



Help Us to Help You

July 4th was Independence Day, a day that I hope you, your family and all Americans celebrated. This was a day to remember because it signified all of the freedoms we now enjoy, including the freedom of speech. What we do and have done for ourselves dies with us but what we do and have done for others remains everlasting. Ask yourself, do you achieve only for yourself or do you strive to help and serve others?

Do you remember your Government and/or Oklahoma History classes? Do you recall who the real taxpayers are? More specifically who the taxpayers of Oklahoma are and in particular who pays the taxes to finance and support Grant County as well as the Grant County road districts?

Those who pay property taxes (home, land and real estate taxes) and/or personal property taxes (farm equipment and/or livestock) financially support schools and the general fund for county government (the courthouse, sheriff and health departments). These taxes are assessed by the County Assessor and then collected from the County Treasurer, payments are generally due in December and the following March. Please be aware that **NOT** one single penny of this money is collected for and/or transferred to the **“Highway Fund”** to give financial support to the maintenance or construction of ANY COUNTY BRIDGE AND/OR COUNTY ROAD. Therefore, be well informed that **no** county roads are funded from “land and/or farm property taxes” or from “personal property taxes” as a great majority of you may believe. This paragraph is definitely worth reading again.

How are county roads funded? All roads and bridges in Grant County are financially supported from designated “Highway Funds”, which are derived from a proportion of Gross Production taxes (oil), Diesel fuel **road tax**, Gasoline fuel **road tax**, Special fuels (such as propane **road tax**) and a percentage of Motor Vehicle Collections. These monies are collected all across Oklahoma and sent to the Oklahoma Tax Commissioner to be appropriated and divided amongst the 77 counties of Oklahoma. The monies are then divided by a “formula” that is based on individual county population, road miles, bridge numbers, and total square miles.

Please note that **“road tax”** is highlighted and only “road tax” on fuels **PURCHASED** in the state of **OKLAHOMA** goes towards **road in Oklahoma** (county and state roads). So **if and when** fuel is purchased out-of-state (such as Caldwell, Kansas) there is not one penny collected to support any roads in Oklahoma (i.e. Grant County, Oklahoma). Furthermore, farm fuel is exempt from road taxes; therefore no money is collected on the purchase of farm fuel for upkeep, let alone for improvements, of county and/or state roads.

I implore you to “help us to help you”! So how can you help? If you desire improved roads and/or bridges in Grant County I challenge you to please buy your entire **road gas** and **road diesel** in **Oklahoma**, because THAT money will help to fund our roads. REMEMBER – land taxes and personal property taxes do not. Farm diesel and/or farm gasoline do not help either – just road tax fuel. If you are burning tax-exempt “farm fuel” in your vehicles, you also are not helping to fund roads. As an additional note, when the price

of fuel goes up the road tax remains the same – in other words higher priced fuel does not equate to more road tax dollars collected.

I am not opposed to help and/or suggestions including **constructive** criticism and appreciation. Furthermore, writing **factual informative** letters to your state legislators can be a positive start. Address **support** for county government and their **needs** for additionally funding to help with road material, road equipment, fuel costs, and for increased wages to help hire new employees and also to help keep present district employees. Please be aware that oil field wages are considerable higher and good solid trained employees are leaving and/or are tempted to leave for employment in the ‘oil patch’. Above all, do **not** be negative and do **not** point fingers, that is always unconstructive and a turnoff in general.

Finally, I challenge you to do something positive that can **beneficially** help the plight of Grant County, Oklahoma. First, take a look at the entire county as well as surrounding counties, observe what others are doing to assist road districts – such as buying fuel in Oklahoma, buying all vehicle tags in Oklahoma, putting up a ‘downed’ sign when found, helping to shale and/or rock roads, spraying and/or mowing ditches, scraping roads properly only when needed, cleaning out culverts, trimming trees and property removing them, and the list goes on and on. Additionally, ANYONE and EVERYONE **could help just** by supporting and giving thanks to the men out there working in **all kinds of weather** and in **all kinds of conditions** because they **are in fact** doing their best to improve Grant County roads and bridges for YOU.

Now ask yourself if you too can make a difference? I believe you can make a difference but only if you **choose** to HELP and SERVE OTHERS rather than to be self-serving for your self.

Respectfully submitted,
Cindy R. Bobbitt, Commissioner
Grant County District 2