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katy freeway

Work Zone Safety... It's a Community Effort!

Now that the Katy Freeway Reconstruction Program is in full swing, it is important to emphasize that IH 10-Katy Freeway, from the Harris/Fort Bend county line (near Katy Mills Mall) to east of IH 610-West Loop (approximately 23 miles), is now a "work zone." Although most everyone knows that highway work zones are dangerous places to work, not everyone knows they are even more dangerous



places to drive. Each year in the United States approximately 700 people die and 25,000 are injured in work zone crashes and the number one cause of work zone crashes is excessive speed, followed by the failure to remain alert while driving. Roadway work zones are a way of life in every community across America, specifically because work zones are everywhere. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) maintains more than 79,000 miles of highway, with 1,000-1,300 projects under way at any given time. Therefore motorists are likely to encounter a TxDOT work zone on average, every 60-70 miles.

Promoting work zone safety is vital to the overall success of the Katy

Freeway Reconstruction Program and everyone needs to take responsibility for work zone safety. Great care and thought are put into developing traffic control plans to optimize work zone safety for the traveling public and workers. The engineers and planners have the responsibility to make sure the work zone is designed and operating properly -- with safety in mind. Construction supervisors and inspectors have the responsibility of overseeing

and enforcing traffic safety requirements. The contractor is responsible for erecting advance signs warning the public of impending construction. Warnings include modifying the speed limit, notifying drivers of any lane closures and providing flaggers and off-duty officers where necessary to help direct traffic safely through the work zone. The Public Information

continues on page 4

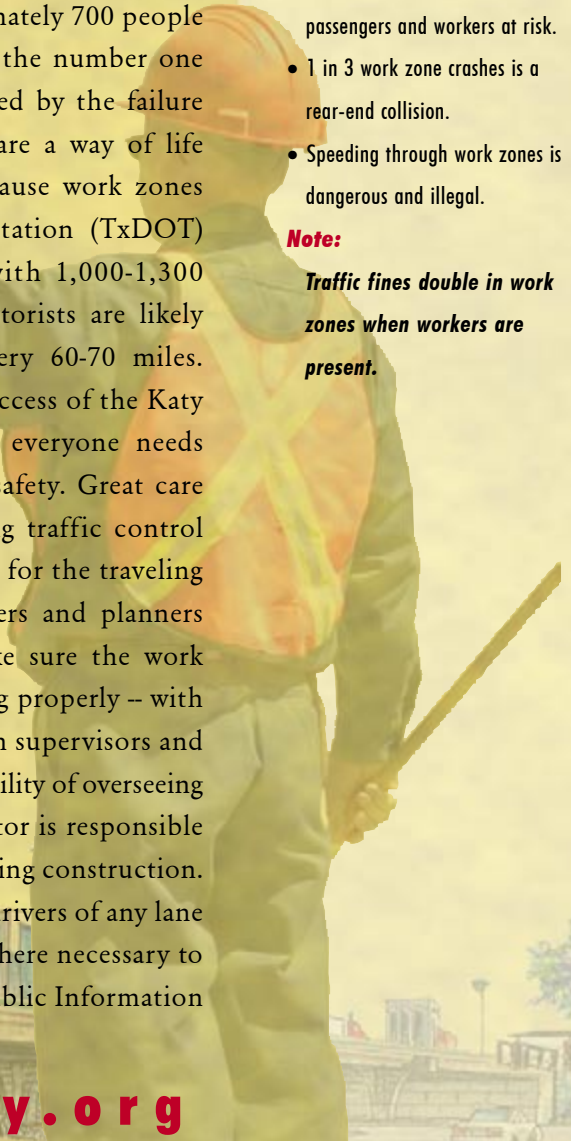


Work Zones Can Be Danger Zones For Motorists And Workers

- More than 95 percent of the people killed and injured in work zones are motorists.
- Speeders put themselves, their passengers and workers at risk.
- 1 in 3 work zone crashes is a rear-end collision.
- Speeding through work zones is dangerous and illegal.

Note:

Traffic fines double in work zones when workers are present.





Construction Program Status

Contract A Update

Harris-Fort Bend County Line To SH 99

Considerable progress has been made on this contract. In recent months, construction began on the new IH-10 westbound mainlanes bridge over Katy/Fort Bend and US 90. Balfour Beatty Construction (BBC) also successfully completed another milestone by opening the northbound lanes and the u-turns of SH 99 to traffic.

