

# WHO IS THIS TIM GUY AND WHY DO WE KEEP TWEETING ABOUT HIM?

VDOT Northern Virginia's Use of Social Media in Traffic Incident Management

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**September 25, 2019** 





# Case Study: American Legion Bridge Tanker

## **Background**

- 2.2 million residents (25% of state population)
- 14,000+ lane miles maintained
- I-495 (Capital Beltway) Inner Loop at Potomac River
- Annual Average Daily Traffic: 116,500
- Rush hour begins around 3 p.m.
- Established practice of live-tweeting
  - Snow operations
  - Pipe replacements
  - Potholing
  - Flood repairs
  - And now incidents!





# Case Study: American Legion Bridge Tanker

### Goals

- Get the word out to all, especially influencer accounts
  - Media
  - Partner agencies/jurisdictions
  - Elected officials
- Provide accurate info at all times
- Manage expectations
- Be relatable, responsive, empathetic, and light-hearted
- Show things that aren't normally seen
- Explain the process and work of your people
- Humanize your agency and personnel
- Have fun!





Alicia Tengwall @LAMillennium · Mar 28

**1** 54 ♥ :

Holy crap!!! A guy my husband just had a meeting with left the meeting and on his way back to his office his dash cam caught the tanker on #rt495 flipping over! #tractortruckaccident #tankeflipped #marylandtanker #maryland495





VDOT Northern VA ◎ @VaDOTNOVA · Mar 28

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Great Falls: 495 NB (Inner Loop) at the American Legion Bridge: Overturned tanker crash with possible HazMat has all lanes but left lane closed. Expect a full closure soon. Pls avoid area.



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Update: ALL Inner Loop lanes are now closed at the American Legion Bridge. Pls use an alternate route.



#### VDOT Northern VA 📀 @VaDOTNOVA

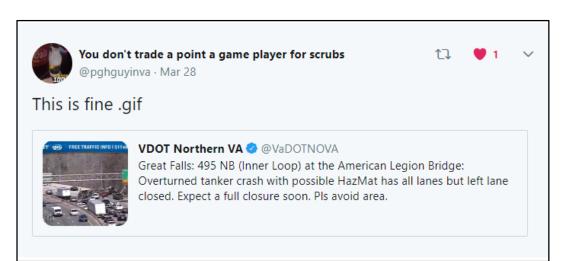
Great Falls: 495 NB (Inner Loop) at the American Legion Bridge: Overturned tanker crash with possible HazMat has all lanes but left lane closed. Expect a full closure soon. Pls avoid area.





















Folks, do not attempt to get on the Inner Loop at this time. Period. And if a responder is behind you, find a way to move. Period. Your National Capital Region responders are amazing, but they need to get there in order to help.

VDOT Northern VA 📀 @VaDOTNOVA

Update: ALL Inner Loop lanes are now closed at the American Legion Bridge. Pls use an alternate route. twitter.com/VaDOTNOVA/stat...

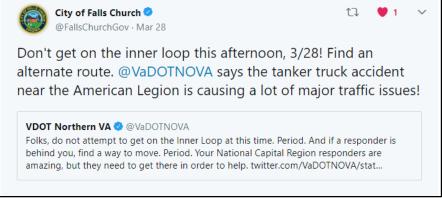














VDOT Northern VA @ @VaDOTNOVA · Mar 28

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This is a first for us (and a career highlight)— we're enroute with 2 of our Incident Management Coordinators (1 is already there) to the overturned tanker at the AL Bridge with two of our spill support trailers. Let's talk about Traffic Incident Management!



**JP** @jennyinDC ⋅ Mar 28 **t**↓





Replying to @VaDOTNOVA

Make sure you live tweet everything, because the rest of us stuck in traffic can't see :-)





VDOT Northern VA ❷ @VaDOTNOVA · Mar 28

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The left lane of the Inner Loop is only temporarily open in order to flush the queue through. Pls assume the American Legion bridge will be closed thru rush hour. Plan accordingly!



VDOT Northern VA ◎ @VaDOTNOVA · Mar 28

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We're taking @Dulles\_Toll\_Rd for obvious reasons. We need to get needed resources there as quickly as possible.



