

**Oklahoma Department of Transportation
Traffic Advisory
Hereford Lane / US-69, Pittsburg County
Friday, Dec. 18, 2009**

Hereford Lane narrows over US-69 in McAlester Monday

East and westbound Hereford Lane over US-69 will be narrowed to one lane from 8:30 a.m. to noon Monday for patching.

Background information:

ODOT crews, along with residents, have noticed settling at the \$7.2 million US-69/Hereford Lane interchange, bridge and frontage road project location. The concrete slabs approaching the bridge have gradually shifted down roughly 5 inches. ODOT understands and shares the concerns of the area residents and taxpayers as well.

Crews were very surprised and immediately inspected the bridge and began an investigation as to the cause of the settling. A plan is developing to make necessary permanent repairs. The bridge is in optimal condition. Crews would have immediately closed access should there have been any threat to motorists.

Survey crews, bridge engineers and other professionals descended to the interchange to take multiple samples across a wide expanse of land and study the surrounding area in an effort to solve the mystery.

Today, Dec. 18, tests are being run on the samples acquired and crews are working over data and inspection reports to determine a cause for the settling. There are many intricate details and levels to a project and the department is being meticulous to pinpoint the exact cause. Also, materials studies can take time as replicated conditions in the lab are a condensed version of what takes months or years to accomplish in nature.

Once the causes are accurately identified, a more permanent repair will be developed for and undertaken in the spring of 2010 when weather conditions are optimal. Cold temperatures and moisture can affect certain materials inversely.

Temporary patching will take place Monday in an effort to further smooth the pavement on Hereford Lane in the meantime. Over the next several months, residents can expect survey and other crews to be in the area measuring any movement and monitoring conditions. Crews will be patching the roadway intermittently into the spring as needed.

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(Editor's note: We encourage the public to allow us to continue in this investigation on site as we move forward and to avoid putting themselves in danger by trying to participate and/or stopping, standing or climbing near the bridge.)

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