

## Knowing What You Need to Know, and Making Sure They Hear It

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One of the major challenges facing any rural operations is gathering information. With some much area to cover and so little resources available, information gathering can be tough. Gathering weather information certainly falls into this category. As we all know weather can change so quickly over such a small distance that knowing what is going on over your entire region of responsibility can be challenging to say the least. Road weather stations collect this type of information; however placing them everywhere many times is not feasible. Today there are new and exciting improvement road weather to help you gather and manage this road weather information, so you can stay on top of the changes in weather, and keep your roads safe and risk to a minimum.

Once you have a good understanding about the weather you can take action. However, it is not just about the action you take, but the action of the traveling public. Making sure they are better prepared and informed reduces the amount of problems caused by the travelers, and is less likely to put them in harms way. Today, there are ever increasing ways to inform the motorists, with many now using their internet enabled smart phones to check information as they drive. This increase in technology has created a new problem –distracted driving. Although these high-tech ways have many advantages, there are still some significant disadvantages to a proven technology – highway advisory radio or HAR. HARs still offer the most reach of any technology; all cars still have a radio. They can provide a wealth of detailed information through spoken messages, they are much less distracting than mobile phones, they alert people to tune in when used with a VMS sign or flashing beacons, and can be updated quickly with the use of communication management software. Vaisala is a weather information provider and ITS company that designs solutions to solve these specific challenges we face every day.