

# INFORMATION RELEASE



## Office of the Director

ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT  
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## TRAFFIC ALERT

### Major Closures for I-40 Bridge Over Mississippi River Begin August 3

**MEMPHIS, Tenn.** – Crews are preparing to conduct a number of major lane closures as work to seismically retrofit the Interstate 40/Hernando DeSoto Bridge over the Mississippi River continues. Crews will be replacing a large seismic joint on three bridge piers near Exit 1 in Memphis beginning August 3, 2010. The work will be broken into three phases. Phase One will begin August 3, 2010 and includes the total closure of the I-40 eastbound off ramp at exit 1 for three weeks. Phase Two and Three will last from September 7, 2010 until mid-November and will involve the reduction of I-40 to one lane in each direction for 71 days.

**Phase 1** – August 3, 2010 through mid-September - The I-40 Eastbound, Exit 1 ramp to Front Street, Riverside Drive and the Tennessee Welcome Center will be closed for three weeks. All traffic will be detoured to Exit 1B at Danny Thomas Blvd. and onto Poplar Avenue, Front Street, and Jefferson Avenue.

**Phase 2** – Begins September 7, 2010 – I-40 will be reduced to one 11 ft. travel lane in each direction. The two left (inside) lanes of I-40 will be closed at the Riverside Drive interchange. Ramps will be open so that West and Eastbound traffic may exit to Front Street and Riverside Drive.

**All Wide loads** will be diverted to the Memphis-Arkansas I-55 Bridge.

**Phase 3** – mid-October through the week of November 15 – I-40 will continue to be reduced to one 11 ft. lane in each direction. The two right (outside) lanes will be closed. The I-40 westbound entrance ramp from Front Street and Riverside Drive will also be closed. **In the westbound direction**, all wide loads and overheight loads will be diverted to I-155 in Dyersburg with the closure of the westbound entrance ramp.

TDOT has created a project website, <http://www.tn.gov/tdot/i40hd/>, to keep the public informed about the upcoming project and will distribute brochures and posters to area businesses to further spread the word about the upcoming closure.

I-40 crossing the Mississippi River is a vital structure for traffic and freight movement in America. TDOT, in partnership with the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department, is retrofitting the bridge to withstand a magnitude 7.0 earthquake. Construction on the seismic retrofit began in 2000 and six phases of the work is complete. The complete work is in excess of \$180 million and future work to complete the retrofit is expected to cost another \$70-80 million.

For more information visit the TDOT SmartWay website at <http://www.tn.gov/tdot/tdotsmartway/> or dial 5-1-1 from any land-line or cellular phone. TDOT is also on Twitter. For up to date travel information for the Memphis area follow [Memphis511](#) on Twitter or follow [TN511](#) for statewide updates.

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