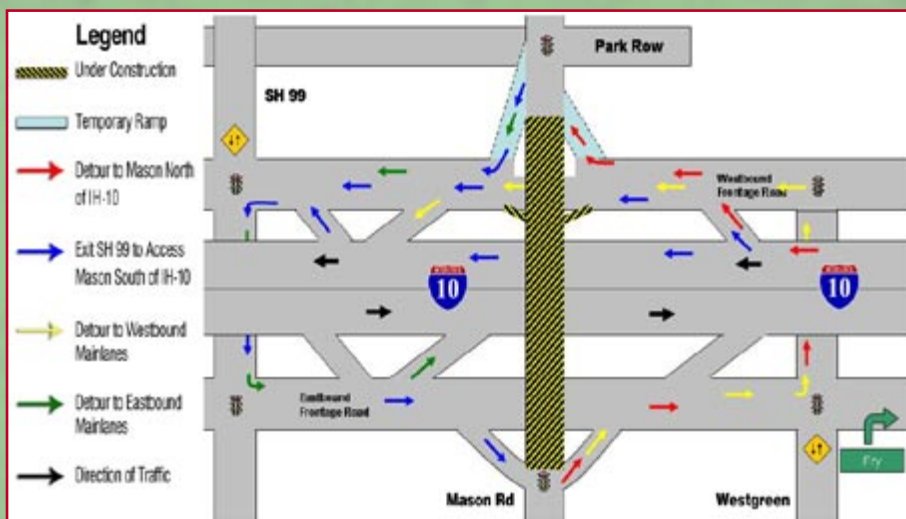


Contract A—New IH-10 westbound mainlanes west Katy Fort-Bend

Contract B Update

SH 99 to SH 6

On June 7, 2005, Williams Brothers Construction (WB) switched traffic onto the new IH-10 eastbound mainlanes over Fry and Park Ten and opened the permanent Westgreen entrance ramp and the Greenhouse exit ramp, marking the completion of the third milestone in this contract. The fourth and final milestone begins the second week in September, 2005 with the closure of the westbound frontage road ramps to and from Mason Road. About a month later, the contractor will completely close northbound and southbound access to reconstruct the Mason Road overpass at IH-10 (see detour map above right). Detours will be provided for all closures similar to those during reconstruction of Fry Road overpass. The contractor has a maximum of 105 days from the time he closes the overpass to restore cross-corridor access at Mason.



Contract B—Detour scenario for Mason Road



Contract C1—Placing a beam for new IH-10 westbound frontage road over Langham Creek



Website

Check out the **Katy Freeway Website** for more photographs of the on-going construction along the Katy Freeway at:

www.katyfreeway.org/construction_photos/construction_photos_main.html

Contract C1 Update

SH 6 to East of Eldridge

Construction on the project has been focused on the completion of the new IH-10 westbound frontage road from east of Eldridge to west of SH 6. To facilitate the completion of the westbound frontage road, traffic will be switched on SH 6 beginning September 6, 2005, temporarily reducing the number of lanes. In late September, traffic will be switched onto the new IH-10 westbound frontage road.

Contract C2 Update

East of Eldridge to East of Kirkwood

Balfour Beatty Construction continued to make progress on the new IH-10 westbound mainlanes from east of Kirkwood to east of Eldridge. At the Dairy Ashford intersection, the contractor has completed a number of columns and began construction on the retaining wall. In the coming month, Old Katy Road will be converted to westbound only. This is the first step of the transition from Old Katy Road to the new IH-10 westbound frontage road.

Contract D Update

IH-10/Beltway 8 Interchange

The switch of traffic onto the new IH-10 westbound mainlanes in the vicinity of Beltway 8 marked the successful completion of the first major milestone on the IH-10/Beltway 8 Interchange reconstruction contract. The switch also allowed Williams Brothers to begin demolition of the existing IH-10 westbound mainlanes and begin construction of the center portion of the IH-10 mainlanes.

Contract E1 and E2

Between Beltway 8 and IH-610

Williams Brothers made significant progress on the construction of the new IH-10 westbound mainlanes and bridges over Gessner, Bunker Hill and Blalock. The contractor has also begun construction of a new sound wall and retaining wall east of Blalock.

