



# Wyoming Fuel Tax News

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## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Customer Visits**
- **Hassinger Recognized**
- **FTA Team Building**
- **Natural Gas**
- **We Share Your Passion**

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- FTA On The Road** 1
- Team Building Grows** 2
- Natural Gas** 3
- Help FTA Make A Difference** 3
- Getting to know FTA** 4
- Fuel Tax Team Contact Info** 4

## FTA On The Road

The Fuel Tax Administration Team has been taking to the road in recent months in an effort to more effectively address customer concerns, learn more about our customers business and their needs, address reporting challenges, and most importantly to build and strengthen relationships with our customers. These taxpayer visits also allow us to provide practical training opportunities to our Fuel Tax Examiners and it gives us the opportunity to train our customers on FTA policies and practices.

Historically, the FTA Program has made several taxpayer visits each year to visit customers that were struggling with the tax reporting process in an effort to help them remedy the problems they were having. While this is a valuable activity that we will continue, we have decided to find ways to expand upon this practice by attempting to get more “bang for our buck” while we’re out on the road by visiting other customers along the way just to make a connection and learn about their business.

During these times of shrinking budgets, we are even more focused on finding efficiencies and getting the most out of every dollar we spend. Having said that and although our program does not have a large operating budget, we have decided that practical, technical employee training as well as customer service and relationship building are fairly high on our priority list. We’ve learned that the entire tax collection process becomes more efficient and effective with additional focus in these areas. We all become more effi-

cient when we are communicating more, proactively educating our team members and customers, and effectively addressing concerns before they become unmanageable. Additionally, learning about our customers needs gives us a better opportunity to anticipate their future needs which makes us even more effective. In light of these reasons, we have put priority on value added in-state customer visits, and we have already seen positive results from these visits.

We want our customers to know that we are open to traveling to their site to offer any assistance we can and learn from them while we are there. Again, budget cuts will impact our ability to make these visits to some degree, but we are committed to helping and we have a huge appreciation that filing monthly fuel tax returns is only a fraction of what our customers do to operate their businesses and fuel tax is our business. If we can help we want to, and we have found that in many cases it is more effective if we are at your location.

These visits have been well received by our customers and we want to say “Thank You” for being receptive to our visits and welcoming us into your businesses. Many times the statement “We’re from the government and we’re here to help” is met with skepticism, but we have found that once our customers learn that we are there to learn as well as help they are receptive to our visit.

Please let us know what we can do to help.

Visit us on the web:  
[www.dot.state.wy.us](http://www.dot.state.wy.us)

# Hassinger Recognized By FTA Team

Following more than three years of demonstrated leadership, the Fuel Tax Team acknowledged Wayne Hassinger for Excellence in Leadership of the Fuel Tax Administration Team on August 24th, 2012.

Wayne joined Fuel Tax Administration in October 2008 as Program Supervisor. One of his goals was to build a highly functioning team and in doing so, he has led the team in:

Team building exercises which have brought the team together as a cohesive work team;

Creation and partial implementation of the Balanced Scorecard, including:  
*Becoming a Highly Functioning Team, Providing World Class Customer*

*Service, Developing the Gold Standard for Government Agencies, Effective and Efficient Application of Fuel Tax Law, and Education of Internal and External Customers;*

Formation of Individual Development Plans focusing on specific areas of interest for each team member;

Quarterly service to less fortunate members of our community; and,

Design and execution of the *Thematic Goal to Operate FTA as a Business* while motivating team members through an environment of fun.

As a leader, he sincerely cares about and acknowledges individual team

members for their contribution to the team.

He persevered through differences of opinion within the team, individual apathy and non-participation to become FTA Program Manager in January 2012. Kimberly Peters who follows Wayne as Program Supervisor says, "Wayne has been a great mentor and leader to me personally, and to the entire FTA team. He brings a great sense of humor and an enviable working environment to our team while at the same time motivating us to accomplish the work of collecting fuel taxes for the Wyoming Department of Transportation."

As a first, Wayne was taken by surprise and rendered speechless.

**Congratulations Wayne!**



*We have seen relationships built while discussing the results of the week's games, and those established relationships have been beneficial in more effectively performing our day-to-day professional duties.*

## FTA Team Building Grows

The FTA Team continues to work on team building and that work has grown to encompass activities that include every WYDOT program housed in our building. For several years the FTA Team has built an NFL Football Challenge activity that involves members from every program in the Planning building. It is not a time intensive activity, but rather a somewhat passive activity that brings together WYDOT employees from many different areas while they rally around a common interest—football. We have

seen relationships built while discussing the results of the week's games, and those established relationships have been beneficial in more effectively performing our day-to-day professional duties. The program that accumulates the most points is awarded the beautiful traveling trophy that was made by FTA's own Bruce Messer. It is a great team building exercise that now has 10 programs and over 100 participants.

We just wrapped-up another building-wide team build-

ing activity known as *Words With Programs*. It is a play off of the game *Words With Friends* and invites programs in our building to build a word on the board once a week. This activity serves as team building within the participating programs as they work together to determine the words to use. Again, while not time intensive in nature, this activity was a great deal of fun, built upon some cross-functional relationships, and the request has already been made to bring it back soon.

