

Roadsoft® Roundup

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For Roadsoft help, visit
the Roadsoft Manual at

<http://roadsoft.org/help>

Roadsoft - Frequently Asked Questions

Staff at the Center of Technology & Training (CTT) are here to help Roadsoft customers if they have questions about installing or using the software. Certain times of the year tend to increase the frequency of very similar types of questions. Here are a few of the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) we typically get early in the calendar year (in no particular order). This isn't meant to provide detailed instructions for each of these topics, but more to help make you aware of these things and give you a brief rundown on how to deal with them. If you ever have questions with these or any other topic, be sure to consult the online manual at <https://roadsoft.org/help> or feel free to send an email to roadsoft@mtu.edu.

Why are my PASER ratings lower than they should be?

Roadsoft uses fairly complex algorithms to calculate the expected surface condition values, deterioration curves, remaining service life (RSL), as well as for making recommendations for the Project Planning & Selection and Strategy Evaluation tools. Generically speaking, all of these calculations and tools rely on accurate surface condition values, as well as having any projects and treatments also added. Most of these would be categorized as advanced topics and could fill a complete issue of the *Roadsoft Roundup* to explain. To keep it simple, here are a few things to keep an eye out for if Roadsoft doesn't seem to be calculating or producing the results you're expecting. Keep in mind that many of these items and settings are related.

Is it a new year?

One common thing that will cause the phone to ring in early January is that the change of the calendar year will trigger a number of calculated and predicted values in Roadsoft to

also change. Surface ratings and all the related and subsequent values calculated from them will be affected by the rolling of the calendar to the new year. There is a way to adjust Roadsoft settings to be based on the calendar year, one year from when a rating or treatment were entered, and fiscal year. This setting can be found under Asset Management>Pavement Management>Deterioration Curve Settings in the Rating Year portion of the form.

Treatment History

One of the most common things that will affect calculated values in Roadsoft is the lack of project or treatment information for road segments. What often happens is that a treatment is applied but isn't recorded in Roadsoft. A rating will then be made at some point on that segment reflecting the treatment. At this point, Roadsoft will only see that the rating maybe jumped from a 5 to an 8, as an example, but without having a treatment recorded it will calculate values and try to fit to a curve using all of the ratings from the past ten years. If there is a treatment entered, it resets the calculations and baseline to account for the treatment. What this means in terms of calculated values is that without a treatment, even though the segment was last rated as an 8, the calculated rating for it might be a 4 as it balances out the ratings for the past ten years. By entering a treatment for the segment, Roadsoft might now calculate the rating to be a 7, which is a bit more realistic.

Add treatments using the Project Builder

Many people will add a treatment in the Road Module. Although this will help Roadsoft build a more accurate deterioration curve and calculate a PASER rating, the preferred way of adding treatments to a segment is to use the Project Builder. To use the



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Project Builder, you must first create treatments for the various surface subtypes. Treatments are added using the Surface Definition form, which is located under Asset Management>Pavement Management menu. Once surface subtypes and associated treatments are defined, they can be used in the Project Builder. Projects built in the Project Builder will make the yearly TAMC reporting process easier and provide more functionality when future projects are entered.

Infer Treatments & Rebuild RSL

One handy tool that was recently added to Roadsoft is the ability to infer treatments when there hasn't been a project or treatment entered, but a segment rating value jumps more than 1 or 2 points (this value is selectable in the tool). This setting is available in a few different areas, but the easiest way to set it is through the Asset Management>Pavement Management>Deterioration Curve Settings. The Infer Treatments setting is global and will be used in various calculations throughout the program. After making changes to the Infer Treatments setting, you will need to rebuild your RSL for them to take effect. This is accomplished under the Asset Management>Pavement Management>Rebuild Remaining Service Life (RSL) menu option. This will bring up the Rebuild RSL form which gives you options of rebuilding your entire network, or to apply filters to only rebuild a portion of your network. In addition, to the Infer Treatments setting, there are other settings available on the Deterioration Curve Settings form that you can try out to see if they more accurately reflect the conditions and values you expect in your network.

How do I manage/backup/move/restore/share my database?

Another common series of questions we often get is in regards to managing databases. These questions range from moving the database to a new computer, sharing the database with coworkers, to backing up and restoring, etc. One general bit of advice is that regular Roadsoft backups are highly recommended. Accidents happen, and sometimes things just don't go as planned. Creating a Roadsoft backup before any data imports, before spring migrations, before importing files from the Laptop Data Collector, etc. are all good practices. The frequency and management of these backups is up to each agency to decide, but a policy or regular procedure should be in place to both ensure the integrity of your Roadsoft data and to provide a recent step-

back point in the event it's needed. Related to this, is the second biggest general piece of advice - use Roadsoft tools to create and restore Roadsoft backups if you're looking to move the database to a new computer. This can get a bit confusing, especially if you're dealing with IT folks, as they tend to look at backups and restores at a more system-wide level. Many agencies have IT staff that are familiar using Microsoft SQL database tools. These tools can be useful for creating an overall backup of the entire SQL instance, along with any associated databases. These backups are also handy to have in case something happens. We recommend that IT staff set up automated nightly, or at the very least weekly, backups of the entire SQL instance or instances.

