



# “In the Works”

Striving to be the Leading Public Works Department Through Innovative Stewardship of Infrastructure and Environment

Stanislaus County  
Public Works

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## Stanislaus Regional Transit (StaRT)

Submitted by Stacie Morales



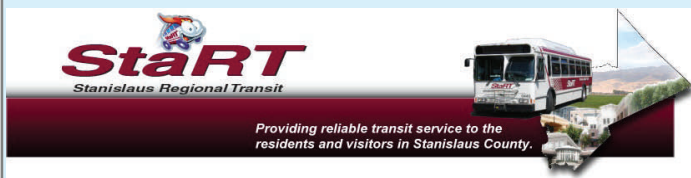
Imagine having a doctor’s appointment, or going to work or school, or shopping at the local or neighborhood grocery store. And imagine not being able to afford buying a car or no longer being able to drive. For those of us working in public transportation, this is why public transit is so important! There are a number of residents in Stanislaus County who do not have the means to own their own vehicles or are unable to drive. This is why some residents in this County use public transportation to commute to work, school, or for their doctors’ appointments.

In Stanislaus County, the Public Works Transit Division, operating as Stanislaus Regional Transit (StaRT) is responsible for managing and operating the County’s public transit, and it is our goal to make sure that residents in all communities throughout the County stay as mobile as possible. StaRT ensures that people who rely on public transportation are able to get to their destinations in a timely manner. For instance, in Fiscal Year 2011/2012, StaRT provided 356,698 rides. Our ridership is increasing and continues to grow each year. This is in part due to promotional and marketing efforts and public outreach conducted by staff in the Transit Division. You may have heard commercials on the radio or seen ads in the local or community newspapers. That is not the only way we promote the County’s bus services. We attend and participate in several community events throughout the year and as an example, beginning January 2013 through June 2013, we are scheduled to attend or speak at 31 events.

Participation in these events ensures visibility throughout the County as it is important to be out in the community speaking to seniors, students, persons with disabilities, and/or people from all walks of life about public transit. Attendance at these events is a valuable way to educate the public on transit services offered in the County and is also a great opportunity to attract more people to use the transit system. For example, StaRT will participate in the “Bike to Work” event on May 10, 2013, and will join colleagues from other transit operators in the County to celebrate festivities planned to encourage more County residents to bike and ride the bus. The activities will be held at the Tenth Street Place from 6:30 AM – 8:30 AM. Staff from the Public Works Department and other County Departments are encouraged to ride their bicycles to work on May 10<sup>th</sup> and those who ride their bicycles to Tenth Street Place will receive free breakfast, T-shirt and many other gifts from vendors participating in the event. This event celebrates Bike to Work Week May 13<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013 and is a great way to ride your bike to the nearest bus stop, load your bike on the bike racks and head off to Tenth Street Place.

Here is a contest for those interested. Can you guess how many bicycles were carried on StaRT buses in FY 2011/2012? Whoever is able to guess how many bikes were carried will win a backpack full of StaRT merchandise/goodies. Email your guess to Stacie

Morales at [smorales@stancounty.com](mailto:smorales@stancounty.com) by April 30<sup>th</sup> to enter. The winner will be announced by email.



### Inside this issue:

Kristen Machado — <i>Playground Dedication</i>	2
<i>Construction Engineering— Spring Updates</i>	2
<i>California Streets in Crisis</i>	3
<i>Global Harmonizing System</i>	3
<i>StanCERA: Member Contribution Rate Increase</i>	4
<i>Staff Updates</i>	4
<i>United Way—Thank You!</i>	4

### Ethics Quotes Emily Post

“Nothing is less important than which fork you use. *Etiquette* is the science of living. It embraces everything. It is ethics. It is honor.”

### “Health & Safety Byte”

Submitted by Sylvia Jones

#### Tool Safety Tips:

- \*Use tools correctly and for the intended purpose only.
- \*Keep tools in good conditions
- \*Put tools away after use, don’t leave things lying around where they can fall or hit someone.
- \*Tools carried in pockets or misplacing them can cause painful injuries.
- \* Always wear your required protective equipment.

