

I-80 Eastbound Sinkhole

Last Update: June 03, 2025

OVERVIEW

The New Jersey Department of Transportation closed and detoured I-80 eastbound at Exit 34 in Wharton, Morris County on Monday, February 10 after a depression in the center lane was observed.

While NJDOT crews were conducting soil tests that night, the roadway collapsed. Crews excavated and stabilized the 11-foot by 11-foot sinkhole that was approximately four-feet deep. The compromised roadway is 75 feet away from a 40-foot by 40-foot sinkhole that was repaired in the right shoulder of I-80 eastbound near mile post 34 in late December 2024.



February Sinkhole

When the sinkhole developed in February, the Department immediately began a series of geotechnical tests on I-80 eastbound and westbound to gain an understanding of subsurface conditions.





Subsurface scanning

A drilling and grouting operation was undertaken to stabilize I-80 eastbound and to determine the area in which more extensive repairs are needed.

On March 19, an approximately 15-foot by 15-foot sinkhole opened up in the median in the I-80 eastbound work zone. Out of an abundance of caution, NJDOT immediately closed and detoured all lanes on I-80 westbound at Exit 34B/Route 15 northbound. Crews worked overnight to stabilize the area around the median sinkhole and tested I-80 westbound to assess the roadway's integrity and determine what is necessary to reopen I-80 westbound.

A significant void was found under the left lane, requiring all westbound lanes to remain closed and detoured at Exit 34B until it is repaired. Final design of the I-80 westbound repairs is nearing completion, with westbound repairs beginning thereafter.

If everything progresses as planned, the repair of two lanes on **I-80 eastbound** will be completed and reopened in mid-May, with the remaining lanes expected to reopen soon after

If everything progresses as planned, two lanes on **I-80 westbound** will be completed and reopened by the end of May, with the remaining lanes expected to reopen soon after.

There will be two separate crews working concurrently – one on the eastbound side and one on the westbound side – to expedite repairs. Crews will continue working 24 hours a day until repairs are completed and the highway reopened.





Drilling and Grouting



MILESTONES

Milestone	Status
Establish emergency detour route	Complete
Establish two-way traffic for residents	Complete
Revise Signal Timing to Improve Traffic Flow	Complete
Conduct Geotechnical Tests	Complete
Proactive Drilling and Grouting	Complete
I-80 westbound testing	Complete
Quality Assurance Testing	Ongoing
Monitoring System Installation	Ongoing
I-80 eastbound paving	Complete
I-80 eastbound 2 lanes Reopen	Opened May 21
I-80 westbound paving	Complete
I-80 westbound 2 lanes Reopen	Opened May 30
I-80 median paving	Has yet to begin
All lanes Reopen in both directions	Expected June 25

PROJECT SCHEDULE

- Two lanes on **I-80 eastbound** reopened at approximately 10 p.m. Wednesday, May 21 and the I-80 eastbound detour utilizing Exit 34 was removed.
- Two lanes on **I-80 westbound** reopened at approximately 10 p.m. Friday, May 30 and the I-80 westbound detour utilizing Exit 34B was removed.

- Work in the **median** is advancing with all lanes in both directions on schedule to reopen by June 25. Crews will continue working 24 hours a day until repairs are completed, and the highway is fully reopened. NJDOT will continue to look for any avenues to pick up time to fully reopen all lanes, if possible.

I-80 Eastbound

Two lanes on **I-80 eastbound** reopened at approximately 10 p.m. Wednesday May 21 and the I-80 eastbound detour utilizing Exit 34 was removed. Motorists are reminded this is an active work zone and are advised to SLOW DOWN and use caution.

The speed limit will be reduced to 40 mph on I-80 eastbound through the work zone.

I-80 Westbound

Two lanes on **I-80 westbound** reopened at approximately 10 p.m. Friday, May 30 and the I-80 westbound detour utilizing Exit 34B was removed. **Motorists are reminded this is an active work zone and are advised to SLOW DOWN and use caution.**

The speed limit will be reduced to 45 mph on I-80 westbound through the work zone.

I-80 Median Work Zone

As of May 30, concrete pours for all six median slabs are complete. The next step is the sealant application, which is weather sensitive, and then paving multiple layers of asphalt. Work in the median is expected to be slower than on the eastbound and westbound sides due to the added complexity of getting materials and workers to and from the smaller work zone safely with live traffic on either side. All lanes are on schedule to reopen by June 25.



WORK AREA	Week Ending 4/6/2025	Week Ending 4/13/2025	Week Ending 4/20/2025	Week Ending 4/27/2025	Week Ending 5/4/2025	Week Ending 5/11/2025	Week Ending 5/18/2025	Week Ending 5/25/2025	Week Ending 6/1/2025	Week Ending 6/8/2025	Week Ending 6/15/2025	Week Ending 6/22/2025	Week Ending 6/29/2025
Open 2 Lanes Eastbound - Construct Slabs E1, E2 & E3 and Establish Traffic Pattern									★				
Open 2 Lanes Westbound Construct Slabs W1 and W2 and Establish Traffic Pattern										★			
Restore Rt 80 to Original Condition all lanes open - Construction Slabs M1, M2 and M3													★