VDOT Northern VA <a> ② <a> ② <a> ② <a> ② <a> ■ VaDOTNOVA · Mar 28 </a> <a> 28 <a> 30 <a> 31 <a> 32 <a> 32 <a> 33 <a> 33 <a> 33 <a> 34 <a> 34 <a> 34 <a> 35 <a> 36 <a> 36

Thanks for moving to the left for us.

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VDOT Northern VA ◎ @VaDOTNOVA · Mar 28

A+ to everyone keeping the shoulder open.

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We had to fight our way theu but we made it. Pls #moveover for amber lights too.



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Getting closer to the scene. Just want to point out that my escort, the amazing IMC 903 (Brad Miller) is an EVOC instructor!!!



VDOT Northern VA < ② @ VaDOTNOVA · Mar 28

Reminder: we are simply flushing the queue.

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## Polly @Polly48721283 · Mar 28







Replying to @VaDOTNOVA

I need to up my twitter game, my poor husband has been stuck on the outer loop for 2 hrs, just now ready to cross the bridge. Thankful for you twitter feed.





VDOT Northern VA ② @VaDOTNOVA · Mar 28

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This. Is. Why. Towing. Is. Important.



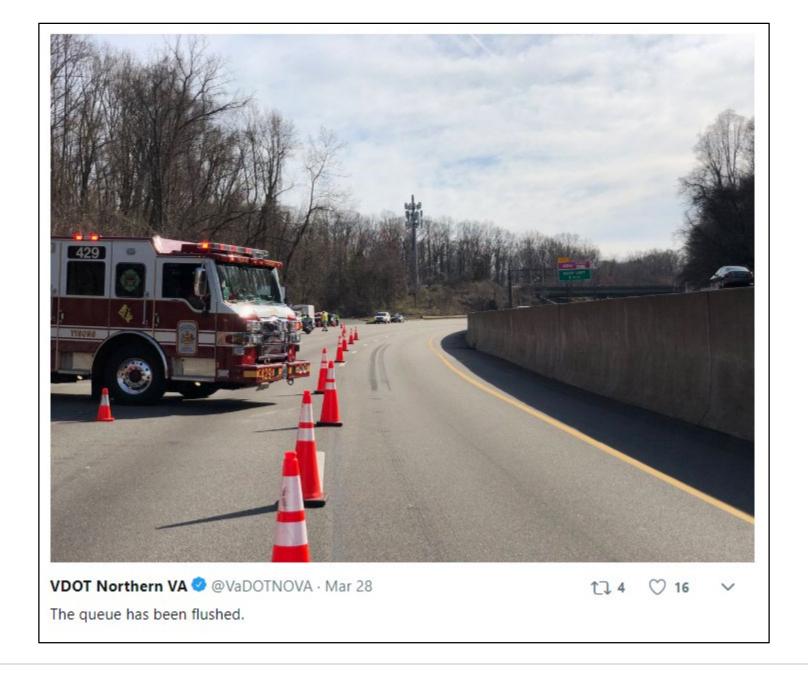
VDOT Northern VA ② @VaDOTNOVA · Mar 28

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Traffic Incident Management includes MULTIPLE partner agencies. The NCR region is unbelievably qualified for these types of incidents.



In case y'all have never seen a tiller truck. @ffxfirerescue 😍







VDOT Northern VA ❷ @VaDOTNOVA · Mar 28

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The drone has arrived. Thank you @VDEM. Drone imagery in 4K and it helps responders see the entire scene much more quickly.



Cordell Pugh @CordellTraffic · Mar 28







Replying to @VaDOTNOVA @VDEM

@VaDOTNOVA Any chances drone video from today could be publicized?





And yes, Maryland agencies are here. Our partnership goes bridge to bridge and beyond.



4:58 PM - 28 Mar 2019





#### Irma Corado

 $\Box$ 





@irma4supervisor · Mar 28

Please find alternative rides home to avoid 495 closures! Por favor busquen rutas alternativas para llegar a casa hoy -- 495 esta cerrado.

