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Happy Spring

Although the calendar says today marks the official start of spring, we've still got one last nod to winter with this edition of our newsletter. As we transition to warmer days, we're looking back at the projects and accomplishments that kept us moving through the colder months. From exciting developments to plans on the horizon, we're ready to carry that momentum forward into the new season.

Grab a cup of coffee and catch up on everything we've been working on!

PCAV VDOT JOINT MEETING

PCAV was pleased to host our annual winter joint meeting with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) on Tuesday, January 21. It was a productive day filled with meaningful discussions on training programs, technical specifications, and collaboration opportunities. Below are the highlights and key takeaways from each committee and meeting session. As always, we encourage you to reach out with questions and topics you have for upcoming meetings, so that we can invite the appropriate people.

Board of Directors Meeting The PCAV Board of Directors met and discussed the business of PCAV, including a focus on educational trainings and opportunities.

Technical Committee The Technical Committee discussed many items, including the **recent announcement** by the Federal Highway Administration to end its longstanding waiver that allows manufactured products used in federal-aid highway projects not to comply with FHWA's Buy America requirements.

On a state level, PCAV members continued discussion of the impact of Hurricane Helene to Virginia and the value of utilizing precast in culvert replacement, evacuation routes, road and bridge repairs to maximize budget and lifespan.

Discussions also continued regarding VDOT specifications, particularly VDOT Road and Bridge Specifications Section 302, on which PCAV had provided **comment** last summer.

PCAV VDOT Joint Meeting

John Schuler, P.E., assistant state materials engineer, VDOT, provided an update for all attendees. VDOT is interested and considering the use and allowance of fiber-reinforced polymer (FRP), both GFRP and BRFP. AASHTO is also writing a special provision for material allowance. Shuler referenced a small research projected in the Richmond District as well as projects in Maine and North Carolina.

Discussion continued regarding standard drawings. There is no formal timeline yet, but companies are encouraged to coordinate with John Shuler regarding what drawings are on file to make sure their drawings are up-to-date.

Jacob George P.E., Senior Structural Engineer, continues to serve as the point of contact for the sound wall committee; Chuck Patterson, P.E, Standards and Special Design Section Manager will reach out to PCAV for comment on constant-slope barriers.

Looking Forward

For more details on upcoming events or to get involved, please contact **Becky Hall**, visit our **website**, or review the upcoming events listed at the bottom of this quarter's edition of Hard Facts.

PCAV January Meeting Sponsors

THANK YOU TO OUR JOINT PCAV VDOT MEETING SPONSORS

Coffee/Beverage

CP&P Concrete Pipe & Precast, LLC

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ej

Lunch

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Virginia Department of Transportation

ANNOUNCEMENTS

IIM 2025-01.01 Project Work Zone Coordinator has been updated and posted on the VDOT public website.

Construction | Virginia Department of Transportation

Construction Division IIM: MAINTENANCE OF TRAFFIC ON CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

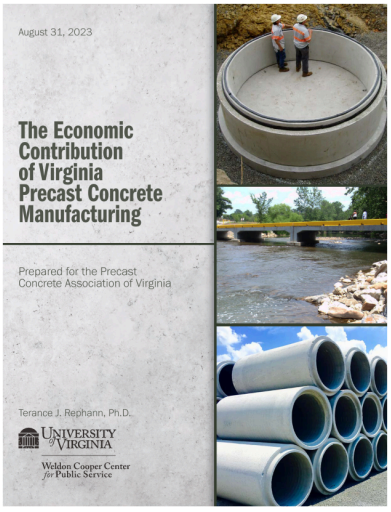
VDOT Bets on AI to cut costs and keep Virginia roads smooth.

With highway construction costs **surging 68% nationwide** since 2020, Virginia's transportation officials are turning to artificial intelligence (AI) to improve how the state estimates costs and manages pavement upkeep.

The move comes as the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) faces increasing financial strain from rising material and labor prices, supply chain disruptions, fuel costs, and unpredictable weather events — all of which have made forecasting and budgeting more difficult.

Read more about VDOT's plan for AI **HERE**.

Legislative Update



The 2025 General Assembly Session began on Monday, January 14, following a brief pause due to the water crisis in the City of Richmond and adjourned Saturday, February 22. Legislators will return April 2 for the Reconvened Session, more commonly known as "Veto" Session, a one-day session to consider all amendments, vetoes, sent down from the Governor.

Among the hundreds of bills under consideration, PCAV remained highly focused on educating legislators on the value of utilizing precast concrete. During the 2025 PCAV Legislative Day, we made visits to the offices of Delegates Joseph McNamara (R) - House District 40; Buddy Fowler (R) - House District 59; Senators Luther Cifers (R) -Senate District 10; Emily

Jordan (R) - Senate District 17; and Kannan Srinivasan (D) -Senate District 32. We were especially pleased to welcome newly-elected Senator Cifers and Senator Srinivasan to the legislature.

