



BRAMBULL

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF
DAVID A. BRAMBLE, INC.

May 2005

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FR OM THE PRESIDENT

This is starting out to be a very busy year and a very interesting one. We have been the successful bidder on a lot of work this spring. We have already started several new projects and we are going to start several others in the near future. Coupled with the work that we have carried over from last year, we have enough work to last the entire year.

The major problem we are facing is that we are not in a stable economic market like we have been for the last twenty years. Concrete, stone, fuel, and steel prices have all taken big jumps in the past year. Steel price increases last year caused a major crisis for many bridge builders including the contractors building the Woodrow Wilson Bridge Replacement Project for the Maryland State Highway Administration. Steel price increases have also effected equipment dealers who have increased prices to pass on the higher cost of steel.

Concrete product prices have increased because of four major factors. Steel is the first culprit as rebar prices have risen along with other steel prices and supply has also been tight. The second factor is cement which has seen record world wide demand that has caused shortages and price increases. The

third factor is stone, where producers are raising prices because of high demand, long term inability to permit additional reserves, and increased fuel costs. Fuel costs have the same impact on concrete prices as they do on all construction costs.

The price of fuel has more than doubled over the past two years due to record demand, the Iraq War and political instability in the Middle East, Africa, and Venezuela. Fuel costs impacts all aspects of our work. Fuel is a major cost factor in all of our equipment costs and all the materials we require. And of course the asphalt plants are a major user of fuel to heat the mix and asphalt cement is a major element in the mixes. The one good fact is there is an escalation clause in all of our SHA and DELDOT projects which adjusts the cost of the mix in relationship to the price of the asphalt cement. This escalation clause dates back to the 1970's when oil prices had a sudden unexpected jump and many contractors were forced out of the market or badly hurt by the rise of oil costs.

The other fuel costs in our projects do not have escalation in them other than the fact that we have been adjusting the cost of fuel upward in our new estimates for over a year now. The big question is can we keep the fuel numbers we bid high enough to stay of ahead of the costs.

With all of these uncertainties, it will be interesting to see how well we do this construction season. I feel that on the work that has been bid this year that we have adjusted for the new construction climate and if prices level off we should do well. Now we just need to have some good weather and we should have a good year.

Major New Projects Since December 2004

Coventry Farms - Major subdivision in Chestertown

Deep Harbor Subdivision - Major subdivision in Cambridge.

AT6355177 - Paving MD 404

CE3165123 - Truck Weigh Facility in Cecil County

KE4115130R - Geometric Improvements to MD 213 in Chestertown

LB 835-000-006 - Emergency Improvements at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Toll Plaza

QA2575177 - Patching and Paving MD 213 in Centreville

QA7225176 - J Turns on US 301 at MD 300 and MD 544

XX7175177 - Milling and Paving Various Roads in Queen Anne's County



OSHA PUTTING

EMPHASIS ON TRENCHING SAFETY

REPRINTED FROM DCA NEWS

One of the DCA's largest construction managers received a letter this week from Acting Assistant Secretary of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Mr. Jonathan L. Snare. Following is the body of that letter.

I would like to solicit your assistance and cooperation in addressing a serious problem in the construction industry.

There continues to be an unacceptable number of trenching related fatalities and serious incidents associated with construction and maintenance of underground utilities and sewer work. Rarely does a week go by without one or more construction workers dying in protected trenches.

On behalf of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), I request your commitment to join me in an effort to reduce the frequency of the serious incidents and fatalities associated with trench work.

Specifically, I ask that you consider contracting only with contractors who have demonstrated good safety and health performance and as that you specify in your contract language the following:

That protective systems be in place in all trenches five feet or more deep.

That all employees be trained in trench related hazards.

That a competent person inspect each trench daily prior to worker entry and intermittently during the trenching operations.

That spoil piles be kept a minimum of two feet back from the edge of the trench.

That safe access/egress into and out of trenches be provided in every case.



FIRM HAPPENINGS

We would like to give everyone an update on the Memorial Bench for Mr. Bramble. As of this newsletter, the bench has been ordered and it will take approximately two months for the bench to be made and shipped here. In the mean time, we are still accepting donations, which can be made to Bill Wetmore or Libby Creighton.

Congratulations to all the children of our employees who will be graduating from high school and college this year. We wish them well.

The company has a scholarship program for employees' children who are going to college in the fall or are already enrolled in college. If anyone is interested in applying for scholarship funds, please contact Preston or Libby at the main office.

The following is an email from Jay Goulet, (who is the project manager on the Coventry Farms project) that Peter Bourne received on Wednesday, May 4th and he would like to share it with everyone.

“Good Morning Peter,

I had to drive across the Bay Bridge this morning to drop something off at my brother-in-law’s house in Cape St. Claire before going to Chestertown, and drove for the first time across the newly paved area just east of the toll booths that your guys paved in the past week. It’s the area you drive across to detour back to the westbound lanes after driving west across the eastbound span. It makes for a nicer & faster merge.

Your paving foreman ought to get 2 gold stars, one for excellent “off” & “on” transitions and the other for a smooth “ride”. Having done SHA work for 4 years at Reliable, I know the importance of both and appreciate good work. Your guys did an excellent job, especially under the conditions they did it in. I would like to have that guy pave Flatland Road for us. And while he’s there we might as well have him cover the site roads too. LOL Seriously, nice job! C ya!”



Roadwire

By Tony DiMaggio and
Wanda Brockson

WOW !!!!! What a booming start to the new construction year. Once the drivers were called back to work, it seems to have been non-stop. The amount of workload seems to have

increased since we all left in December. While we know in our heads it has not, the stress and immediacy of the work load has. In the last five months, there have been drivers start and leave, some of last years drivers did not come back, and some drivers from previous years have returned and some will be returning.

There has been one major change in our operations so far this year. Two of Easton’s trucks have been moved to operate out of Wye Mills. We feel this will be beneficial not only to the drivers but also for Wye Mills Plant. We shall see how it works out.

Drivers, once again, there is more need for you to be specific on your paperwork. With the new time system, it is very important to keep track of loads, hours per job, what was hauled, job numbers, as well as the usual information. Not only does it benefit the payroll system, it gives us better information for our job costing. We appreciate the extra effort you have put in so far and expect you will do so in the future.

WELCOME NEW DRIVERS - Peter Pletzer, Matt Fletcher, Clifton Jackson, Bill Scott, Gary Griffin, and Wesley Sobolesky.

GOOD LUCK TO ALL OF THEM

Another item of mention is the Town of Centreville, traffic along Rt. 213 is steadily on the rise especially through Centreville. Rt. 213 is extremely rough in town and this can make dump trucks sound like **CANNONS**. Residents always come to one conclusion on trucks that make noise: “THEY ARE DRIVING TOO FAST!” The

minute they hear and see them that is the opinion. Please **limit** your thoroughfare through Centreville without impacting your haul time when possible.

ACCIDENTS - DON’T HAVE ANY!!!

INJURIES - BE SAFE!!!

WEAR YOUR HARD HATS AND VESTS!!!!

One ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

PLEASE BE SAFE



HEALTH NOTES

DEHYDRATION

During the hot weather, remember to drink plenty of fluids, especially water. Try to limit your intake of caffeine and alcohol. Dehydration can cause headaches, nausea, and tiredness. If you experience any of these symptoms, you should immediately increase your intake of fluids, but not cola, ice tea, coffee, or any other caffeinated beverages. Caffeine and alcohol actually increase dehydration.
