***(Note: The following article can be personalized to fit your department. Please use it in your local newspaper, on your county or department website, or on your Facebook page to help area residents know your department’s dedication to economically providing them the safer driving surfaces in their rural areas.) Fill in your department’s information in blue.***

(**Name of Department**) To Improve Area Rural Roads

Living in the country has many benefits, but driving on unpaved roads can be a challenge. However, this spring **(name of your department**) will be working to improve roads in the area to make them more stable and safer for drivers.

Properly designed and maintained gravel roads can stand up to heavy traffic from trucks and farm equipment and still offer an even driving surface. It’s important that roads are bladed with the proper grade, so water drains properly and doesn’t pool, helping create washboards and ruts.

Gravel roads also can be treated with a road stabilizer, which keeps gravel or other road materials in place, makes the road surfaces smoother, and controls the dust. The (**name of your department**) will be blading roads and applying a road stabilizer to improve many of the roads in our rural areas.

The road stabilizer the department will be using is a naturally occurring mineral called magnesium chloride, a nontoxic mineral that is gathered from the Great Salt Lake in Utah. DustGard® magnesium chloride road stabilizer is applied as a liquid solution on freshly-bladed roads, and it stabilizes roads and controls dust because it has hygroscopic properties. This means that it naturally attracts moisture from the air, keeping the ground slightly damp and preventing dust and dirt from blowing in the wind.

This is beneficial for many reasons. It improves road safety by offering drivers greater traction and controlling dust that make visibility difficult. It also protects vehicles by keeping loose gravel and dust to a minimum, reducing chipped windshields, congested filters and clogged bearings.

Controlling dust also improves the environment for human and animal health. This is especially helpful for young children, the elderly, and anyone who suffers from asthma or frequent upper respiratory illnesses.

The (**name of department**) also expects total road maintenance costs to decrease by using a road stabilizer on key roads. The maintenance plan reduces the amount of grading required throughout the year and there is much less need to replace lost gravel. Additionally, the department’s road equipment should have fewer maintenance and repair issues.