We spoke about the devastation that Hurricane Helene left in her wake, especially in Southwest Virginia, and the value precast concrete offers in culvert replacement, providing for evacuation routes, and repairing roads and bridges to maximize budget and lifespan. We certainly want to utilize our dollars efficiently and effectively by considering the quality of the product and its lifespan all while minimizing the need for replacement. We also were pleased to share the **the Economic Contribution of Virginia Precast Concrete Manufacturing** study recently conducted by the Weldon Cooper Center.

Upon adjournment of the 2025 Virginia General Assembly, Speaker of the House Don Scott called for a Special Session on a date to be specified to address the recent federal actions, impacting federal jobs and spending reductions. PCAV will advise you of any developments.

PCAV Member Highlights



HK Turns Joint Testing Inside Out with the Straub Test Coupler

Hamilton Kent turned joint testing for concrete pipe and manholes inside out – quite literally – with the development of the Straub Test Coupler. While traditional joint testing involves filling the pipe with water and pressurizing it from the inside to test for joint leaks, the Straub test coupler is installed around the joint and applies pressure from the outside to test the joint's ability to withstand hydrostatic pressure from the environment around the pipes.

Application - Testing & Measuring:

The Straub Test Coupler dramatically simplifies joint testing for pipe and precast concrete producers and contractors and provides quality



Gillespie Precast Supports Spotsylvania County's Wastewater Consolidation and Conveyance Improvements

Spotsylvania County, Virginia, one of the fastest-growing counties in the state, is undertaking a major infrastructure project to enhance its wastewater management system. Following discussions and planning efforts with county representatives dating back to 2017, the county's comprehensive Wastewater Consolidation and Conveyance Improvements project includes the expansion of the Massaponax Wastewater Treatment Plant, the closure of the FMC Wastewater Treatment Plant, and significant upgrades to the region's sewer

assurance to project owners that the joints will meet or exceed specifications.

It's really the difference between exfiltration and infiltration, said Randy Reimer, Director of Sales and Marketing for Hamilton Kent. For decades, pipe joints have been tested for their ability to contain liquids flowing through without leaking. Large pipe systems, however, rarely experience high flow levels that would create high pressure inside the pipe.

"The reality is that as far as municipalities are concerned it's not exfiltration, it's infiltration," Reimer said. "It's high groundwater pressures that ultimately may push past the gasket or push past the joint, which creates opportunities for infiltration and erosion of fine materials around the bedding. Municipalities have deep pipe applications and they're concerned about gasket performance because of infiltration."

Want to prove your joints can prevent infiltration? The Straub test is built for that. Learn more about the Coupler **HERE** or watch **their video**.

conveyance network- improvements which are expected to be operational by January 2026. Upon completion, this facility will be among the most advanced in the state.

Gillespie Precast has been instrumental in this project. Initially designed with cast-in-place structures, the project transitioned to precast concrete solutions, bringing significant advantages such as faster installation times—our latest vault was installed in just 15 minutes, minimized weather dependency, superior structure quality, and financial savings.

To date, Gillespie Precast has manufactured five pigging vaults for this initiative, with a sixth one in production, helping this critical project move along. The largest vault, among the ones we have shipped, measures 24.4' x 10.4' and includes a 35" opening to accommodate for 30" diameter pipe.

With over 100 years of expertise, state-of-the-art production facilities, and a dedicated team, Gillespie Precast delivers reliable precast concrete solutions tailored to meet the evolving needs of modern infrastructure development.

Our Members Shine at the Virginia Concrete Conference

The PCAV was pleased to serve as a gold sponsor of the Virginia Concrete Conference! We were thrilled to see many of our members participating as exhibitors, speakers, and attendees. A special shoutout to Ed Page from PCAV member CP&P for his role on the VCC Planning Committee, helping to make this event a success.

Our thanks to our fellow hosts, the Southeast Cement Promotional Association, Virginia Ready-Mixed Concrete Advisory Council, Virginia Chapter-ACI, Virginia Department of Transportation, and Federal Highway Administration for another outstanding conference!





We Want Your News!

PCAV would like to feature your business' community outreach -- it's easy to highlight all that you do to support youth by providing scholarships, supporting events in your community, and highlighting your people, products, and promotions!

What will we do with your submissions?

In addition to inclusion in our HardFacts, social media channels, and on the website, we may include in our SCPA grant application and in other publications as requested. We will always provide credit to you, the author, and for all photos.

Submit your news to **Becky Hall**.

2025 PCAV Calendar

March/April

30-2

American Concrete Institute's Spring Concrete Convention

📍 Toronto, Canada

May

5-6

PCAV Annual Meeting

📍 Richmond, Virginia

September

16

PCAV VDOT Joint Fall Meeting

📍 Richmond, Virginia

October

26-29

American Concrete Institute's Fall Concrete Convention

📍 Baltimore, Maryland

View all upcoming activities on our website

Precast Concrete Association of Virginia | PO Box 3632 | Richmond, VA 23235 US

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