District Four will be in next month's edition. For more details, see story on page 2.