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## Freight and Logistics E-News April 2005 (Vol. 3, No. 1)

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### Freight and Logistics Symposium proceedings published

The summary report of the eighth annual Freight and Logistics Symposium, held December 3, 2004, is now available. The symposium was sponsored by CTS, in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee, the Council of Logistics Management, and the Metropolitan Council.

To obtain a copy of the proceedings, please visit the [CTS proceedings page](#).

### Policy analysis tool for Minnesota biodiesel use

This year, state law is set to require a two percent mixture of biodiesel—a renewable fuel derived from animal fats or vegetable oils—in diesel fuel used by many commercial vehicles in Minnesota. Driven by concerns about the air quality impacts of petroleum-based diesel fuels, biodiesel is emerging as a significant alternative fuel source; however, the effects of biodiesel adoption on fuel usage patterns is not well understood. With funding from the [Minnesota Department of Transportation](#), research fellow **Douglas Tiffany** of the University of Minnesota's [Department of Applied Economics](#) has developed a tool to help policymakers implement biodiesel use policies.

The tool, in the form of a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, may be downloaded at [www.lrrb.org/pdf/MNBiodieselPolTool120904.xls](http://www.lrrb.org/pdf/MNBiodieselPolTool120904.xls). Users can evaluate alternative scenarios based on blend percentages of biodiesel for various classes of vehicles and machines. By using the spreadsheet, it is possible to determine the amount of biodiesel fuel required to meet the needs of these usage scenarios.

The use of biodiesel in a mixture with petro-diesel is likely to increase in the coming years, as federal laws sharply reducing the amount of sulfur in diesel fuel come into effect. Sulfur acts as a lubricant in diesel engines, and increased engine wear is expected to result from use of low-sulfur fuel. Biodiesel, however, contains no sulfur and has a high lubricity that can compensate for the reduction in sulfur content. In addition, the use of biodiesel can help reduce emissions of particulates, volatile organic compounds, and greenhouse gases.

The report, *Distillate Usage Patterns in Minnesota: Development of Data and Tools to Analyze Policies Affecting Biodiesel Usage (Mn/DOT 2005-08)*, is available from the Mn/DOT Web site. The Minnesota Biodiesel Policy Analysis Tool (Microsoft Excel file) is available at: [www.lrrb.org/pdf/MNBiodieselPolTool120904.xls](http://www.lrrb.org/pdf/MNBiodieselPolTool120904.xls).

Reprinted from the [CTS Research E-News](#), April 2005

### Mn/DOT drafts statewide freight transportation plan

Freight transportation within Minnesota is forecast to increase by 60 percent from 2001 to 2020. The Minnesota Statewide Freight Plan provides a framework for policies, strategies, and performance measures to address the state's freight needs. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) has released a draft of the plan for review and comment, at [www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/statewide\\_plan.htm](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/statewide_plan.htm).

### Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee winter meeting recap

The Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee (MFAC) met February 18, 2005, for its winter quarterly meeting in St. Paul, Minnesota.

MFAC Chair **Ron Lifson** led a review of the MFAC 2005 Action Plan and the status of the Transportation Equity Act reauthorization. Also discussed were issues of funding, congestion and reliability, and the millennium generation and security.

A summary and review of Minnesota Statewide Freight Plan and action items identified in the study were presented

by **Marc Cutler** of Cambridge Systematics, the primary consultant for the project, and **Bill Gardner** of Mn/DOT, the project manager for the study. Gardner led a question-and-answer session following the presentations. Topics discussed ranged from private funding opportunities to impacts of West Coast port congestion to the possibility of additional rural intermodal terminals in the state. The draft of the Minnesota Statewide Freight Plan can be viewed at: [www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/statewide\\_plan.htm](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/statewide_plan.htm).

**Robert Johns**, director of CTS, outlined the research program at CTS and its links to freight as well as ways in which MFAC members can become involved in research. For more on the CTS research program refer to: [www.cts.umn.edu/research/](http://www.cts.umn.edu/research/). Johns also presented the state's transportation research program on behalf of Mn/DOT; which is online at [www.research.dot.state.mn.us](http://www.research.dot.state.mn.us).

