

ODOT Outpost

Adel, Oregon lies at the state's southern entry to the Great Basin...the vast sagebrush dotted expanse of open land that is the world's tenth largest desert.

And ODOT Region 4's last outpost sits atop a bluff on its western edge.

It's up to the half a dozen or so ODOT crew to keep Oregon 140 open all year round.

Having them in Adel cuts emergency response time and out here, that can mean saving lives.

They're a small tight-knit group who tackle everything from clogged highways to clogged drains...since they live on the compound that doubles as the local ODOT HQ and their home.



District 11 TMM Tim Bednar doubles as shop honcho and landlord at the Outpost, handling organization of crews on the road and routine maintenance.

Bednar recently gathered the crew around a table to talk over the task of moving one worker from a temporary trailer to a more permanent mobile home, and improving the Outpost water supply.

His conversation ran from highway maintenance to the new compound water system. "When we put the new well in, keep in mind we want to run the water system to the back," he said, adding "that way we can run two showers at the same time."



Cyndy Warner is one of the crew who calls this lonely ODOT Outpost “home”.

When duty calls, she “manhandles” a snowplow to keep the highway clear.

But when she’s off duty, Warner is at home at the ODOT Outpost, where she recently invited us in.

When on the job at Adel, Warner leaves family behind. It’s not too far, just 25 miles or so to Lakeview, but she’s still out of the house for important family time.



Out on the road though, she’s in her environment. “I’m actually accomplishing something,” she said, “You know, making the roads safe. I’m not the kind who wants to be in an office”.

But not everyone on the Adel compound is completely without family....

ODOT’s David Ortwein share’s his home with man’s best friend.

And like the other crews at the Adel Outpost, when he’s not making himself at home at this far flung reach of Region 4, Ortwein makes himself comfortable in the seat of an ODOT rig...taking care of the highways to take care of Oregon’s motorists.