



2018

# Build a Better Mousetrap Competition:

Recognizing Innovative Inventions and Improvements

*PennDOT Local Technical Assistance Program*



**pennsylvania**

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



## Have You Built a Better Mousetrap?

Have you or one of your coworkers recently built an innovative gadget or developed an improved way to do a job? If so, now is the time to show off a project your municipality is proud of in the Build a Better Mousetrap Competition.

PennDOT is looking for projects that you, your employees, or crew designed and built. It can be anything from the development of tools, equipment modifications, and/or processes that increase safety, reduce cost, improve efficiency, and improve the quality of transportation.

If you have something you think would qualify for this competition, submit your entries by **Friday, March 9, 2018**. Entries will be judged by a committee of municipal road employees on cost savings/benefits to the community, ingenuity, transferability to others, and effectiveness.

The winning entry will be submitted to a regional and national competition to compete for recognition and, of course, bragging rights. Winners of the national competition will be announced at the annual LTAP/TTAP national conference. All entries at the national level will be posted on the LTAP/TTAP program website and compiled into an electronic booklet.

To enter the competition, complete the entry form that follows and **return it by Friday, March 9, 2018**.

If you have questions, please feel free to email them to [ltap@psats.org](mailto:ltap@psats.org), or call Karen Atkinson at (717) 763-0930 ext. 156.

### *Judging Criteria*

*The competition is judged on the criteria listed below within the framework of a ten-point rating scale. Provided is a list of the judging criteria and the ten-point rating scale. The winner is the entry that has the highest number of overall points.*

#### **Judging Criteria**

- Cost
- Savings/Benefits to the Community
- Ingenuity
- Transferability to Others
- Effectiveness

#### **Five-Point Rating Scale**

- 5 = Excellent
- 4 = Very Good
- 3 = Good
- 2 = Fair
- 1 = Poor

# 2017 Build a Better Mousetrap: Pennsylvania Competition Winners

## 1st Place Pennsylvania Winner

### Winning Entry: Slat Shed Entrance Curtain Whitehall Township, Lehigh County

Whitehall Township built a salt shed entrance curtain to reduce the exposure of salt stored in the shed to rain and thus prevent it from contaminating stormwater runoff. Built for less than \$1,200 in materials, plus labor and equipment, the curtain helps to meet the township's goals in ensuring good housekeeping and pollution prevention in municipal operations under minimum control measure #6 that is part of the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, or NPDES.



### Runners-Up: The L.A.W (Life Assist for Wheels) Horsham Township, Montgomery County

Horsham Township's Public Works Department created a lift that makes it easier to mount heavy wheels onto equipment. The lift assist for wheels, which the township refers to as "the LAW," was constructed almost entirely from recycled material found around the shop, including an unused janitor's cart and old signposts.

The lift only cost the township a day's labor for one employee to construct it and \$4 for two new hitch pins. The device, which also conveniently stores tools, allows a mechanic to easily mount and dismount a wheel by himself, thus lowering the risk of injury.



### Runners-Up: The Bounty (It's the quicker Picker Upper!) South Manheim Township, Schuylkill County

South Manheim Township developed a system that easily and conveniently stores its tailgate spreaders out of the way and assists in installing them onto a truck. The unit consists of heavy-duty shelving mounted onto a



block wall and a sliding mechanism so that a backhoe with forks can lift the spreader off the wall and onto a truck for installation. The system allows the spreader to be installed without having to put it down and lift it again.

The invention, which the township calls "the bounty, or the quicker picker upper," was made for approximately \$187 in materials plus labor costs.

## *2018 Build a Better Mousetrap Competition Entry Form*

Agency Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Address: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Entry Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Problem Statement:

Discussion of Solution:

Labor, Equipment, Materials Used:

Cost:

Savings/Benefits to the Community:

Please email photographs to [ltap@psats.org](mailto:ltap@psats.org) and include the municipality and the entry title.

You may enter more than one entry. Use separate forms for each entry.

Please return your completed form by **Friday, March 9, 2018**, to [ltap@psats.org](mailto:ltap@psats.org),  
fax it to (717) 763-9732, or mail it to:



PennDOT LTAP  
c/o PSATS  
Attention: Karen Atkinson  
4855 Woodland Drive  
Enola, PA 17025

*Questions? Please call Karen (717) 763-0930 ext.156.*