



Minnesota Department of Transportation

Online Customer Community





How the Online Community Works

- 600 Minnesotans agreed to journey with us for a year
- They sign on weekly and see discussions and surveys
- Three-way communications: MnDOT to Customers, Customers to MnDOT, Customers to Customers [on transportation-related issues]
- Member appreciation (nominal incentives)
 - \$10 gift cards/mo for 'regular' contributors, purge and replace non-participants
- Intended to be useful for us; interesting and engaging for them
- Online tools to interact with customers:
 - Surveys, brainstorming, discussions, live chats, image galleries
 - New tools to interact: video clips, attachments

The MnDOT Process

- 12 month rolling list of informational needs [leadership, districts/offices, steering committee, expert offices]
- Research summaries 2x monthly, updates reported in the off weeks
- Tracking use/decisions from results – a rule of engagement
- Closing the loop with customers – communicate how their feedback informed MnDOT plans/decisions . Video updates from Commissioner Sorel.



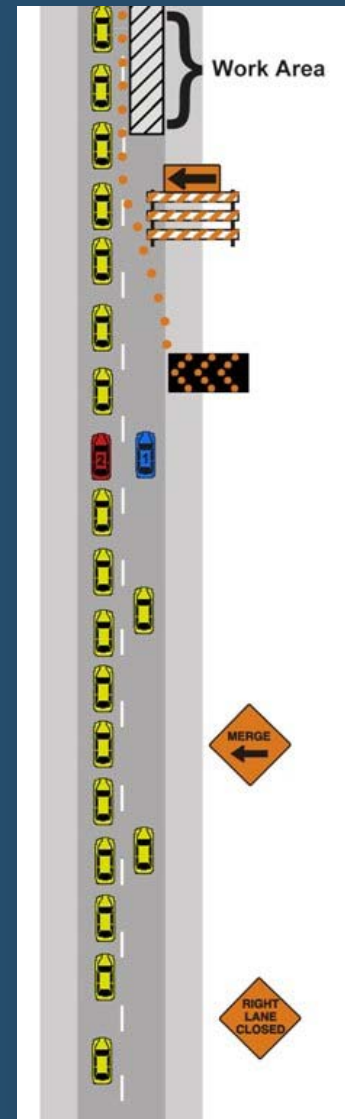
Zipper Merge Study Results

Objectives

- To understand what the perceived, proper behavior is in a congested, lane drop construction zone situation.
- To determine if the signs are conveying the intended behavior.

Results

- Initial Awareness: 18% have heard of this issue in the MEDIA recently, 72% have not
- Current Behavior: shown a diagram of work zone with a lane drop in a congested scenario; most (80%) state that they are early mergers, 18% late mergers





Zipper Merge Study Results

So much for MN Nice: Among early mergers (red car):

- 18% would let late mergers in and wouldn't be bothered
- 65% would let late mergers in but I would be annoyed with them
- 14% would be upset enough to not allow them in

Dynamic Merge Awareness: after viewing a video clip showing both lanes used until merge point and then taking turns cooperatively, this intended behavior was new to 40% (60% claim to have already known)





Late Merge Study Results

WHY THEN?-If 60% know the intended behavior -- do only 18% late merge?

- “I get over ASAP – I don’t want to be **“THAT GUY!”**”
- “...I usually think that those people are in a big hurry or very rude!”
- “...we all know people that want to cut in front of the line...”
- “It seems wrong initially”

- Net, Net, we have multiple issues at play contributing to ongoing early merge behavior :
 - If aware, reluctant to act
 - If not aware, think doing the right thing all along





Zipper Merge Educational Campaign