Thanks @VaDOTNOVA for responding so quickly! Gracias VDOT por responder tan rapido!

#### VDOT Northern VA 🤣 @VaDOTNOVA

Folks, do not attempt to get on the Inner Loop at this time. Period. And if a responder is behind you, find a way to move. Period. Your National Capital Region responders are amazing, but they need to get there in order to help. twitter.com/VaDOTNOVA/stat...





VDOT Northern VA ② @VaDOTNOVA · Mar 28

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Meet the wrecker drivers from @HenrysWrecker. Their expertise and tools are going to help us clear this incident. Towing is so very important to Traffic Incident Management. Amber = blue = red. #MoveOver





**Tasha Pablo** @MtVernonT · Mar 28  $\Box$ 



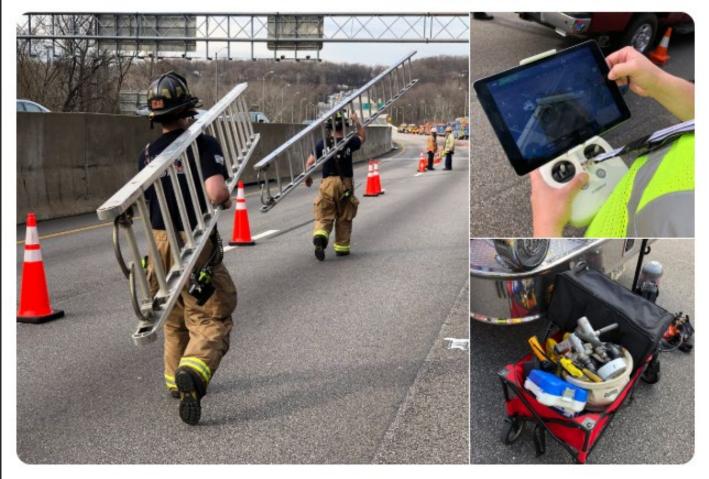


Replying to @VaDOTNOVA @HenrysWrecker

Nice to see the guys doing the hard jobs!



# All. The. Tools. @ffxfirerescue @VDEM







## **Ray Lehr** @RayLehr · Mar 28

#### **(**]





# #EveryDayHeros







VDOT Northern VA ◎ @VaDOTNOVA · Mar 28

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Arguably the most important resource has arrived. Traffic Incident Management partnerships allow agencies to leverage resources.



incident and it will take many more hours to clear.



# Jack Dobbyn @JackDobbyn · Mar 28

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Replying to @VaDOTNOVA

What's the tanker leaking?



#### The Collected Shimbo

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@NeverDauntedNet · Mar 28

Replying to @JackDobbyn @VaDOTNOVA

My will to live





Whoever is holding the @VaDOTNOVA handle — Thank you for keeping this incident as light hearted and educational possible! My (very, very, very long standstill) commute thanks you! Stay safe and thank you!



Replying to @VaDOTNOVA

Thanks for sharing the process with us!





Ever wonder what's in our spill trailers? Now you can see. We also have evac trailers, yodocks (Google it), message boards, cones, etc.







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Replying to @VaDOTNOVA

If you ask "Alexa, what is a yodock?" she tells you all about a Korean prison camp which I'm confident is not correct in this context. Lol



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Replying to @CaitlinCFRE

Omg that's not what we have. Promise.



#### Jennifer M Hernandez

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@Jenn\_0591 · Mar 28

# Omgggg i love whoever runs your Twitter!!!!

VDOT Northern VA 📀 @VaDOTNOVA

Replying to @MKSpence

Career highlight in terms of working with and seeing first hand the vast amounts of experience and unparallelled skill set of the responder community in the National Capital Region. We didn't intend to be insensitive to you— apologies!







Replying to @VaDOTNOVA

Glad to see this but don't be fooled because if you zoom in you'll see that the truck is still overturned. A new truck had arrived to the scene to pump the rest of the gas out of the overturned truck. Keep it goin! @VaDOTNOVA



This is a great series of tweets about the spill on 495. I have issues with policies and work zone schedules, but am always impressed with vdot incident response.



