

AGENCY NEWS

SNOW 'ROADEO' PROMOTES SAFETY THROUGH COMPETITION, FUN

On a hot and humid September day in Edwardsville, volunteers and contestants of the 2018 American Public Works Association - Illinois Chapter Snow Rodeo were improbably focused on winter driving conditions.

The Snow Rodeo provided friendly competition and a chance for public works employees to show off their talent and skills behind the wheel of a highway maintenance truck by driving through an obstacle course. Other competitions included a vehicle inspection, a written test and a mini-excavator skills test.

Thirteen local jurisdictions participated in this one-day event.

"The purpose of this event is training for all the people involved," said Bob Hotz of Volkert Engineer, event chair. "The snow plow drivers need to think about their speed, accuracy and equipment, and if there are any equipment problems, they need to be addressed before they get on the road."

As a gold sponsor providing six volunteers and playing a major role in planning, IDOT is an important partner for this event. The IDOT Technology Transfer Center created and facilitated the written test for the event.

"The reason we are pushing this event is safety for all of our snow plow operators," said **Barry Kent**,



A team from O'Fallon weaves through traffic barrels in the Snow Rodeo obstacle course.

Technology Transfer Center program manager. "We get local agencies such as counties, road districts and municipalities to participate. It's a fun competition, and they get to learn a little about safety."



The Highland Public Works Department wins the traveling trophy for the seventh time.

Contestants competed in several categories, including "best dressed" snow plow, for which snow-related artwork was added to plow blades. This year's category winner was the

Bloomington Public Works Department.

The traveling trophy, the most coveted award of the event, went to the Highland Public Works Department, their seventh championship.

In addition, there was a friendly celebrity competition between Edwardsville Mayor Hal Patton and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Chancellor Randall Pembroke, in which both raced through the obstacle course while striving for accuracy and the fastest completion time. In the end, Patton beat out Pembroke to win the Gold Shovel Award.

Jim Karch, Bloomington Public Works Director, said this event would not be possible without the support of IDOT. The event was enjoyed by all, and rematches are planned for 2019.

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