CTRE houses new weather research center

The National Academy of Sciences estimates as many as 7,000 deaths per year are associated with weather-related traffic accidents. Weather-related crashes in Iowa annually add up to more than $240 million in economic losses.

The new Center for Weather Impacts on Mobility and Safety (C-WIMS) at CTRE provides an opportunity to positively impact Iowans and Iowa’s economy by reducing the economic and human losses due to weather-related crashes.

C-WIMS is led by Tom Maze, transportation engineer at CTRE and professor of civil and construction engineering at ISU. Gene Takle, an ISU professor of geological and atmospheric sciences and agronomy, serves on the center’s executive committee.

The five-year federal transportation bill signed by President Bush in August 2005 includes $5 million per year for weather-related research. Iowa State is a natural for that kind of research. Because of its agriculture programs, the university has expertise in the science of weather and its impacts at ground level.

Beyond Iowa and the Midwest, the recent disasters that resulted from hurricanes Katrina and Rita have highlighted the need to better understand weather’s impact on transportation.

For information about this new program, see www.ctre.iastate.edu/cwims/