

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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DUST-BLOCKED ROADS

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Soil-blowing and dust-storms attending the protracted drought in middle-western America have imposed upon highway engineers some novel tasks more or less similar to those involved in the annual campaign of keeping the roads free from snow. The current number of the Engineering News-Record says of conditions in southwestern Kansas:

"In many places new highway work undertaken has been almost obliterated by the erosion of the wind acting upon the dry unconsolidated material. Ditches have been almost completely filled with sandy dust and road surfaces have been eroded almost to impassability. Drifts of dust have completely closed the new highways to traffic in some places.

"The same conditions have affected the existing older highways. Many well-established road surfaces have been rendered impassable from surface erosion caused by the wind and the drifting of fine soil. In some cases slat-type snow fences were erected in an effort to prevent drifts covering the traveled way. Where drifts occurred on the highways it has been necessary to use snow-plows, graders and other equipment for removal."

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