

DRIVER & VEHICLE SAFETY DIVISION

In 2019, the driver examination and motor vehicle functions of the Missouri State Highway Patrol combined to form the Driver & Vehicle Safety Division. Captain Darewin L. Clardy was named director for this new division.

The Driver Examination Section provides an effective program of driver testing to ensure Missouri licensed drivers have a level of competency consistent with safe driving habits and practices as well as demonstrated skills and knowledge of Missouri laws related to traffic safety. The Driver Examination Section provides the written and skills test for applicants applying for a Missouri operator's license, motorcycle license, Class E chauffeur's license, and commercial driver's license (CDL).

The Driver Examination Section provides administrative and staff support for the program in the field. Responsibilities of the section include: program direction and guidance, coordination of examination site selection, liaison with the Department of Revenue and field personnel, correspondence and contacts concerning the driver examination program, training, equipment, supplies procurement, and overall program budget control.

The Driver Examination Section includes approximately 231 Patrol employees. There are 156 driver examination offices throughout the state with locations in each of the state's 114 counties and in the city of St. Louis. Fourteen of these are Commercial Driver's License skills test sites. Nineteen full-time, five day-per-week offices are located in the urban areas of Kansas City, St. Louis, Springfield, St. Joseph, Joplin, Columbia, and Jefferson City.

The Motor Vehicle Inspection Section is responsible for the statewide administration of MVI programs, consisting of the Motor Vehicle Safety Inspection Program, the School Bus Inspection Program, the VIN/Salvage Examination Program, and the Emissions Inspection Program in the St. Louis area. The section provides administrative supervision to over 60 motor vehicle inspection personnel assigned to troops statewide.

The Driver and Vehicle Safety Division found itself on the front line of the COVID-19 pandemic, starting in March 2020. The unique services provided by DVSD employees across the state demand close interactions with the public. Thus, the challenge of COVID-19 was a significant test of everyone's resiliency. The initial onset of the pandemic led to a flurry of procedural adjustments and safety measures being implemented, which quickly turned to large-scale facility access challenges. Soon after, the situation culminated in a statewide pause of services as the entire state virtually shut down.

The division capitalized on this time by securing necessary safety equipment, maintaining a dialogue nationally on how to best combat the pandemic, monitoring industry needs, and preparing a re-entry to service plan.

Upon returning to service, DVSD employees throughout the state responded exceptionally and provided citizens the needed services. Troop commanders helped assess their regions and led the charge of ensuring all challenges were met. Extended hours and facility adjustments for social distancing were the norm as the demand for services grew.

The Driver Examination Section experienced a sustained surge in the demand for written testing, non-CDL skills testing, and overall testing throughout May and June. The Motor Vehicle Inspection Section experienced a heavy backlog of salvage inspections and extended the inspections of school buses through the month of June. Motor vehicle safety inspection and emission stations also experienced a significant increase in demand as citizens adjusted to their new normal through the summer.

Throughout the challenges of 2020, DVSD employees embraced the opportunity to collaborate on creating solutions that both served the public and protected our employees as best as possible.

Two DVSD team members accepted awards for their outstanding efforts in 2020.

Clerk Typist Kimberly Threet was named Department of Public Safety Non-Sworn Employee of the Month for February 2021. She was recognized for her actions during 2020, when a longtime employee's retirement in mid-May left a full-time position vacant. The duties were extremely time-sensitive, including processing emissions and safety inspections records from stations around the state to meet daily deadlines and promptly fulfilling orders for a variety of motor vehicle safety inspection stickers and decals.

Ms. Threet, whose own full-time position in the division was quite demanding, managed to research the responsibilities of the vacant position, learned the necessary processes and procedures, and juggled both full-time positions for five months, until a new employee could be brought on board. It was quite a challenge, but she prioritized pressing issues and found a way to handle both positions. Ms. Threet met the deadlines for the most time-sensitive requirements and took the initiative to train other employees so responsibilities could be shared in the future, if necessary.

MVI Analyst Brenda J. Davis accepted the Superintendent's Award for Excellence in Public Service for 2020. Her knowledge of budget, law, directives, and the state's rule-making process is invaluable to the organization. Mrs. Davis serves as the program director for the division's School Bus Inspection Program. She provides oversight, communication, research, and leadership to ensure over 12,000 school buses in our statewide program are properly accounted for and safe for our students. Mrs. Davis serves on the city council for her hometown of Vienna, MO. She tutors local students

and helps organize an annual scholarship drive in memory of her late father. She also assists her husband, Chuck, with duties of leading their church, where he is the pastor.

Driver & Vehicle Safety Division Directors

Capt. Darewin L. Clardy, 2019 to present