**Team building works!**

**Teamwork!**



# Natural Gas

Got Gas? Wyoming does, plenty of it. According to USA Energy Information, Wyoming is ranked number three in natural gas production, so it's probably no surprise that there are several natural gas retail locations licensed with Fuel Tax Administration. Recently some of our team members had the opportunity to visit Encana's retail location located at Bailey Oil in Riverton, Wyoming. We would like to thank both James Ross and Mike Bailey for taking the time to let us tour their facilities and educate us about compressed natural gas.

With the influx of alternative fuels entering the market, our intention is to be as

proactive as possible so we can inform you, our customers, of new reporting procedures. By touring the natural gas facility we have a more definitive understanding of how natural gas flows from bulk storage, to the retail pump and finally to a vehicle. Once the natural gas is used to propel a motor vehicle, it becomes fuel tax liable.

At this time we have not been enforcing whether suppliers, distributor/importer/exporters or retailers should or should not be licensed to sell natural gas for vehicle use, unless the only fuel type sold by a retail location

is natural gas. However, as we progress towards more natural gas being sold for vehicle use, we hope companies will license and remit fuel taxes so the monies can go towards maintaining the state's highways. If you have any questions about licensing to disburse natural gas for vehicle use and reporting questions, please contact us.

## Help The FTA Team Make A Difference For The Kids

In almost every issue of the *Wyoming Fuel Tax News*, we share what our team is doing in our community. We like to talk about it because it is very important to us and also because we hope to influence other work teams to volunteer their time in their community.

The timing of this newsletter coincides with our biggest community fundraiser—the Friday Food Bag Foundation Puzzle Auction. September 10th through September 17th marks the dates for the **FTA 2nd Annual Friday Food Bag Foundation Puzzle Auction.**

The Friday Food Bag Foundation works with social workers from both LCSD #1 and LCSD #2 in Laramie county to deliver bags of nutritious, non-perishable food each Friday while school is in session to children who otherwise might not eat well, or at all, during the weekends.

Wyoming Department of Education data indicates, for the 2010-2011 school year, **45.8% of all students in LCSD #1, and 36.4% of all students in LCSD #2, qualified for free or reduced fee meals.**

This year we are again holding a silent auction of 21 professionally framed and matted puzzles. *We have partnered with an online auction website this year and the address is listed below. Once you're at the site, you can view the puzzles to be auctioned by clicking on Auction. To bid you will need to create a log-in and password.*

**View & Bid At:**  
<http://sas-demo-5-com.si-sv2521.com/>

Please consider participating in this important fundraiser.

Other projects we have worked on since the last newsletter include

Habitat for Humanity and Connections Corner. Most FTA team members volunteered a Saturday in June and assisted with the building of a local Habitat For Humanity home. In mid-August, the majority of the FTA team as well as several members of the Motor Vehicle Services Team volunteered to prepare a dinner for the local Connections Corner organization that works to assist those living in poverty. It is an innovative program designed to end poverty, and they look for volunteer groups to prepare dinners for the participants each Wednesday. Fortunately for us, Jo -Ed Produce graciously agreed to donate the majority of the food, so all we needed to do was prepare and serve dinner.

We gain a great deal of satisfaction from giving back, and we hope that your organization does as well!

*"The timing of this newsletter coincides with our biggest community fundraiser—the Friday Food Bag Foundation Puzzle Auction."*

# We Share Your **PASSION**



**Beth Hilleman: Tax Examiner**

My greatest personal passion, outside of my family, is not only my two, six-year old Miniature Schnauzers, but dogs in general. I've always been a "pushover" for animals, however; my passion for these creatures totally came to the forefront especially this past month.

One of my "girls", Emma, developed autoimmune hemolytic anemia. This disease causes her body to attack itself and destroy her red blood cells. She became so ill so quickly that we just about lost her. She needed a blood transfusion and our local vet was not able to provide her with one. Fortunately, we live close enough to a wonderful veterinary hospital at Colorado State University. They have donor dogs who regularly give blood and were able to give Emma a transfusion the day she arrived and again a couple of

days later. After many tests and a week of hospitalization, she was able to return home. She's on medication and making very slow progress, accompanied by some setbacks. She will have to live with this disease forever and will have ongoing monitoring. Sitting in the waiting room at Colorado State Vet Hospital, we saw so many dogs, cats, birds, etc. coming to have medical help. It broke my heart to see so many three-legged dogs, dogs who need to be assisted to walk or to get up from a lying position, dogs with bandages on all different areas of their heads or bodies. I felt so blessed to have this location to take Emma with the hope of bringing her back home, and home to her sister-her litter mate-whom she'd never been away from for so long. Dogs are such wonderful creations. They are

always honest. They love without questioning why. They help you up when you're feeling down. They are such characters that you can't help but laugh about them. When you come in the door, they make you feel like you've been gone for a year when you've only been gone for a half an hour. Coincidentally, on one trip to visit Emma while she was in the hospital, I read a bumper sticker on a car we passed on the highway. It said, "Life is short. Play with your dog."



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