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Driving Kansas into the 21st Century

By Donna Shelite, Director of Vehicles

TOPEKA – The first week of May will be an exciting time for Kansas as our state’s Division of Vehicles drives into the 21st century with a significant system upgrade that will move all motor vehicle records into a single, modern system that is easier to use, maintain and enhance.

I tip my hat to those who have planned ahead and visited treasurer’s or driver licensing office in advance of this system upgrade that will cause our offices to be closed from May 1 to May 7.

Because the systems that run vehicle titling and registration as well as driver licensing will be down, state driver licensing offices will be closed for the week, but county treasurers’ offices will be able to conduct non-vehicle related business.

I am excited about the new system and the benefits it will bring and appreciate people’s patience as we go through this necessary step.

With a little bit of planning the upgrade will not be a major problem for Kansans.

To avoid unnecessary inconvenience, we are suggesting that people whose vehicle registration will expire in April – those with last names starting with C and D – should renew their tags before Monday, April 30.

For those turning 21 during the shut-down who cannot renew their driver’s license before their birth date, the state provides an automatic 45 day extension which will allow them to have a valid driver’s license and get their new license later in the month from any of the state’s 111 driver licensing stations.

Anyone else whose license expires from May 1 to May 7 should be sure to renew their licenses no later than April 27 as driver licensing offices are closed on Mondays.

During the upgrade week we will transfer 6.8 million records onto the new system. The new system will replace three aging mainframe systems used for driver licensing, motor vehicle titling and registration and inventory management.

While those records are being converted, state and county offices will close out of the old mainframe system, install new computer equipment, and get set up to serve customers again on May 8

This is the product of a three-year, \$40 million project that has included participation and input from county treasurers, law enforcement officers, vehicle dealers and others from across the state.

It is also the first step in the upgrade process. This fall, there will be a second week-long shut down while the system that handles driver's license and driver control records is merged into the first phase of the upgrade. Once this is completed we will be able to see all of a person's vehicle and driving records at once.

We could not have built the system without help from those who will be using it. We also commend the foresight of state legislators in 2009 who enabled us to make this investment in the future, as it will allow us to improve customer service and efficiency.

We appreciate everyone's cooperation as we work to build a better, more efficient system for Kansas drivers and vehicle owners that can grow with our state in the future.