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# Setting Up Snow Plow Operator Training (SPOT)

Bret Hodne

City of West Des Moines, Iowa





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# Getting Started

Why  
Who  
How  
Where  
What





# “Why” Do Training?





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# Some Reasons!

Safety  
Work culture  
Liability  
For yourself





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# “Who” Helped Us!

NDOT contact

Volunteers

Best “external” invite

It’s not always “what” you know!





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# MNDOT “SPOT”

Originally developed by MNDOT - late 90's

First time plow operators

Wanted to get rid of the “Here's the keys, be back in twelve hours”

Liability

Full/Part-time trainees

Held at Camp Ripley every fall





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# MNDOT SPOT

over 200 students per rear

40-45 trainers broken down into 7-8 groups

office support staff, mechanics, HR staff

50-55 MNDOT trucks

two week period for students

three weeks for trainers/staff (first week set up, "Train-the-Trainers")







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# MNDOT SPOT

Classroom CDL and plow training

Hands On pre-trip training

Operating plows - roadeo environment

Ability to have road - private grounds

Must pass the SPOT road test before driving on public road runs

For most students, it's "pass or fail"





# Where Do We Go Now?

What to do with all this knowledge

Talk to IDOT/ICEA/APWA/LTAP

Direction

Developed a WDM in-house SPOT training

Develop a regional SPOT training course - Why?



# “How” - Overview of WDM SPOT

House training started in 2006

Designed for new/part-time operators

5 days of training – “maybe”

Classroom and “hands-on”

Specific training, controller's, fueling, loading, plow techniques,

Procedures, walk around CDL inspections, proper salting, liquids, seat

Work with trainer





# New Hire In House Snow Plow Training

## Overview

Intro, hand out snow manuals

Pre-trip DVD

Shop tour, pre-trip inspections

Raccoon River Park - road trip

Fueling

Loading salt



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# Challenges - WDM SPOT

IE

Identifying the “right” trainers

Addressing potential concerns about students

Additional training required

Buy-in from management





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# Successes - WDM SPOT

Employee knowledge

Safety

Increased operational awareness

Getting peers engaged with training

Ownership/accountability



# 2008 Metro Spot

First time - Iowa State Fair Grounds

3 day event (2 days SPOT, final day state Snow Plow Roadeo)

35 attendees in SPOT

Classroom, pre-trip, road test, Roadeo

Planning committee – local operators

“NOT” a pass or fail scenario



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# Course Content

Driver safety

Pre-trips with plows, wings(if you use them)

Load practice

Load course







# Attendees

erably new plow operators  
be a refresher  
truck for 2-3 operators  
trainer per truck  
lly - agency's provide their own  
k





# 2010 Metro SPOT

- 60 people involved
- State Snow Plow Rodeo – Day 3
- More field staff involvement
- \$40 person per/day
- Grilled our own brat burgers and hamburgers





# Day 1

“Train-the-trainers” session

Introduction to SPOT

Pre-trip video

DOT officer covers pre-trip inspections

Lunch

Move outside to practice pre-trips

Start on Rodeo practice





# Day 2

Plowing technique video

Lessons learned

New technology

Round table

Lunch

Practice Roadeo

Road course





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# “Where”

- Cost
- Location
- Classroom availability
- Outdoor truck work area
- Close proximity to applicable roads





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# Sideline Events For SPO

OT simulator

effect truck- have all day during down time

0 defects, top three winners get \$50





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# Challenges of Iowa Metro SPOT

Level  
Education  
Food  
Specific training  
Downtime  
How big is "too" big







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# Challenges of Iowa Metro SPOT

course design and layout

getting enough help

budget

whether snow removal equipment

some people not giving a S...!

