

LaPorte District Employee Learns A Lesson ... About Toilet Paper



LaPorte District Media Relations Director Matt Deitchley has had some interesting inquiries from the media in his six months at INDOT. In early August, a local paper called and inquired “Why are your crews putting toilet paper all over the roads?”

“My response to the reporter was, in a matter-of-factly-tone, ‘I doubt its *toilet paper* you are seeing,’” said Deitchley. “I figured it might be some type of paper used for road work, but not the run-of-the-mill Quilted Northern.” In performing his job and to practice due diligence, Deitchley told the reporter he’d check to see what the maintenance crews were using – and tried to hang up the phone before erupting into laughter. The last laugh was on Deitchley.

Rensselaer Subdistrict Operations Manager Tom Kerkes, confirmed the product on the roadway was toilet paper. Deitchley joked “We’re not turning State Road 14 into a public bathroom, are we?”

Kerkes explained that as maintenance crews seal road cracks, one ply toilet paper is placed over their work so vehicles can drive over it sooner without damaging their tires. It’s a very cost-effective tool, and dissolves away without damaging the environment.

Deitchley then had to return the call to the reporter. “I felt pretty stupid calling the reporter back after treating his question like something a seven-year-old would ask,” confessed Deitchley. “Thankfully the reporter was understanding and did confess... it’s not something you see every day on the highways!”

“I’ll take this media inquiry as a learning experience...and next time I’ll be prepared for all bathroom-related high-way questions,” joked Deitchley. And perhaps a learning experience for some of us, whether new employees or veterans, that did not know it is okay to have toilet paper on a highway.