



US-77/SH-39 Purcell-Lexington Bridge closed until further notice
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Oklahoma Department of Transportation engineers have closed the US-77/SH-39 bridge over the South Canadian River between Purcell and Lexington due to safety reasons based upon cracking found during inspections. The bridge was originally load posted on January 20.

Northbound US-77 and eastbound SH-39 traffic should use I-35 to eastbound SH-9, then south on US-77. Westbound SH-39 should use US-77 north to westbound SH-9, then south on I-35. Message boards are in place further south on I-35 so drivers can locate an alternate route if necessary.

Following recommendations from ODOT's structural engineers and consultants Modjeski and Masters, national bridge experts, it was decided due to safety concerns, the bridge must remain closed until repairs are completed, which could take several months. The experts were consulted to further inspect the bridge due to the specialized materials used on the bridge and its fracture critical design.

The department is working with local communities and emergency management on ideas to help ease the inconveniences of this emergency closure.

During a routine inspection on January 20, engineers found cracks in beams on the truss system underneath the bridge that ultimately lead to today's closing of the bridge.

The James C. Nance Memorial Bridge over the South Canadian River was built in 1938 and carries nearly 9,000 vehicles a day.

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(Editors and News Directors: For more information call the ODOT Media & Public Relations Division at 405-521-6000.)

INFORMATION RELEASE

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