



Guardcable  
Route J

Minor  
Routes,  
Major  
Routes



# Talkin'

Madison County

# TRANSPORTATION

May 2008

## Guardcable Installation On Route 67

Within the next year, guardcable will be installed along the median of Route 67 in from a mile south of Crystal City in Jefferson County to Route E in Madison County. Why install the guardcables now? They have shown to stop more than 95 percent of vehicles that enter the median before they cross into opposing traffic lanes. In addition to successfully reducing these devastating types of crashes, median guard cable provides protection to emergency responders and is a cost-effective safety barrier.



“These cables have a history of reducing the severity of crashes,” says Project Manager Andy Meyer. “We’re starting to install them on portions of I-55 and Route 67 in Southeast Missouri that have the highest traffic volumes and hope to continue installation on other sections as funding becomes available.”

Work is expected to get started this summer and wrap up in summer 2009. Installation will be a moving operation, reducing various portions of Route 67 to one lane at times. Meyer explains that the guardcable will be installed along only one side of the route but will protect both lanes more efficiently. The installation will alternate between northbound and southbound lanes because of median width and obstacles.



“Obviously wherever the cable is located it can do the job of preventing traffic from entering the opposing lanes. However, our medians are built to provide drainage, and installing the guardcable system in the bottom of the median with continued exposure to water would lessen its effectiveness and reduce its durability,” says Meyer.

In addition to equipping Route 67 with guardrail, some of the median crossovers will undergo some changes.

“We’re planning to close about seven crossovers along Route 67 in Jefferson County that are located close to each other and don’t particularly have a high traffic volume,” says Meyer. “This will allow a greater coverage area for the guardcable without affecting heavily traveled areas. However, three of the crossovers that see more traffic will be improved with turn lanes.”

## Saline Creek Bridge

As part of the Route 72 upgrade, MoDOT is planning to widen and replace the Saline Creek Bridge in Madison County. Drivers can expect to see work on the improvements likely this fall.

Last fall, MoDOT looked into the possibility of relocating the Route J/72 intersection, but after investigating that option, the project team found that unfortunately that part of the improvements were too costly to be included in the bridge replacement project.

“This project is first and foremost a bridge replacement” says Project Manager Tim Richmond. “Our statewide directive is to design projects to fit the specific needs, without additional frills.”

MoDOT has been gearing up for a transportation funding crisis looming in 2010. That’s when the bonding proceeds made possible by Amendment 3 end. In addition, the amount of federal funds Missouri can expect to receive for transportation projects is expected to drop 40 percent. Compounding the problem is rising fuel and material costs. The construction program will drop from \$1.23 billion this year to \$569 million in 2010.

“We’re saving all we can in order to have funding to address our future needs,” says Richmond. “So our focus now has to be on replacing the bridge.”

# Why Does MoDOT Do That?

## More Work To Major Roads, Less Work To Letter Routes, & Lives Saved

By MoDOT Southeast District Engineer Mark Shelton

Fatalities from traffic crashes in Missouri are down dramatically from 1,257 in 2005 to 974 for 2007. Before we get lost in those numbers and statistics, let's put it in real terms we can each relate to. In two years, almost 283 fewer precious lives were lost on our roadways. That's nearly 300 lives—mothers, fathers, children, grandparents, coworkers, friends—saved. While one is too many to lose, knowing that 300 were saved is not simply rewarding, it's heartwarming.

The last time Missouri's traffic fatalities were that low was 15 years ago. So, why the reduction now? MoDOT has made traffic fatality reduction a mission. We've partnered with law enforcement and increased our educational outreach efforts. But, I think what has played a bigger role than anything else are two programs the department has undertaken over the last several years: Smooth Roads Initiative and Better Roads Brighter Future.

These programs were created in part to address something else we can all relate to: many needs, little funds. Just like families across Missouri, MoDOT had to take a hard look and make tough decisions with the state's many pressing transportation needs and what little money was available to address those. SRI and BRBF were the solution.

Because we couldn't address all the needs, we decided to focus on the best value—the roads that were most traveled, nearest the most people, touched the most lives. SRI was made possible because Missourians approved Amendment 3 in 2004. MoDOT completed SRI, smoothing 2,200 miles of the state's most heavily traveled roads in 2006—one year ahead of schedule. BRBF continued that quest by bringing another 3,300 miles of roads to good condition, adding wider, brighter stripes, edgeline

and center rumblestripes, and paved shoulders on two-lane roads over the next four years. Like SRI, BRBF targets heavily traveled highways. These roads carry 80 percent of all traffic on the state highway system and 95 percent of Missourians live within 10 miles of one of these roads. As a result of our focus two things have occurred.

First, the lesser-traveled routes have certainly not gotten much attention. If you live on one of those roads, you know what I mean. Our crews have done their best to patch and seal the roads with lower traffic volumes, but they've seen little additional improvements. I mentioned tough decisions earlier, and this is a prime example. Folks who live on lesser-traveled routes want improvements just like those near heavily traveled routes. But the bottom line is we cannot make all the improvements that we would like to or that you would like us to. MoDOT wants a transportation system we can be proud of, but the mon-

ey for all our needs just isn't there. So, we have focused our efforts on making the that reach as many improvements we can afford Missouri as possible, which brings us to the second result.

The reduction in traffic fatalities can be attributed to the improvements and engineering advances as part of SRI and BRBF. We made safety improvements to roads carrying the most traffic, and we saw fewer traffic fatalities. Now, Missouri will never be accident-free. There are too many variables. But, it only stands to reason that if you want to reduce fatalities that you focus on where most of the traffic is. It isn't easy. It doesn't please everyone. I hope that one day Missouri has enough funding to adequately address all of our transportation

needs. But right now, we must make those tough decisions. It is MoDOT's obligation to make our highways as safe as possible and our mission to reduce traffic fatalities. In essence, fatality means death, and while it may not be the most pleasing strategy to all, I feel confident in a plan that has reduced deaths of Missourians by 24 percent in two years.

Prep work for the Smooth Roads Initiative



Safety measures help state to reduce highway fatalities to a 14-year low

By Ken Leiser  
ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Highway deaths dropped 11 percent in 2007  
and Amos Bridges  
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SRI smoothed 2,200 miles of roads.