[www.squidoo.com/work-safety-tips](http://www.squidoo.com/work-safety-tips)

Civility Principle for  
March is “Don’t Shift  
Responsibility & Blame”





# Kristen Machado Memorial Playground

Submitted by Chad Johnson  
Photos taken by Diane Haugh

On March 16, 2013 at Lakewood Elementary School in Modesto, the Kristen Machado Memorial Playground was officially dedicated. The ceremony included Kristen's friends



and family, parents and children of Lakewood School as well as numerous people from across our community who were touched by Kristen's life. The dedication included a song from Girl Scout Troop 3380 (Kristen's Troop), a performance from the Lakewood School Jump Rope team, a ribbon cutting, and a balloon release. The event concluded with dozens and dozens of kids swarming the new play structure.



This event was the culmination of years of effort on the part of the Lakewood PTA. The effort to replace Lakewood's old, dangerous play structure began nearly 10 years ago and was one of the many projects to which Matt and Kristen dedicated their time and energy. Upon her passing, friends of Kristen felt that the completion of the playground would be a lasting tribute to her life and symbolize her always cheerful personality. Contributions to the memorial playground began coming in from across the community. Kristen was associated

with so many different organizations. As a result, the list of contributors is very diverse. Lakewood families (past, present and future), Girl Scout families, members of her church community, local businesses and employees of Stanislaus County were among the many who donated to the project.

A new bench has been set in place in a garden area next to the play structure. The plaque on the bench reads, "Kristen's dedication to her family, children, and the children of Lakewood will live on forever in their laughter." This is a fitting tribute to a person who had such a positive impact on so many people's lives.



## Construction Engineering Division—Spring Updates

Submitted by Chris Brady

**Parklawn Neighborhood Sewer Improvements**—Mozingo Construction began work in February on the sewer main facilities. As of the beginning of April, approximately 80% of the underground facilities will be installed. The sewer force main and gravity sewer facilities within Morgan Road and Oates Court still need to be completed. The grading and paving operations on the roadways will follow all the pipeline testing and acceptance. The project is scheduled to be completed by the end of June.

**SR 99/SR 219 (Kiernan Avenue) Interchange**—The contract was awarded to O.C. Jones & Sons, Inc. in December, and the work is scheduled to begin in mid-April. The groundbreaking ceremony is scheduled for April 30th (Tuesday). The Stage 1 critical path lies in the completion of the storm drain pump station and storage facility along northbound 99. Stage 1 work also includes mainline shoulder improvements, on/off ramp improvements, the initial section of new bridge, and miscellaneous roadway and traffic signal improvements along SR 219 (Kiernan Avenue) and adjacent local road intersections.

**RSTP Overlay Program E**—The contract was awarded to George Reed, Inc. and work is tentatively scheduled to begin in late May. Work will include placing an asphalt concrete overlay, placing shoulder backing material, and placing roadway striping/markings.

### Other Upcoming 2013 Projects:

- > RSTP F Pavement Project
- > Hatch Road at Carpenter Road Traffic Signals
- > 2013 Slurry Seal Project
- > Salida Sidewalk Replacement Project
- > Phase 1 of the Claribel Road Widening Project

# CALIFORNIA STREETS IN CRISIS

Either spend the money now to repair and maintain,  
or expect to pay a lot more in the future

## NOW →

California's local street and road system is deteriorating rapidly. Every dollar's worth of maintenance put off today will escalate to as much as \$50 worth of replacement costs later, costing California taxpayers billions of extra dollars.

\$1 to repair and maintain

## LATER →

Unless additional funding is established, a quarter of streets and roads in California will be in "failed" condition in just ten years. We can either address the backlog of maintenance now, or pay a lot more in the future as the system continues to decline.

