

Construction signs being ignored; old habits hard to break

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 7, 2008

PR# 08-069

ODOT asking drivers to heed established signs in place for their safety

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation is cautioning drivers of the dangers of ignoring construction detour signs. The problem is occurring in the I-40 Crosstown construction area, south of downtown Oklahoma City.

Construction crews report that many drivers are not heeding the directional signs along Western Avenue and are making improper u-turns and even going behind barricades. Officials are very concerned because such activity creates a safety hazard for both drivers and construction workers.

Even with advanced notifications through message boards, letters and traffic advisories, driver habits have been difficult to alter.

Western Avenue and Exchange Avenue closed this week for bridge work associated with building the new interstate. These two avenues join other streets closed in the area. The closing of several main thoroughfares at the same time is necessary because of the unusual size of this project, the complexity of work and time constraints.

Current closures include:

- Western Ave. is closed between S.W. 5th St. and Wheeler Park through late 2009 for bridge work. Detour is Walker Ave. Access to Wheeler Park will be maintained via Walker Ave./S.W. 11th St. throughout the project.
 - S.W. 5th St. is closed at Western Ave. through late 2009 for bridge work.
 - S.W. 6th St. and S.W. 7th St. have closed permanently at Western Ave. Neither street will have access to Western.
- Exchange Ave. bridge is closed between S.W. 3rd St. and Pennsylvania Ave. until summer 2009 for bridge work. Detour is Agnew Ave.
- Shields Blvd. is closed between S.W. 29th St. and S.W. 6th St. until early 2009 for bridge work. Detour is Robinson Ave.
- Pennsylvania Ave. is closed between Reno Ave. & Exchange Ave. until late 2009 for bridge work.
- Agnew Ave. is narrowed to one lane in both directions just south of I-40 through early 2009.
- May Ave. is narrowed to one lane in both directions under I-40 through spring 2009.
- S.W. 7th St. is closed between S. Broadway Ave. and Santa Fe Ave. until further notice.

Drivers are urged to be cautious and remain alert as construction is expected to continue in the area until 2012. Closures will continue to change. A current listing of traffic advisories related to the I-40 Crosstown construction and other local and statewide closures is posted each day on ODOT's Web site, www.okladot.state.ok.us Click traffic advisory on the front page.

--www.okladot.state.ok.us--

(Editors and News Directors: For media inquiries, contact Brenda Perry, ODOT Media and Public Relations Division at 405-521-6000.)