#### VDOT Northern VA 📀 @VaDOTNOVA

This is a first for us (and a career highlight)— we're enroute with 2 of our Incident Management Coordinators (1 is already there) to the overturned tanker at the AL Bridge with two of our spill support trailers. Let's talk about Traffic Incident Management!



I-95 northbound travelers headed toward Northern Virginia and points beyond should be aware that all lanes of I-495 northbound (Capitol Beltway Inner Loop) are closed at American Legion Bridge at MD line. Continue to follow @VaDOTNOVA and 511virginia.org for updates.



### VDOT Northern VA 📀 @VaDOTNOVA

Just wanted to point out how eerie it is to stand in the middle of a closed interstate. This is a complex incident and it will take many more hours to clear.



### John Dunlop @MDScot · Mar 28

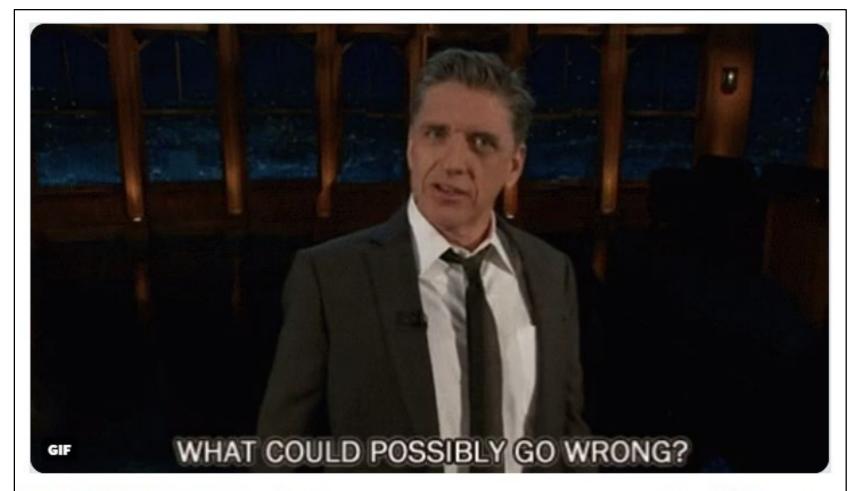
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Replying to @VaDOTFRED @VaDOTNOVA

Don't understand why getting a few lanes open is so hard push to one side until night



Cordell Pugh @CordellTraffic · Mar 28







Replying to @VaDOTNOVA @MDScot @VaDOTFRED

@VaDOTNOVA Leaving 8,500 gallons of fuel in an unstable trailer in a bad spot on a very heavily travelled interstate?





Replying to @ABC7Jay @VaDOTNOVA and 2 others

Remember it's gasoline and very flammable even a static spark could ignite the fuel.





Replying to @michellenapu @VaDOTNOVA and 3 others

As someone that has dealt with the same scenario 20+ years ago, it was almost a 12 hour process back then, so I'm not surprised about the amount of time it's taken. It becomes a bigger focus on a major bridge.







Replying to @VaDOTNOVA

At least all the people on the other side wont slow down to









VDOT Northern VA ② @VaDOTNOVA · Mar 28

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Wonder why the Outer Loop is going so slow at the American Legion Bridge? Because tons of people are driving and filming us AT THE SAME TIME. Come on, folks.



Replying to @VaDOTNOVA

This tweet is too real.



🔊 Dread We Need a Pitching Staff David 🗟

@fotodave · Mar 28

Pro tip: don't do this



VDOT Northern VA 📀 @VaDOTNOVA

Wonder why the Outer Loop is going so slow at the Bridge? Because tons of people are driving and filmin TIME. Come on, folks.















I LOVE this call out by @VaDOTNOVA ... I hope everyone is reaching home it has decided to stay at the hotel instead of being on the road tonight.



VDOT Northern VA 📀 @VaDOTNOVA

Wonder why the Outer Loop is going so slow at the American Legion Bridge? Because tons of people are driving and filming us AT THE SAME TIME. Come on, folks.



@itbejasonyo · Mar 28

The DMV area in a nutshell. Its like people havent seen a crash/police cars in their lives or theyre just trying to post to their social medias for likes.