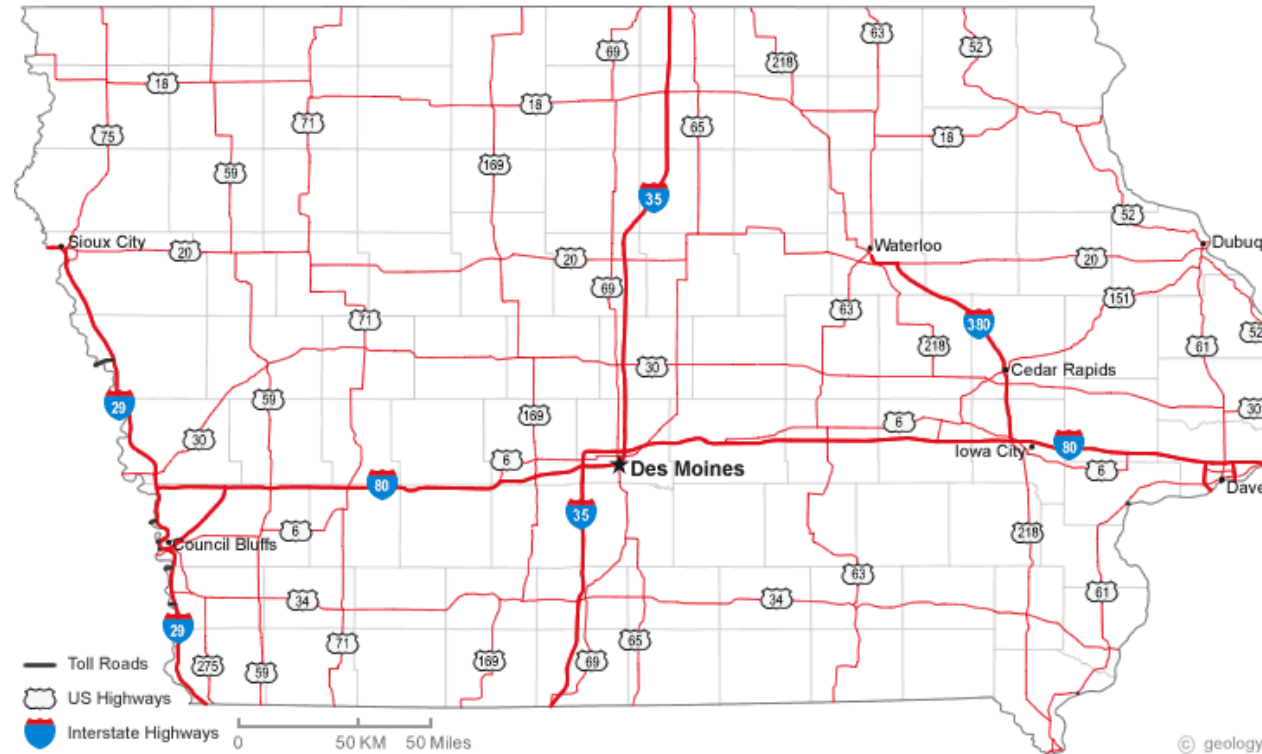




# Where's SPOT Going?

Develop State Wide Training Locations

2017 - Moved Metro SPOT and Roadeo from Central Iowa to Cedar Rapids - will alternate every other year





# Exploring Others Programs

- Survey other agencies
- Web searches
- On site visits
- Ask for help – list serves?





# Equipment Rodeos

- Hands-on training
- Networking opportunities
- Operators seem to enjoy
- Good public relations event





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# Sideline Events For Rodeo

Vendors booths/equipment

Celebrity event

IDOT simulator

Key note speakers





# Getting Staff Involved

- Benefits
- Buy-In
- Delegation
- Ownership in training







# Common Problems

- Sessions scheduling
- Lack of visual aids
- No opportunity for participation
- “Talking down” to attendees
- Repetitive material





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# Networking

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**2018 MINNESOTA FALL EXPO**  
**OCTOBER 3 - 4, 2018**



**MID-AMERICA SNOW AND EQUIPMENT EXPO**

Location :  
Century Airport  
56 Hwy & 167th St  
Edgerton, KS, 66061

Contact Person :  
Terry Whitaker  
Email : [twhitaker@edgertonks.org](mailto:twhitaker@edgertonks.org)  
Phone : (913) 893-6231  
Company : City of Edgerton

**The 29th Annual APWA - Wisconsin Snow  
Rodeo and Equipment Show**



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# “What” Do I Need to Do to Get Started?

You're in luck!

Contacts – You now have some!

Don't reinvent the wheel

Lots of “help” out there

[matt.dolan@wdm.iowa.gov](mailto:matt.dolan@wdm.iowa.gov)





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# THANK YOU!

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# Thanks!

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