

Oklahoma Turnpike Authority Project Affects Travel on I-44/Will Rogers Turnpike

A project on the Will Rogers Turnpike will affect traffic on Interstate 44 in Missouri beginning in early July and ending in Summer 2012.

The Oklahoma Turnpike Authority plans to repair 4.5 miles of pavement between the Oklahoma/Missouri state line to Oklahoma milepost 325 and completely rebuild the Five Mile Creek Bridges in Oklahoma.

Traffic will be limited to a single lane in each direction from just east of the Missouri state line to mile marker 325 in Oklahoma. During the first phase, expected from July through November 2011, lane reductions will begin just west of Exit 1 in Missouri.

Travelers on the Will Rogers Turnpike/Interstate 44 in Oklahoma will share the single pair of eastbound lanes as the westbound side and an entire bridge is rebuilt. In the next phase, travelers will share the westbound lanes as the eastbound side is rebuilt.

During the project, motorists will operate in a single lane, separated from opposing traffic by a portable barrier. No passing will be allowed.

Message boards will inform travelers of real-time traffic conditions, displaying expected travel times within the work zone. This information will come from sensors placed in the pavement that detect travel speeds and calculate delay time.

A strong law enforcement presence is expected in the construction zone for the duration of the project.

Work within the construction zone will be suspended on Sundays and on Labor Day, though travel will remain limited to one lane in each direction. Heavy traffic is expected during the first week of August as visitors arrive and celebrate Marian Days in Carthage, Mo. Other possible high traffic days include July 16, July 29, August 12, August 27, September 4 and September 16 when entertainment events will occur at an Oklahoma casino.

Those seeking an alternate to traveling in the construction zone are advised to consider the following route:

Westbound

I-44 West to US 71 South (Joplin, Mo.) to US 60 West (Neosho, Mo.) to I-44 West/Will Rogers Turnpike

Eastbound

I-44 East/Will Rogers Turnpike to US 60 East to US 71 North (Neosho, Mo.) to I-44 East (Joplin, Mo.)

Commercial Motor Carriers

Commercial motor carriers and professional drivers can expect delays on I-44 in Oklahoma and possibly on I-44 West in Missouri for the duration of the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority project.

Consider using the alternate route, especially if weather or traffic incidents stem traffic flow in the construction zone.

Fuel and Services

Commercial motor vehicle drivers are advised that the tornado that struck Joplin in May heavily damaged businesses at Interstate 44 Exit 11. Fuel and other services are available in the Exit 4 area. Given the somewhat difficult layout at this exit, caution and patience are necessary.

I-44 Missouri Rest Areas and Truck Parking Only Facilities

Joplin	Mile Marker 2	East – 28 spaces West – 29 spaces - <i>Truck Parking Only</i>
Halltown	Mile Marker 52	East – 17 spaces West – 20 spaces
Strafford	Mile Marker 89 – <i>Truck Parking Only</i>	East – 17 spaces
Conway	Mile Marker 110	East – 78 spaces West – 78 spaces
Doolittle	Mile Marker 177	East – 14 spaces West – 14 spaces
St. Clair	Mile Marker 235	East – 13 spaces West – 16 spaces