VDOT Northern VA 📀 @VaDOTNOVA

Wonder why the Outer Loop is going so slow at the American Legion Bridge? Because tons of people are driving and filming us AT THE SAME TIME. Come on, folks.



Fairfax Fire/Rescue @ @ffxfirerescue · Mar 28

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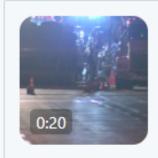
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#FCFRD and @mcfrs HazMat crews currently working to transfer gasoline from overturned trailer. They have successfully offloaded one pod (1/4 of product), they have 3 pods left. Anticipate completing operation in next 2 hours after which @VaDOTNOVA will work to upright tanker.



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# Are people still just stuck there?



### Van Applegate 🔮 @vbagate

UPDATE: 1 of 4 gasoline pods has been unloaded. 3 left. Could take around 2 hours to finish transfer of fuel. At that point crews can move in to upright the trailer. Crew that would be lifting the truck tells @Idemarcofox5 it will take the, around 90 minutes, if it goes smoothly.

Show this thread



Van Applegate 

@vbagate · Mar 28

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Replying to @AJ ThompsonJr

No, @VaDOTNOVA and @FairfaxCountyPD did Yoeman's work getting them across the bridge hours ago.



The incident continues. The Inner Loop is still closed and will remain so for many more hours.



Van Applegate 

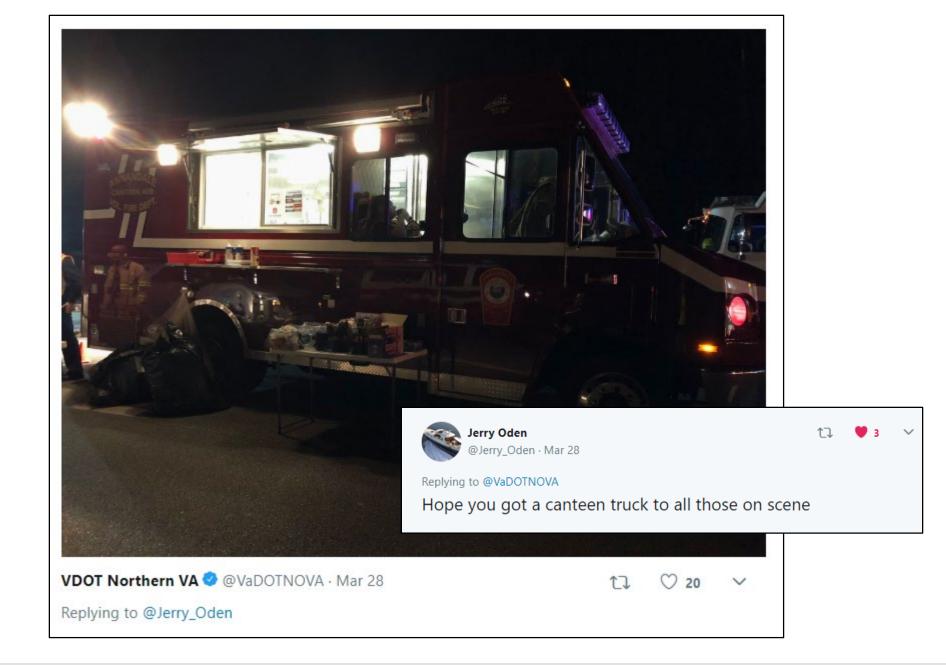
②

@vbagate · Mar 28

Replying to @VaDOTNOVA @AJ\_ThompsonJr @FairfaxCountyPD

Thanks for all you guys do, keeping us and the public informed. What a day. Stay safe.







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Idk who y'all got managing the @VaDOTNOVA account but give them a raise.

Their coverage of the spill is better than any of the local news stations. We getting play by plays like a NCAA game



Follow

# **UPDATE/NEW IMAGES IN:**

@VaDOTNOVA providing up close pics of @ffxfirerescue working w/contractors & environmental officials to safely offload fuel from overturned tanker on 495NB inner loop near American Legion Bridge. Hope is road open for AM commute. @ABC7News





Replying to @VaDOTNOVA

Is the outer loop affected? How do you see this shaping up for the morning commute in both directions? Btw, great work reporting on Twitter!!





