

Traffic Advisory

Oklahoma Department of Transportation, Media & Public Relations Division
200 N.E. 21st Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73105
Phone:405-521-6000, Fax:405-521-2524

THIS INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE AT

<http://www.okladot.state.ok.us/newsmedia/traffic-advisory.htm>

Traffic Advisory

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

UPDATE - Progress continues despite setbacks on Purcell/Lexington bridge

Crews are moving rapidly and making significant progress in their first couple of weeks installing brackets on troubled areas of the US-77/SH-39 bridge between Purcell and Lexington after the initial startup and manufacturing period. The brackets will connect either end of cracked areas and hold them together. There are more than 70 workers on the ground using more than 30 pieces of equipment and lifts to make repairs.

The department originally targeted the 45-day deadline to have the bridge open to passenger vehicles and the contractor is aggressively pursuing that goal, but the continued discovery of additional cracks is making that deadline difficult to be certain about.

When the contract was awarded for emergency repairs to the bridge, there were 10 locations that needed to be addressed before the bridge could open to passenger vehicles. However, cracks kept appearing during continuous inspections of the bridge and what were 10 areas have now become 37 areas that need attention. These cracks could be newly formed in already weakened areas or could have just now become apparent. Recent frigid temperatures could have also contributed to the cracks becoming more accelerated.

The department understands that this is a frustrating situation for people in the area, but safety is the top concern for ODOT. No vehicles will be allowed on the bridge until all cracked areas are addressed and engineers feel confident the bridge can support traffic.

The manganese steel used on the portions of the bridge that need repair is not a commonly used material. The Purcell/Lexington bridge is the only known bridge in the state to use this alloy and the department is still learning about its properties and how and why the cracks are continuing to form. The cracks began to form due to welding done during a recently completed ODOT bridge rehabilitation project.

Manhattan Road and Bridge, the contractor for the emergency repairs, has been a tremendous help working very well with the department and offering solutions to problems involving contract times and the number of cracked areas that need to be addressed.

This is the first in a series of weekly updates on the progress of repairs on the bridge.

Follow @okdot on [Twitter.com](https://twitter.com/okdot) and Know B4 U Go!

ODOT strongly discourages texting or tweeting while driving.

Statewide & extended construction closures, visit www.okladot.state.ok.us, Traffic Advisories