\$50 to reconstruct or replace

This study was sponsored by the cities and counties of California and managed by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). The Oversight Committee is composed of representatives from the following:

League of California Cities (League)  
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)  
County Engineers Association of California (CEAC)  
California Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPA)

California Rural Counties Task Force (RCTF)  
Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)  
County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works

Download the Report at:  
[savecaliforniastreet.org](http://savecaliforniastreet.org)

## What Does "Global Harmonizing System" Mean to You?

Submitted by Laura Janovich

Global Harmonizing System (GHS) has arrived. *Employers* have until December 1, 2013 to train employees on the new label elements and safety data sheets (SDS) format. Yes it is change, but it is change for the better. The SDS will always be the same in structure where the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) varies from manufacturer to manufacturer. First aid information will always be Section 4. Accidental release information will always be Section 6. All SDS will be the same. No more searching for the information you need in a hurry. All SDS will have 16 sections and each section on every SDS will list the information for that hazardous material that is specific to that material under the same Section heading. They will become easier to read and understand the more you see them so make yourself familiar to your SDS for the Hazards you are exposed to. That is your responsibility as an *employee*.

Pictograms are also part of the training to be completed. Each pictogram represents a hazard. They are pretty self explanatory in a visual kind of way... What a concept! We see universal visual signs all the time. Like the visual aid sign for "No Smoking" or the visual identification on men's and women's restrooms. Same concept, but the pictograms will be used to identify hazards.

Welcome this change, accept it and be more protected from hazards. The GHS is universal across the nations, around the world. The U.S. is just late in catching that train.

*This was Laura's last article for us. She has moved on to new opportunities. Best wishes and thank you Laura!*

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Articles by Public Works Writers

Published by Keimi Espinoza 

**Our Public Works**  
2011 Annual Report is available at:  
<http://www.stancounty.com/publicworks/pdf/2011-annual-report.pdf>

Stanislaus County Department of Public Works  
2011 Annual Report  
Then and Now



Transit Division's website is:

[www.srt.org](http://www.srt.org)

For route info call StaRT at 1-800-262-1516

**GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.**  
**LIVE UNITED** 

THANK  
YOU!



We would like to thank employees at **Stanislaus County Public Works** for their generous donations to the United Way campaign. United Way brings our community's resources together, with service providers working and collaborating to address the greatest needs. Our entire community benefits from working together to advance the common good. Without your contribution, United Way would not be able to fund vital programs and services that make a difference in the lives of people. Now more than ever, individuals in our community need help with food, clothing, shelter, senior services, health care, crisis services, counseling and much more.

**Total funds raised for 2012 campaign: \$1,325**

Again, thank you for Living United and influencing the condition of all.

# StanCERA

(Stanislaus County Employees' Retirement Association):

## Increase in Member Contribution Rates Effective 2013-2014

*Taken from the Spring 2013 StanCERA Newsletter*

Beginning with the first full payroll period after June 30, 2013, StanCERA (Stanislaus County Employees' Retirement Association) will begin implementing new employee pension contribution rates. The change in rates is due to a change in the assumptions used to calculate your pension benefits. The assumption that caused the largest change to employee rates is the expected investment return on the assets that are set aside to pay for future pension benefits.

To summarize, the expected investment return on assets was lowered from 8.0% to 7.75%. This means that a greater portion of your future benefits are assumed to come from contributions instead of investment returns. The decrease in the expected investment return means that both you and your employer must pay for a larger portion of your overall benefit and as a result, employee contribution rates are increasing.

The amount of the increase depends on your salary level, the age at which you began work for a StanCERA covered employer and the benefit formula under which you accumulate retirement benefits.

StanCERA staff has put together a calculator that displays the change in your contributions that will commence with the first full payroll period after June 30, 2013. The following is a link to that calculator online: <http://www.stancera.org> Click on Calculators, then click on 2013-14 Contribution Rate Analysis. Simply enter the required information and the change in cost will be shown on an annual, monthly, and bi-weekly basis.

Should you have any questions, please contact StanCERA staff at 209-525-6393.

\* \* \*

## Staff Updates

### New Employee:

**Patrick Brunn** (Road Maintenance Worker I) has joined our Road & Bridge Division.

*Welcome aboard!*

### Departing Employees:

- \* **Laurie Barton** (Public Works Deputy Director) retired after 5 years of County service.
- \* **Laura Janovich** (Staff Services Analyst, Safety) left for a new job. She had 6 years of County service.
- \* **Michael Wilson** (Senior Engineering Tech, CSA & LLD) retired after 10 years of County service.
- \* **Calvin Xavier, Jr.** (Road Maintenance Worker) departed after 20 years of County service.

*Congratulations and thank you for your service!*

**CONGRATULATIONS!**