

## News Release

For Immediate Release

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**contact:** Miracle King  
[miracleking@ncdot.gov](mailto:miracleking@ncdot.gov)  
(336) 487-0157



*The Alamance County rest stop at milepost 139 just 3 miles west of Burlington won 1st place for Rest Area Interstate Maintenance.*

### Resting Easy With the NCDOT

**GREENSBORO-** When you are traveling across [North Carolina's Highways and byways](#) and nature calls, you may not think about where to 'go,' just that you need to get there and fast! An award presented at the North Carolina Rest Area Awards during the National Safety Rest Area Conference in Asheville last week however may encourage you to take your next pit-stop along I-85 Southbound in [Alamance County](#).

“What can I say, we're pretty proud around here!” said Ken Taffer who heads the [N.C. Department of Transportation](#) Division 7 [Roadside Environmental Unit](#).

Opening in 1983 and renovated in 2005; the rest stop at milepost 139 just 3 miles west of Burlington won 1st place for Rest Area Interstate Maintenance across the entire state.

From truckers, to school groups and families on vacation these rest stops are an oasis in a sea of multi-lane concrete along the road to their final destinations.

“We're just glad that we have been able to consistently provide a clean, inviting rest area for the travelers who make their way across this great state.” Said Taffer.

In addition to Alamance County; all across the state Roadside Environmental Units are being recognized for their excellence. In Carteret County the U.S. 70 rest stop facility took 1st place for longevity. In Dare County the U.S. 64/264 rest stop garnered 1st place for a primary U.S. Route; and in Nash County the I-95 rest stop was awarded an honorable

mention.

The NCDOT workers that maintain these rest stops do more than just keep them clean and beautiful; they also are occasional super heroes.

“Back in August we got a frantic email from a woman traveling through Davie County,” said Division 9 Roadside Environmental Engineer Todd Hiatt.

The letter read:

‘We lost a beloved stuffed bear at the I40 east rest area in Davie County (mile 177) this morning around 10:30am. I believe my two-year old son might have dropped him while walking around the elevated picnic area. It is a small, brown, well-worn Winnie the Pooh bear with a faded ribbon around its neck. I called the number listed on the NCDOT website for that rest area and was able to leave a message at that number but if there is anyone else I could get in touch with I would very much appreciate that information!

Many thanks –Erin B.’

It took a few days, but roadside crews were able to save the end of what would have been a horrible outcome to one family’s road trip.

“After just a few hours of receiving the letter, crews from Division 9’s Roadside Environmental Unit came across the child’s toy and swiftly began the process of returning it, and it happens all the time around here,” explained Hiatt.

These aren’t the types of experiences that garner national recognition. However they are the incidents that make NCDOT employees clearly some of the best people in state government.

The final letter reads:

‘Pooh bear arrived late yesterday afternoon and we had a very happy reunion! We are all grateful for your efforts on our behalf, and if there is anyone else involved in the rescue, please let them know how much we appreciate it! Every contact that we had with the DOT - from people routing us through your system, to your phone calls, as well as responses via email impressed us with its courtesy and concern. And we are especially grateful for the happy ending! We've talked to Dylan about pooh bear's "exploring adventure," and he knows he has the DOT to thank for his rescue.

Best, Erin B.’

So whether you need to take a pit-stop, play-stop or nap; NCDOT crews around the entire state are working hard to make your rest-area experience safe, and your customer service experience great!

“That’s what we are supposed to do,” said Ken Taffer. “We are the men and women of the Department of Transportation. We are not only state workers but we are your neighbors and friends; we take pride in our work and it shows.”

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1503 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699 (919) 707-2660