

Hard Work Earns District Crew High Praise

A citizen known for being critical about INDOT has changed his tune after witnessing hard work by those in the Vincennes District Chrisney Unit.

Leroy Bates, who lives near Tennyson in rural Warrick County, has routinely called INDOT's customer service team with grievances and criticisms. That changed in late August, when we responded to his concerns about a drainage issue along State Road 62 near his house.

"We went out there to install a 160-foot-long pipe," said Chrisney Unit Supervisor Jeff Muse.

Bates watched the crew like a hawk, observing them install the pipe and then cover it with dirt and grass to smooth out the ditch along the area. Bates came away so impressed that he called customer service personnel in the Vincennes District and at Central Office.

"Thank you to Jeff Muse and his crew," said Bates. "I am very proud of all of them. They worked hard for two straight days, and no one took a break or a lunch."

Bates also complimented the highway technicians.

"Special thank you to Doug Risse for extra work that was done," said Bates. "I want to recognize, as well, Randy Bingle, Randy Embry, Dakota Risse and Kenny Price. All worked as a team and gave a 200 percent effort. It is so nice to know that, working for a state agency, they are really taking care of their customers. They didn't do a good job — they did a supreme job. I really want it to be noticed."

Bates said he was a heavy equipment operator for 35 years.

"I've operated everything big and small that you can imagine, and I know what hard work and talent look like," said Bates.

"These workers have talent and they work hard. This wasn't a typical one-joint pipe and 6-inch-deep culvert under a driveway. This was eight joints — 160 feet long — and 6 feet deep. The crew members beat their brains out for two days with no breaks, jumping in and out of the hole. When they were done, everything was impeccable. Even the grass was so perfect that I couldn't even tell there was a 6-foot-deep hole there. In my lifetime, I will never have to worry about this drainage issue again."



The Chrisney Unit, located within the Tell City Subdistrict of the Vincennes District, consists of (from left) Supervisor Jeff Muse and Highway Technicians Randy Bingle, Dakota Risse, Doug Risse, Kenny Price, Randy Embry, Ryan Shore, Jon Winkler and Larry Williams.

District Customer Service Resolution Specialist Misty McCarter and District Customer Service Assistant Kristina Taylor certainly noticed when they received Bates' phone call.

"Misty and I have talked to Mr. Bates several times for complaints," said Taylor. "We were extremely proud to get this phone call. Mr. Bates said he knows that INDOT doesn't always get phone calls with good comments, and that they're normally complaints, so he really wanted to express his supreme satisfaction."

Excerpts of the phone call were printed and hung at the Chrisney Unit for the workers to see.