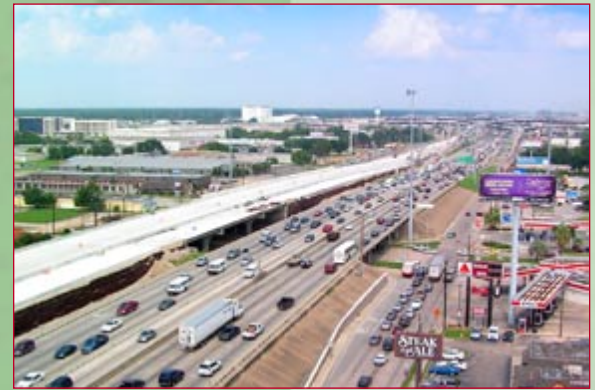
Contract F

IH-10/IH-610 Interchange

The switch of traffic onto the new IH-610 northbound mainlanes between San Felipe and US 290 marked the successful completion of yet another major project milestone on the IH-10/IH-610 Interchange reconstruction contract. The switch placed north and southbound traffic on the new IH-610 southbound mainlanes bridge over IH-10, allowing the contractor room to demolish the existing IH-610 mainlanes bridge and continue reconstruction over the coming months.



Contract C2—Overview of construction at IH-10/Kirkwood



Contract D—Overview of new IH-10 westbound mainlanes before switch (looking east at Wilcrest)



Contract E1 and E2—An aerial photo of construction along IH-10 near Bunker Hill (looking east)



Contract F—Traffic was recently switched onto new IH-610 southbound mainlanes over IH-10



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Visit the Katy Freeway Web site for more FAQs on the program
www.katyfreeway.org/faqs/f_a_q_s.asp



Q. When will construction impact traffic on SH 6?

Construction will begin to impact northbound and southbound lanes on SH 6 when traffic is switched onto temporary pavement on September 6, reducing capacity to two lanes in each direction. All turning movements will still be accessible when the capacity is reduced, however, there will not be dedicated turning lanes. SH 6 will remain two lanes in each direction for approximately 6-8 weeks while the contractor completes the construction to open the new westbound frontage road from west of Langham Creek to tie-in to the project west of SH 6.

Q. When is major construction expected to begin at Barker Cypress?

By early September major construction is expected to begin at Barker Cypress. Traffic will not be affected until late September when the westbound frontage road ramps to and from Barker Cypress will be closed and traffic detoured on temporary ramps. Complete closure of the overpass is not expected until the end of October, and like the Fry Road reconstruction, traffic will always have cross-corridor access via detours. The contractor will have a maximum of 88 days from the time he closes the overpass to restore cross-corridor access at Barker Cypress.

Work Zone Safety continued from page 1

Office is responsible for the dissemination of information to the traveling public about construction activities and closures and efforts to increase public awareness about work zone safety. The police and the courts have the responsibility to make sure that the traffic and work zone laws are enforced. Public safety agents have the responsibility of responding to, securing and clearing crash locations. Drivers and pedestrians have the responsibility to always be alert and obey the traffic laws, and passengers should always buckle up and act responsibly. As a community we must all work together to increase work zone safety for the traveling public and highway workers.

Safety Tips for Motorists...

The keys to making work zones safer are skilled, knowledgeable drivers.

• **SLOW DOWN.** When driving in a work zone motorists should drive at or below the posted speed limit and keep a safe distance behind the vehicle in front of them.

• **BE PATIENT.** Traffic delays in work zones are often unavoidable and inevitable. It takes less than 5 minutes longer to drive through a 10 mile work zone at 45 mph than at 65 mph.

• **PAY ATTENTION.** Stay alert and give full attention to the roadway. Pay close attention to signs and work zone flaggers. Expect the unexpected and disengage from distracting activities such as cellular telephone usage and changing channels on the radio while in a work zone.

• **PLAN AHEAD.** Road work advisories are distributed weekly to notify subscribers of upcoming major traffic changes and closures along the Katy Freeway. View those postings, as well as daily updates, using the link www.katyfreeway.org/closures.html or go to www.newsrouter.com/newsrouter_uploads/56/subscribe.asp to subscribe to receive notices in your personal mailbox.