VDOT Northern VA < ② @ VaDOTNOVA · Mar 28

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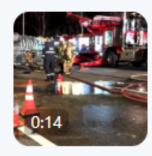
Ever wonder what a multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency coordinated complex incident scene looks like? @ffxfirerescue apparatus are nothing short of breathtaking.



## **Ryan Sprouse** @RSprouseABC7 · Mar 28

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### #teamworkmakesthedreamwork



### VDOT Northern VA 📀 @VaDOTNOVA

Ever wonder what a multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency coordinated complex incident scene looks like? @ffxfirerescue apparatus are nothing short of breathtaking.





Replying to @VaDOTNOVA @ffxfirerescue

Have folks gotten a break or a shift change? It's been 9 hours. Thanks to all!



John Akhavan 🏠 🧰 💲 @JohnAkhavan · Mar 28



Replying to @VaDOTNOVA

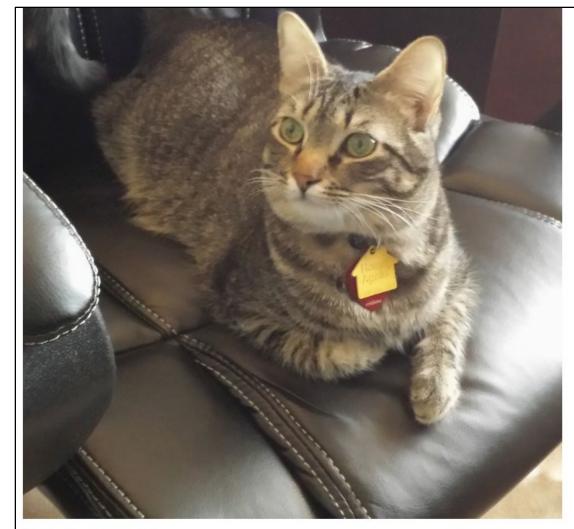
Please thank everyone for their hard work! We appreciate it. 👍











Howie @hsg516 · Mar 29



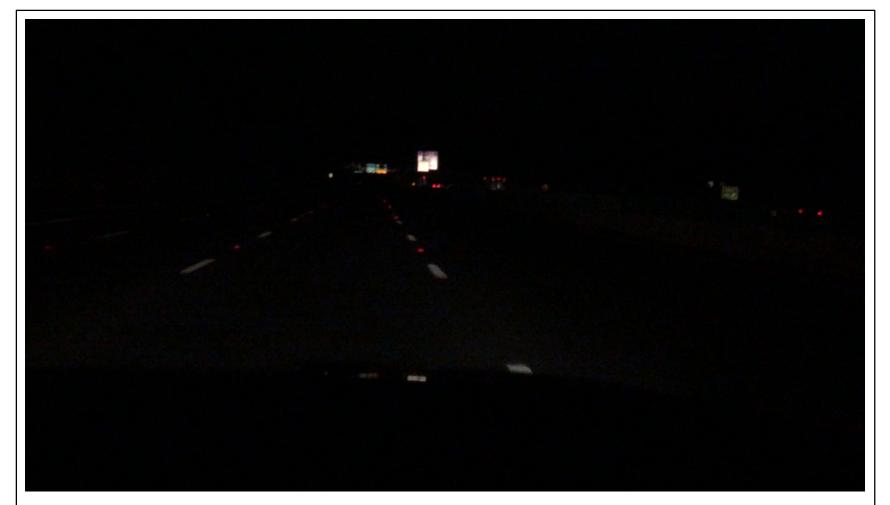


Replying to @VaDOTNOVA @ffxfirerescue

Do the hoomans needs me to come out so they can has a friend to help destress? I can sits on lap and purr, it makes the hoomans feel better.

