

# Leveraging Technology to Communicate with Residents – QR Codes

Lower Salford Township, Montgomery County's Build a Better Mousetrap entry to PA LTAP

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**What was the challenge?** About five years ago, Lower Salford Township began using the Cape Seal surface treatment process as part of our road improvement program. This is a two-step process where a chip seal is first applied to a roadway followed by a slurry seal as the finished product. We get all the benefits of the chip seal with the aesthetics of the slurry seal, which is important in more suburban settings. We send letters to all residents on the affected streets in advance of work to inform them of the work and to minimize phone calls. The challenge was to adequately explain the process in a concise manner without sending a multi-page letter that no one would take the time to read. A two-step process that includes a seven- to 10-day gap lends itself to the question of if and when the work will be completed. The "gap" period is typically when the phone calls would start coming in and would require staff time to answer the questions.

**How did you develop and implement your solution?** We were able to locate a professionally made YouTube video of the Cape Seal process, which included narration of the various steps and the overall benefits of the process. Using a free website, we created a QR Code linking the video.

The QR Code was then included in all letters sent to residents, who can simply scan the QR Code with their phone and watch the video that explains the entire process. We also had signs made that included the QR Code. About a week prior to the start of work, we installed these signs at strategic locations so that anyone driving, jogging, or walking their dog, can simply scan the code and watch the video.

**What labor, equipment, plans, or material did it take to make the solution work?** Implementing the solution took approximately three hours of staff time to research Cape Seal videos, find the free QR Code creator website, create the code, and include it in the letters and on the signs. Other materials included aluminum sign materials.

**What was the cost of implementation?** The cost of implementation was less than \$500, which included staff time, and the purchase of 12 signs.

**What was the positive impact/result/outcome of your efforts?** Leveraging this technology reduced the number of phone calls from residents that "just wanted to know" if the chip seal (first step) was the final product, when the contractor would be back, and just the general what's happening on my street.

It also allows the township to better communicate with our residents by showing them what will be happening on their street and how the use of the Cape Seal process benefits the community.

