



FDOT Presents Plans for a New Brooks Bridge



Construction of the estimated \$166.1 million Brooks Bridge replacement project is anticipated to begin in 2022 and be completed about three years later.

“It’s fully funded with federal dollars,” Florida Department of Transportation District 3 spokesman Ian Satter said Thursday at the Emerald Coast Convention Center.

The Convention Center was the site of the FDOT’s open forum and public hearing on the bridge project. About 200 people attended

The FDOT’s Project Development and Environment study being conducted by the HDR engineering firm could wrap up in early 2019, Satter said during the forum.

He said once the study is finished, officials will have a better idea of how much right of way the FDOT will need to acquire and how many homes and businesses will have to be relocated to make way for the bridge.

According to an FDOT PowerPoint presentation at the hearing, four homes and 13 businesses might have to be moved. The businesses include Pat’s Bait & Tackle on Brooks Street and Waffle House, Emerald Coast Inn & Suites and the Tropical Waves store on Okaloosa Island,

Steve Schnell from HDR said after the hearing.

The existing four-lane, 52-year-old Brooks Bridge is considered structurally deficient. The planned new bridge would provide three driving lanes on each side of two spans. It would include a 12-foot-wide shared-use bicycle and pedestrian path on both sides of the structure.

It also will cross over Santa Rosa Boulevard on the island, and upgraded sections of U.S. Highway 98 would connect to the bridge starting at Perry Avenue in Fort Walton Beach and Pier Road on the island.

“We’re really going to have a new bridge,” County Commissioner Carolyn Ketchel, whose district includes the island and downtown Fort Walton Beach, told the audience at the hearing. “Can you believe it?” She and Ted Corcoran, president/CEO of the Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce, said the new bridge has been discussed for decades.

The FDOT recommends construction of a new bridge to the north of the existing one due to fewer impacts to businesses and utilities. The existing bridge would remain intact while the first span of the new bridge is built next to it and over it.

After it’s finished, the first span would have room for a temporary four lanes of traffic to function while the old Brooks Bridge is torn down and the second span is put in.

To Read More, See Excerpt: <https://www.nwfdailynews.com/news/20181004/fdot-presents-plans-for-new-brooks-bridge>



About The FDOT

The goal of the DBE Supportive Services Program is to increase the number of DBEs participating on FDOT contracts and facilitate the opportunity for DBEs to obtain contracts. The services are designed to:

- Assist established construction firms to move them from bidding as a subcontractor to bidding as a Prime Contractor to produce sound bids.
- Provide access to training increases DBE expertise in handling of daily business operations.

About The Program

The Construction Estimating Institute (CEI) works with FDOT as the statewide provider of the federally funded Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) Supportive Services Program. We want to increase the number of certified DBEs participating in highway and bridge construction, as well as assist DBEs in growing and eventually becoming self-sufficient. Additionally, CEI provides supportive services by assisting prime contractors and consultants with identifying DBEs for subcontracting opportunities on priority projects.

3 Tips to Ensure Heat Safety for Construction Workers

Mitigating the effects of heat-related illnesses



As many of us sit in air-conditioned offices and homes, it's easy to forget that some workers have no choice but to work outside in the elements, whether it be rain, snow or severely hot

temperatures. In 2015, 280 construction workers fell ill due to heat, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Between the hot temperatures and extra layers of protective clothing, it's important construction workers and their bosses are aware of heat safety.

So, what can employers do to ensure they are protecting their employees from the heat? Below are three tips to mitigate the effects of heat and prevent heat-related illnesses and death.

1. Know & Understand the Sign's of Heat-Related Illness

No matter how careful you are, a worker may still experience a heat-related illness, such as heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps or heat rash, so it's important to understand the signs and symptoms. The most severe of these conditions, heat stroke, is characterized by:

- Confusion
- Fainting
- Seizures
- Excessive sweating
- Red, hot and dry skin
- Very high body temperature

It's important to call 911 at the earliest sign of symptoms, as heat stroke can lead to death if the person's temperature doesn't drop back down to a normal range quickly. As you wait for help to arrive, place the worker in a cool, shaded area, provide water, remove outer clothing, and apply ice or cool compresses if available, especially to the worker's armpits.

Heat Exhaustion is characterized by:

- Cool, moist skin
- Heavy sweating
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness
- Lightheadedness
- Weakness
- Thirst
- Irritability
- Fast heartbeat

If heat exhaustion is suspected, give the worker plenty of water, have him/her take a break in the shade or air conditioning (if available) and be sure to take him/her to a hospital if symptoms don't improve after 60 minutes. The worker shouldn't return to work that day.

Muscle spasms and pain in the worker's abdomen, arms or legs are signs of heat cramps. Let the worker take a break and drink plenty of water. He/she should be able to return to work a few hours later if the pain subsides. If not, he/she should visit a hospital.

Lastly, clusters of red bumps on the neck and upper chest are signs of heat rash. The worker should keep the rash dry and try to work in a cooler environment.

Symptoms should never be taken lightly. If a worker begins to complain, make sure he/she is treated as quickly as possible. It could mean the difference between life and death.

2. Create a Response Plan & Train Employees on It Regularly

Twenty-eight states throughout the United States have Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)-approved state plans in place to protect workers from work-related deaths and illnesses. Be sure your company is in compliance by creating a response plan that outlines every step workers should take in the event of a heat-related illness. At the first sign of symptoms, all employees on the jobsite should know how to react properly. The plan should outline every step workers should take in the event of a heat-related illness.

To Read More: <https://www.constructionbusinessowner.com/safety/3-tips-ensure-heat-safety-construction-workers>

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