Honestly, thank you all for the hard work that sometimes goes unnoticed. We appreciate all that you do. #FirstRespondersRock

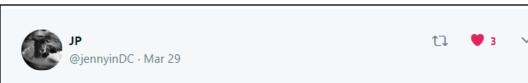




VDOT Northern VA < 2 @ VaDOTNOVA · Mar 29

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GM Friends! All Beltway lanes are open. Thank you to our incident partners from DC & MD and special thanks to @ffxfirerescue @FairfaxCountyPD @VSPPIO @VDEM @HenrysWrecker. Here's a video of us driving the "wrong way" when all lanes were closed. Notice the reflectors are red?



#### Wowwww you learn new things every day



#### VDOT Northern VA 📀 @VaDOTNOVA

GM Friends! All Beltway lanes are open. Thank you to partners from DC & MD and special thanks to @ffxfire @FairfaxCountyPD @VSPPIO @VDEM @HenrysWreck of us driving the "wrong way" when all lanes were clos







Thank you all for your hard work to clear such a horrible accident! Yes, traffic was terrible, but at least no one was injured and that's what matters most.



#### VDOT Northern VA 📀 @VaDOTNOVA

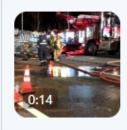
Ever wonder what a multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency coordinated complex incident scene looks like? @ffxfirerescue apparatus are nothing short of breathtaking.



Kristi King 📀

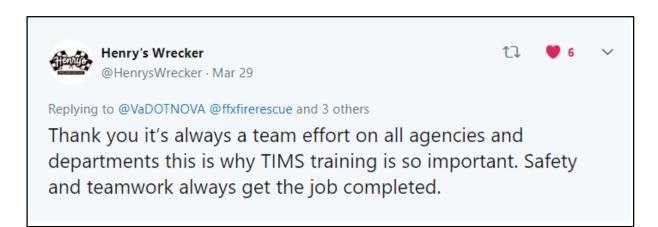
@kingWTOP · Mar 29

Planning and training pay off



#### VDOT Northern VA 📀 @VaDOTNOVA

Ever wonder what a multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency coordinated complex incident scene looks like? @ffxfirerescue apparatus are nothing short of breathtaking.













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Replying to @VaDOTNOVA @ffxfirerescue and 8 others

And thankfully no one does it better than #NoVA and the #NCR!





### Real Housewife of Howard County







@kittykittykia · Mar 29

Replying to @VaDOTNOVA

My husband was stuck here for 5 hours and he's cranky. I think I'm entitled to financial compensation.



michael raumer







@mindpivot · Mar 29

man, after yesterday's traffic hellscape I'm here checking the @VaDOTNOVA twitter feed for alerts every 10 minutes to see if I need to bail out early





Leslie Malone @LeslieRMalone · Mar 29

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Replying to @VaDOTNOVA @ffxfirerescue

Fantastic job yesterday. Kudos to everyone involved and also to the social manager(s).





Joe Spevak @CameraCrazyFox5 · Mar 29







@VaDOTNOVA road crews setting up to repair damage after yesterday's tanker accident. Minor delays on the legion bridge. @ErinFox5DC @fox5dc



Jay Korff 🔮 @ABC7Jay · Mar 29

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UPDATE: VA State Police have charged tanker driver Weldon J Harrison, who crashed on 495NB yesterday leading to trafffic chaos, with reckless driving & defective brakes.

Pic courtesy @VaDOTNOVA



# **Twitter Metrics**

Tweets/replies: 76

Retweets: 364

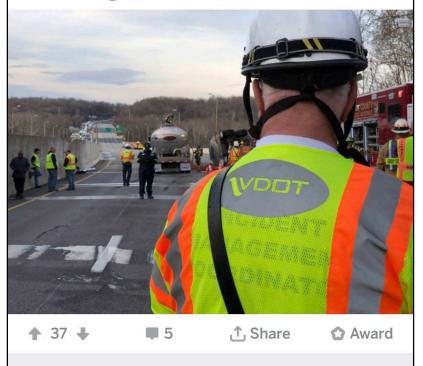
Likes: 1,250

Comments: 101

Impressions: 496,885



American Legion Bridge about 24 hours ago. Looks so eerie.



**₩** BEST COMMENTS ▼

big\_sarge • 11h

He is thinking..."just another 1/4 mile and this would have been Maryland's problem."