Backup, Move & Restore Database

If you are looking to move the Roadsoft database from one computer to another, or you're just looking for instruction on how to backup and restore your Roadsoft database, the process is similar. In a nutshell: backup the database using Roadsoft tools, copy the backup file to the new computer, then use Roadsoft tools to restore it. More specifically, you can create backups within Roadsoft under the Tools>Backup Roadsoft Database option; at the login prompt under the Options button; or by using the included Roadsoft Database Manager Utility that is installed with Roadsoft and is available in your Windows Start menu. One you create the Roadsoft backup, browse to the backup file location and copy it to the new computer over a network, or if need be load it on a thumb drive. We recommend creating a folder on the root drive of the computer you're moving or restoring the backup to, and name it something simple and self-explanatory like Roadsoft Backups, RS Backups, etc. Roadsoft needs the file to be located on a local, physical drive - you can't load a backup from a shared network folder. Once the file is copied to the new computer, restore the database using Roadsoft tools. [Click here](#) for more detailed instructions on how to do this.

Share Database

If your agency has multiple people using Roadsoft, we recommend using it in a shared environment. This ensures everyone in the agency is using the same data and will help avoid any potential data loss scenarios. Multiple user accounts can be created, and each user's settings and preferences are individually saved under their profile. There is a common misconception that in order to share a Roadsoft database that it needs to be on a

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traditional file server. Although that will work, it's not necessary. A Roadsoft database can be shared from any computer to any other computer. There are some settings that need to be set to allow connections to both the hosting computer and the SQL instance, but it's pretty straightforward. [Click here](#) for instructions on how to set up SQL sharing.

One caveat to be aware of when setting up a shared Roadsoft environment is that if you want to perform a backup, or restore a backup, make sure there aren't any remote users connected to the database as it could lead to a situation where the backup doesn't capture changes the other user makes, or the restore overwrites data they may be working on.

Where's my crash data?

Every year in January and February, CTT staff are asked when the previous year's crash data will be available in Roadsoft. This is a difficult question to put an exact date on, but we can provide some general guidelines.

MDOT reviews the previous year's crashes to ensure that everything is properly located and coded. This process typically takes 3-4 months to complete as there is a lot of data to compile and verify, crash report forms to redact, etc. Once they are done, the data is then reviewed by the governor's office, and once they sign off on it (for Michigan Crash Facts), the data is then provided to the CTT to make available in Roadsoft.

Usually, this entire process is completed in mid-April to mid-May. Once the data is made available to the CTT, we do our best to complete the processing we need to do on our end and turn it around as quickly as possible to make it available within Roadsoft.

[Click here](#) for instructions on updating crash data within Roadsoft.

Hopefully this FAQ was helpful. Feel free to contact us at roadsoft@mtu.edu if you need more explanation or have any other questions or concerns.

Roadsoft & LDC Update – Version 2021.4 is Now Available

Roadsoft and Roadsoft Laptop Data Collector (LDC) 2021.4

are now available. This minor update includes bug fixes and enhancements for both Roadsoft and LDC. It is necessary to update both Roadsoft and the LDC to the same version for this release. We also recommend that you update the Mobile app if you are using it.

As a reminder, all TAMC data collection for 2021 must be completed using the 2021.3 or later release of Roadsoft and LDC.

A complete list of changes is available on the [Downloads](#) page.

Roadsoft Tech Assist Tuesdays

This is a reminder that the CTT transitioned our *Roadsoft on the Road* technical assistance visits from on-site at your agency to online with *Tech Assist Tuesdays*.

Sessions are available on Tuesdays with one hour slots at 9, 10, and 11 a.m.

Visit roadsoft.org/roadsoft-tech-assist-tuesdays to request a *Tech Assist Tuesday* session.

RUCUS 2021

CTT staff are currently planning the next Roadsoft User Conference of the United States (RUCUS). This year's RUCUS will be held at the Comfort Inn & Suites in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan on Wednesday, December 15, 2021.

Please visit <https://roadsoft.org/rucus> for more information and to suggest speakers and topics.



RUCUS 2021
Roadsoft User Conference of the United States
Wednesday, December 15th • 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. • Mt. Pleasant, MI
Tuesday, December 14th • Hands-On Introduction or Advanced Roadsoft Training



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Roadsoft Center for Technology & Training

Have an idea for a topic? Interested in presenting? Know someone else willing to present?
Visit roadsoft.org/rucus to suggest a topic or speaker.