



Two state bridges temporarily closed after design evaluations, load postings made
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Oklahoma Department of Transportation officials continue to keep abreast of new bridge evaluation methods and are taking precautions to keep Oklahomans safe.

Following a year-long study after the 2007 Minnesota bridge collapse, the Federal Highway Administration issued guidelines for evaluating similar bridges across the nation. Although the evaluations could not begin until guidelines were issued, ODOT was soliciting engineering consultants to be on standby once guidelines were published.

The design reviews include evaluating all 95 truss bridges on the state highway system. Trusses contain plates that connect structural members commonly referred to as gusset plates which are the focus of evaluation.

The study of the Minnesota bridge collapse indicated inadequate gusset plates may have played a role in the structure's failure. The design evaluations are in addition to the routine wear and tear inspections already performed by the Department every year on these truss bridges. After the Minnesota collapse, ODOT engineers immediately began inspections of similar bridges in Oklahoma.

A nationally recognized consulting firm gave ODOT officials preliminary data from its evaluations this week. As a result two state bridges were temporarily closed and load limits for 25 others were also temporarily reduced, meaning heavy vehicles are restricted from crossing the bridges. Engineers are reviewing ways to modify the bridges, if necessary, to improve postings and reopen as quickly as possible.

The closed bridges are in Choctaw County on SH-109 over the Kiamichi River and in Garvin County on SH-74 over the Washita River.

"We certainly have a duty to err on the side of caution," ODOT Chief Engineer Gary Evans said. "When we saw the preliminary information from the design evaluations, we decided to take action on the bridges until further determinations can be made."

Bridges with the temporary load postings are in Beckham, Bryan, Canadian, Cherokee, Coal, Garvin, Grant, Haskell, Hughes, Johnston, Latimer, Leflore, Lincoln, Marshall, McCurtain and Pushmataha counties.

"We know these closures will be an inconvenience," Evans said. "And we are working diligently to make the closings as short term as possible."

As more data becomes available on the remaining truss bridges, additional temporary closings and load postings are possible.

INFORMATION RELEASE

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Bridges with temporary load postings following design evaluations

County	Highway	Crossing
Beckham County	SH-34	North Fork of the Red River
Bryan County	SH-78	Red River
Canadian County	US-281	Canadian River
Cherokee County	SH-100	Dry Creek
Coal County	US-75	Rock Creek
Garvin County	SH-76	Washita River
Garvin County	US-77	Washita River
Grant County	US-60	Salt Fork of the Arkansas River
Haskell County	SH-2	Beaver Creek
Hughes County	SH-9	Wewoka Creek
Johnston County	SH-99	Washita River
Latimer County	SH-1	Buffalo Creek
Leflore County	SH-63	Billy Creek
Leflore County	SH-63	Kiamichi River
Leflore County	US-270	Caston Creek
Leflore County	US-271	Fourche Maline
Lincoln County	SH-66 Business	Capitan Creek
Lincoln County	US-177	Deep Fork River
Marshall County	SH-32	Hauani Creek
McCurtain County	US-70	Little River
McCurtain County	US-70	Mountain Fork River
McCurtain County	SH-3	Glover River
McCurtain County	US-70	Yashau Creek
Pushmataha County	SH-3	Kiamichi River
Pushmataha County	US-271	Kiamichi River

Temporarily closed

County	Highway	Crossing
Garvin County	SH-74	Washita River
Choctaw County	SH-109	Kiamichi River

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(Editors and News Directors: For more information call the ODOT Media & Public Relations Division at 405-521-6000.)