**Jerry Nagel**, president of the Northern Great Plains Institute in Fargo, North Dakota brought the group up-to-date on studies and other activities related to the northwest regional transportation and economy.

**Betsy Parker**, Mn/DOT's Office of Government Affairs director, led a panel presentation and discussion which included state Rep. **Mary Liz Holberg** and Mn/DOT's assistant to the commissioner for transportation policy & government affairs **Bob McFarlin**. Holberg reviewed various funding proposals currently under review, including the Citizen's League and Itasca Group proposals. She also covered the issue of funding sources and the variety of revenue-generating options. McFarlin presented an overview of the governor's transportation investment plan proposal, which is built around four principles: 1. build on the success of 2003-2004, when 17 major projects were fast-tracked; 2. increase investment by substantial amounts to catch-up; 3. provide sustainable, long-term additional resources to highways, local roads, and transit; 4. be fiscally responsible regarding transportation for the state.

*MFAC is a partnership between government and business to exchange ideas and recommend policy and actions that promote safe, productive, and sustainable freight transportation in Minnesota. MFAC consists of representatives from Minnesota's shipper and carrier communities, as well as a variety of other interested organizations. MFAC provides advice to the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Metropolitan Council regarding freight issues and investments. For more information, contact Bill Gardner, Mn/DOT Office of Freight & Commercial Vehicle Operations at 651-406-4806 or [william.gardner@dot.state.mn.us](mailto:william.gardner@dot.state.mn.us).*

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## U of MN supply chain management program, October 2005

The [Carlson Executive Development Center](#) at the University of Minnesota is hosting a two-day program on supply chain management October 4-6, 2005.

In this program, participants will examine the latest challenges facing supply chains in light of increased globalization and security concerns, industry consolidation, and rising customer expectations. Faculty experts in inventory and distribution management, strategic sourcing, and technology management have drawn from recent supply chain research and best practices to develop an exciting curriculum for this new program. Through exercises, case discussions, and industry presentations, participants will be exposed to new supply chain management tools, concepts, and strategies, and challenged to apply these ideas in their own businesses.

The program fee of \$2,500 includes tuition, program materials, coffee breaks and lunches. Register online at [www.carlsonschool.umn.edu/edc](http://www.carlsonschool.umn.edu/edc), e-mail [edc@carlsonschool.umn.edu](mailto:edc@carlsonschool.umn.edu), or call 612-624-2545 or 800-388-3863.

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## Commercial Truck and Bus Safety Synthesis Program publications available

The federal [Commercial Truck and Bus Safety Synthesis Program](#) (CTBSSP), sponsored by the [Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration](#) and administered by the [Transportation Research Board](#), compiles knowledge from sources relating to specific commercial truck and bus safety issues. CTBSSP publications may be viewed at [www4.trb.org/trb/crp.nsf/reference/appendices/ctbssp](http://www4.trb.org/trb/crp.nsf/reference/appendices/ctbssp).

Here are recent CTBSSP publications, with summaries from the TRB Web site:

- [Operational Differences and Similarities Among the Motorcoach, School Bus, and Trucking Industries](#) (CTBSSP Synthesis 6) is designed as a single resource for information on profiles, safety statistics, and general business operations for these three commercial vehicle industries.
- [Training of Commercial Motor Vehicle Drivers](#) (CTBSSP Synthesis 5) identifies and documents training strategies and curricula from existing commercial driver training programs, with the goal of identifying those commercial motor vehicle driver training tools and techniques that hold the greatest potential to improve commercial motor vehicle safety.
- [Individual Differences and the "High-Risk" Commercial Driver](#) (CTBSSP Synthesis 4) explores individual differences among commercial drivers, particularly as these differences relate to the high-risk commercial driver. The synthesis identifies factors relating to commercial vehicle crash risk and assesses ways that the high-risk driver can be targeted by various safety programs and practices, at both fleet- and industry-wide levels.

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## Upcoming FHWA 'Talking Freight' seminars

Upcoming topics and dates for the "Talking Freight" online seminars from the [Federal Highway Administration](#) (FHWA) are listed here. See the [Talking Freight Web site](#) for further details.

**May 18, 2005** Linking Freight with Context Sensitive Design: Notable Practices 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm EDT **June 15, 2005** Statewide Freight Planning Considerations 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm EDT



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