

WV DOT Newsletter

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WEST VIRGINIA
Department of Transportation



SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

- Estimating Training
- Building Capacity
- Mobilization Financing
- Bonding Assistance
- Marketing Plan Development
- Creating a Business Plan
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- Plan Reading

Operation R.I.P. Potholes update: WVDOH closing in on 65,000 potholes patched

West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) road crews continue to take advantage of the unseasonably warm weather during an early patching blitz.

Since Gov. Jim Justice and the WVDOH announced Operation R.I.P. Potholes on Tuesday, January 30, 2024, WVDOH road crews have patched 64,821 potholes along 5,484 miles of road.

Pothole patching typically doesn't begin until the first week of April, but WVDOH officials worked with asphalt plant owners in St. Albans, Morgantown, and Princeton to open early this season, allowing road crews to make permanent pothole repairs with hot asphalt. As crews are out patching, they are finding that some stretches of road may have numerous potholes to patch, while some stretches may have none.

Asphalt plants are beginning to open in other parts of the state now, with the rest expected to open the first week of April.

Roads scheduled to be milled and filled on Wednesday, March 27, 2024 include:

- WV 94, WV 85, and Spruce Laurel Road, Boone County.
- Ossia Road and Ovapa Road, Clay county.
- US 60, WV 214, WV 61, Kellys Creek Road, Frogs Creek Road, Sissonville Drive, Mile Fork Drive, Kanawha Two Mile Road, Keystone Drive, Barlow Drive, and Wills Creek Drive, Kanawha County.
- WV 2, Glenville Ridge Road, and Boggs Road, Mason County.
- WV 34 and Custer Ridge Road, Putnam County.
- US 60, Virginia-Benedict Road, and Hash Ridge Road, Cabell County.



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Vision Kwest: Presenting ABC's 2024 Contractor of the Year

Kwest Group was just supposed to be a regional player in northwestern Ohio. Twenty years, 350 full-time employees and \$130 million in annual business later, the nationally known heavy contractor is ABC's 2024 Contractor of the Year

Kwest Group was always going to be a success. Ryan Odendahl is sure of that today—but even 20 years ago, it was always the plan. Odendahl had left a good position with a successful contractor to join his boss in running a new heavy contracting company in northwestern Ohio. He was 30 years old, a former Marine, and used to making a plan, executing on it and achieving commensurate results.

“Our revenue goal this year is \$165 million,” Odendahl says. “In 2003, would I have said that? Probably not. But to get here, it’s just been the next step, and the next step, and the next step. So, I would not have said \$165 million at the time, but I would’ve said, ‘We’re going to make this something really great,’ because otherwise we wouldn’t have done it.”

Done it they have—crowning two decades of high-performing growth by being named ABC's 2024 Contractor of the Year at ABC Convention last month. “For little old Kwest Group, in the pool of contractors that is ABC, to get Contractor of the Year is humbling,” Odendahl says. “Like, a pinch-yourself humbling experience. We are really, really proud of the team.”

RECESSION TO THE RESCUE

“Little old Kwest Group” isn’t actually all that little today, but it certainly was when Odendahl and Mark Murray started the business. Both were working at a large, family-owned heavy highway firm in northwestern Ohio—Odendahl as part of the environmental group, Murray as president of the holdings company. When Murray found an opportunity to acquire a small industrial contractor located in Port Clinton, Ohio, he organized a partnership to procure it and asked Odendahl to run the operations side.

As managing partners, the two rebranded the company Kwest Group, named for Murray’s affinity for Key West. Including Odendahl, Murray and Murray’s wife, Kelly, who served as office manager, there were a total of eight employees, all operating out of a double-wide office trailer.

“Then we just started adding some more team members along the way,” Murray says. “I always think back to some of my early mentoring, when they told me, ‘If you surround yourself with good people, they’re going to make your life easy and the company more successful.’ And I have been very blessed to do that.”

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About The WVDOT

The goal of the DBE Supportive Services Program is to increase the number of DBEs participating on WVDOT contracts and facilitate the opportunity for DBEs to obtain contracts. The services are designed to:

- Assist established construction firms to move them from bidding as a subcontractor to bidding as a Prime Contractor to produce sound bids.
- Provide access to training increases DBE expertise in handling of daily business operations.

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