



This edition of the STIC ***Innovation in Motion*** e-Newsletter highlights two more recent STIC innovations – Living Snow Fence and Air Foil. These field-driven and practical innovations aim to reduce costs, improve efficiency and enhance safety for employees and motorists during winter operations.

This e-Newsletter highlights the February ***Innovation in Motion*** webinar and provides links to register for the remaining 2026 webinars, and shares information about PennDOT's Green Light-Go Program, which is designed to improve the efficiency and operation of existing traffic signals across Pennsylvania.

Clearing the Way

Smart Innovations for Safer Winter Roads

Group (TAG) is clearing the way to better manage winter weather events and help make roadways safer for PennDOT employees and motorists alike.

An increase in material costs for traditional snow fence and the labor-intensive maintenance to install and remove the fence

led Brian Horning, a roadway programs coordinator in Lebanon County, PennDOT Engineering District 8, to find a more efficient and cost-effective way to utilize [Living Snow Fence](#), in this case standing rows of corn, to keep roads clear of snow drifts.



This resulted in a pilot project where District 8 partnered with a local farmer in Lebanon County to leave eight to 12 rows of corn in place during the winter season to determine if that method would work to hold back drifting snow. Following a successful pilot, the STIC's Maintenance TAG worked with Horning to figure out a way to make the Living Snow Fence an optional tool for other maintenance organizations to use.

"The challenge wasn't whether using a Living Snow Fence would work," said STIC Maintenance TAG Leader Dean Schmitt, P.E. "The challenge was how to develop a process to compensate farmers to leave standing rows of corn in place throughout the winter season to keep snow from drifting onto the road."

In 2025, the team worked with PennDOT's Office of Chief Counsel (OCC) to develop contract language for an agreement between PennDOT and the farmers. This agreement ensures a mechanism is in place to adequately compensate farmers for leaving standing corn.



PennDOT truck with Air Foil attachment

In addition to the Living Snow Fence innovation, the STIC's Maintenance TAG also continues its work on the [Air Foil innovation](#) to help address truck visibility issues during winter weather events and improve safety.

"Reduced visibility of the reflective material on the tailgates and lights on maintenance trucks cause a safety concern for PennDOT operators," said Aaron Raible, an Armstrong County highway maintenance manager in PennDOT Engineering District 10. "Operators have to routinely stop to clean the back of the trucks during winter operations."

The Air Foil mounts to the back of the truck to redirect air flow. Air is pushed down across

the tailgate when wind passes over the device, resulting in buildup of snow, ice and other debris being removed as the truck travels. The innovation was piloted the last few winter seasons with positive results.

For the 2025-26 winter season, the team reduced the size of the Air Foil to allow for greater sight distance and visibility of the revolving lights on the cab protectors, while still keeping truck tailgates clean. Reducing the size of the Air Foil did not prove as successful with keeping the backs of the trucks clean; therefore, the team determined that the larger Air Foil is the better option moving forward.

To read more about current Maintenance TAG innovations and discover the latest innovation advancements and success stories from across PennDOT, stay tuned for the release of PennDOT's Focus on Innovations publication this spring.

Looking Ahead



INNOVATION IN MOTION

Webinar Series



Pennsylvania
Department of Transportation

Want to learn more about innovative and impactful initiatives happening across PennDOT to help move innovation forward?

The 2026 ***Innovation in Motion*** webinar series provides an inside look at how innovative practices, tools and technologies are transforming the future of transportation in Pennsylvania. With presentations from PennDOT employees, the webinars will feature how and where these innovations are being used, best practices, challenges and valuable lessons learned.

The [February webinar](#) focused on the use of strategic planning to drive an organization's collective goals. The webinar highlighted core concepts, key tools, and tips and tricks to complete a strategic plan to help propel an organization forward.

Click on the links below to register for the remaining 2026 ***Innovation in Motion*** webinars and let these webinars inspire new ideas for your next great innovative initiative.

- [April 14 - Innovative Solutions for a Safer Tomorrow: The Impact of Transformational Technologies in Transportation](#)
- [June 9 - Innovative Processes in Materials Testing: Ensuring Quality and Performance for Transportation Construction Projects](#)
- [Aug. 11 - Collaborative Insights: How Research Supports and Strengthens PennDOT's Mission](#)

- [Oct. 6 - Modernizing Asset Management: Best Practices for Maintaining Pennsylvania's Roadway Infrastructure](#)
- [Dec. 8 - Driving Innovation: How Paperless Solutions are Revolutionizing Quality and Safety in Transportation Projects](#)

If you missed previous ***Innovation in Motion*** webinars, recordings are available on [PennDOT's website](#).

Did You Know?

Shapiro Administration Advances Traffic Safety with \$30M Signal Upgrade Investment



The Green Light-Go Program recently awarded \$30 million to 57 municipalities across Pennsylvania to improve safety and mobility by reducing congestion and improving traffic flow.

Many of the funded projects will upgrade traffic signal detection and control technology, allowing signals to respond to real-time traffic conditions, reduce congestion, and improve safety for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists.

The Green Light-Go Program, also known as Pennsylvania's Municipal Signal Partnership Program, is a competitive state grant program designed to improve the efficiency and operation of existing traffic signals located throughout Pennsylvania.

To learn more about the program and apply for funding, click [here](#).

For more information, visit www.penndot.pa.gov/stic or email penndotstic@pa.gov.