



OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Oklahoma City, OK 73105-3204

Oklahoma Department of Transportation

Statement concerning I-35W bridge incident in Minnesota

August 2, 2007

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation extends its deepest sympathies and concern to those involved in and affected by Minnesota's bridge incident. We understand this is a very tragic situation as the department can relate to the shock of such an experience. This incident brings back unfortunate memories of Webbers Falls in 2002.

Bridge conditions have been at the forefront of ODOT's concerns for quite some time. ODOT has been proactive in discussing the condition of our bridges and the need to address related issues. Fortunately, with the recent passing of House Bill 1176, consistent, sustained funding has been established. We currently have 480 bridges scheduled for reconstruction, triple the amount addressed in the past. Plans also include addressing the nearly 135 load posted bridges and rehabilitating an additional 200.

The department has an established bridge inspection process and is very aware of the needs and conditions of our bridges. We are responsive to situations concerning our bridges and infrastructure. ODOT conducts federally-mandated bridge inspections every two years, however the department exceeds that timeframe in many cases. Additionally, field crews continually inspect bridges as part of their routine daily activities. If the department deemed any bridge unsafe, the traveling public can be certain the road would be closed.

Pertinent Oklahoma Bridge Facts

- 6,700 bridges on the state system
- Nearly 1,600 are identified for improvement
- 62 bridges are fracture critical
- The longest bridge span in the state is 350 ft. on US-59 over the Arkansas River
- Additional methods, such as climbing, are performed during bridge inspections to allow a closer look
- Oklahoma performs inspections more often than the required 2 year period
- 480 bridges scheduled for reconstruction, triple the amount in previous years, at an estimated cost of \$1 billion over the next 8 years
- Nearly 800 bridges scheduled for improvements over the next 8 years

"The mission of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation is to provide a safe, economical, and effective transportation network for the people, commerce and communities of Oklahoma."

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