



INFORMATION RELEASE

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Arkansas River Flooding Prompts Shutdown of Crossings in Ft. Smith

SEBASTIAN COUNTY (5-27) – Historic flooding along the Arkansas River requires closure of two bridges that span the waterway in the City of Ft. Smith, according to Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) officials.

Beginning at 10:00 p.m. this evening, crews will close the U.S. Highway 71B (Broadway St.) bridge. This structure is known locally as the Midland Bridge. There is no detour available.

Following the closure of the Midland Bridge, crews will close the I-540 river bridge. Northbound traffic will be required to take Exit 5 (Kelley Highway). Southbound traffic will be required to take Exit 3 (Van Buren).

Both structures remain sound and at this time ARDOT has not identified any problems. These bridges are being closed because floodwater is predicted to cover the approaches – the portion of the highway leading to the bridges. At this time there is no way to tell how long both structures will be closed to through traffic.

This leaves only one crossing of the Arkansas River in the Ft. Smith area – the State Highway 59 Bridge. Last night ARDOT shut down the westbound lanes of the U.S. Highway 64 Bridge (Garrison Ave.) due to both eastbound and westbound lanes going under water in Oklahoma.

There are approximately 10 segments of State Highways closed in the River Valley with more expected in the coming days. The latest information on highway closures due to high water is available on our Traveler Information site, IDriveArkansas.com. Late-breaking news is published on our Twitter account. Follow us @myARDOT.