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## Casey Overpass deemed safe after emergency repairs; more work may be needed before it is replaced

Posted by Matt Rocheleau September 5, 2012 03:30 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

The Casey Overpass has been deemed safe for traffic following \$12,000 in emergency repairs needed after pieces of asphalt and concrete fell from the aging structure Friday afternoon, state transportation department officials said Wednesday.

One side of the 58-year-old overpass was shut down for about 12 hours, snarling traffic at the start of the Labor Day weekend and the busy move-in period in Boston.

Until the bridge is torn down as part of a planned replacement project, additional work may be needed “to ensure continues to meet safety standards,” department spokesman Michael Verseckes said in an e-mail Wednesday.

“We will continue to monitor the condition of the bridge closely, and we will address any maintenance needs or make any repair work as required in order to keep the bridge safe, and open,” he said.

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keep the bridge safe, and open," he said.

On Friday afternoon, officials were notified shortly before 3 p.m. that debris had fallen from the overpass onto MBTA property below, Verseckes said. The pieces of asphalt and concrete did not cause any property damage or injuries.

"Because of the age of the bridge and because of the existing deterioration and continued wear and tear, some of the concrete and asphalt came loose," he wrote.

Engineers inspected the bridge and determined that the eastbound lane of the bridge needed to be closed so that crews had room to make repairs, according to the spokesman. Traffic was detoured.

Work began at about 5:30 p.m. Friday and was completed by 4:30 a.m. Saturday, at which time the eastbound lanes reopened after passing safety inspections, he said.

Verseckes said repairs were made to the concrete deck of the bridge where the debris fell from and that, since the bridge was already closed and crews were on site, additional repairs were made to the driving surface, including patching potholes.

Asked whether the overpass has, in the past, sustained damage similar to what happened on Friday, Verseckes said in the e-mail that: "From time to time, we have maintenance crews on the overpass making spot repairs to the bridge."

The overpass carries Route 203 over the Forest Hills MBTA station.

In March, after a lengthy, [contentious](#) public process, the state transportation department [chose](#) to replace the deteriorating structure with a network of surface roads, forgoing an option to replace it with another overpass.

The surface road replacement project is in the final design phases.

It is expected to cost \$53 million and construction is scheduled to start in early 2014.

Verseckes said in the e-mail Wednesday that it is "too early to determine when demolition of the bridge will occur, but there is a high likelihood that the overpass will remain open for travel well into the construction project."

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overpass will remain open for travel well into the construction project.

When it was built nearly six decades ago, the 20-span, 1,650-foot-long, 80-foot-wide bridge was designed to carry four lanes of traffic. Aged beyond repair, the overpass now has sidewalks along either edge and since fall 2010 has been reduced to two lanes, one in either direction, out of safety concerns.

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