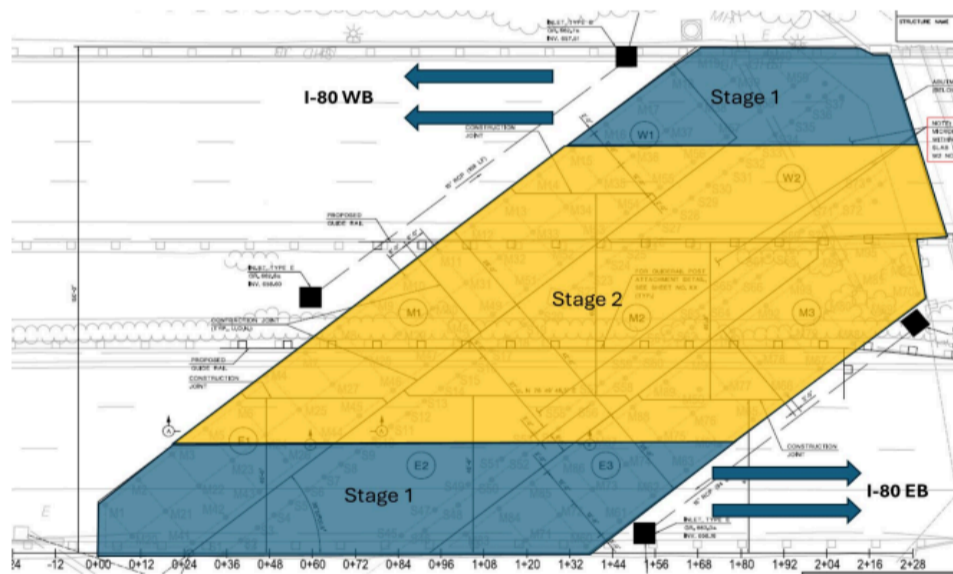
- ★ MILESTONE 1 - Approximately May 21, 2025
- ★ MILESTONE 2 - Approximately May 31, 2025
- ★ MILESTONE 3 - Approximately June 25, 2025

Operations are weather contingent and conditions could impact durations

The team remains committed to seizing every opportunity to improve the schedule by swiftly adapting to changes and challenges and finding creative logistical solutions.

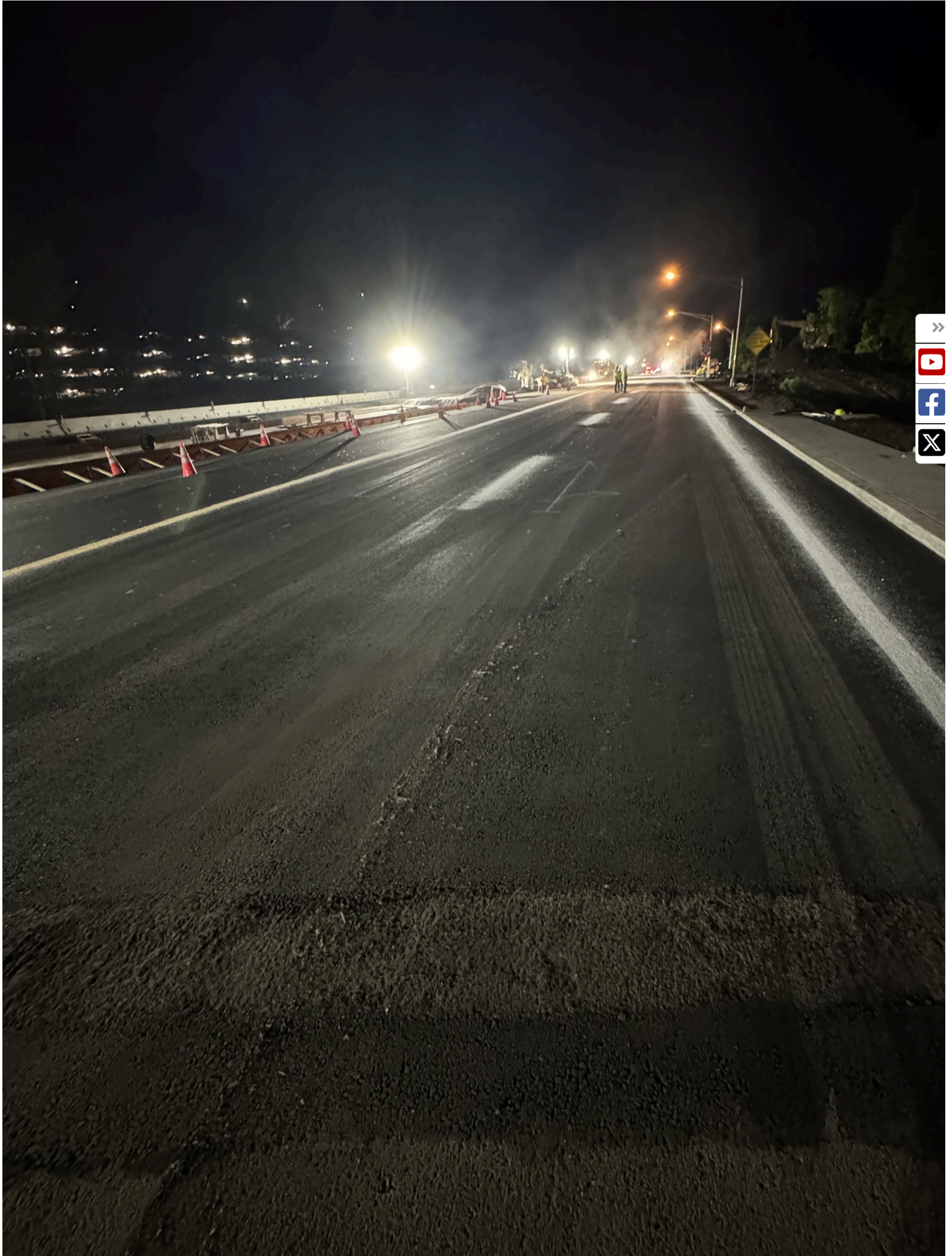
Current slab design is fluid.

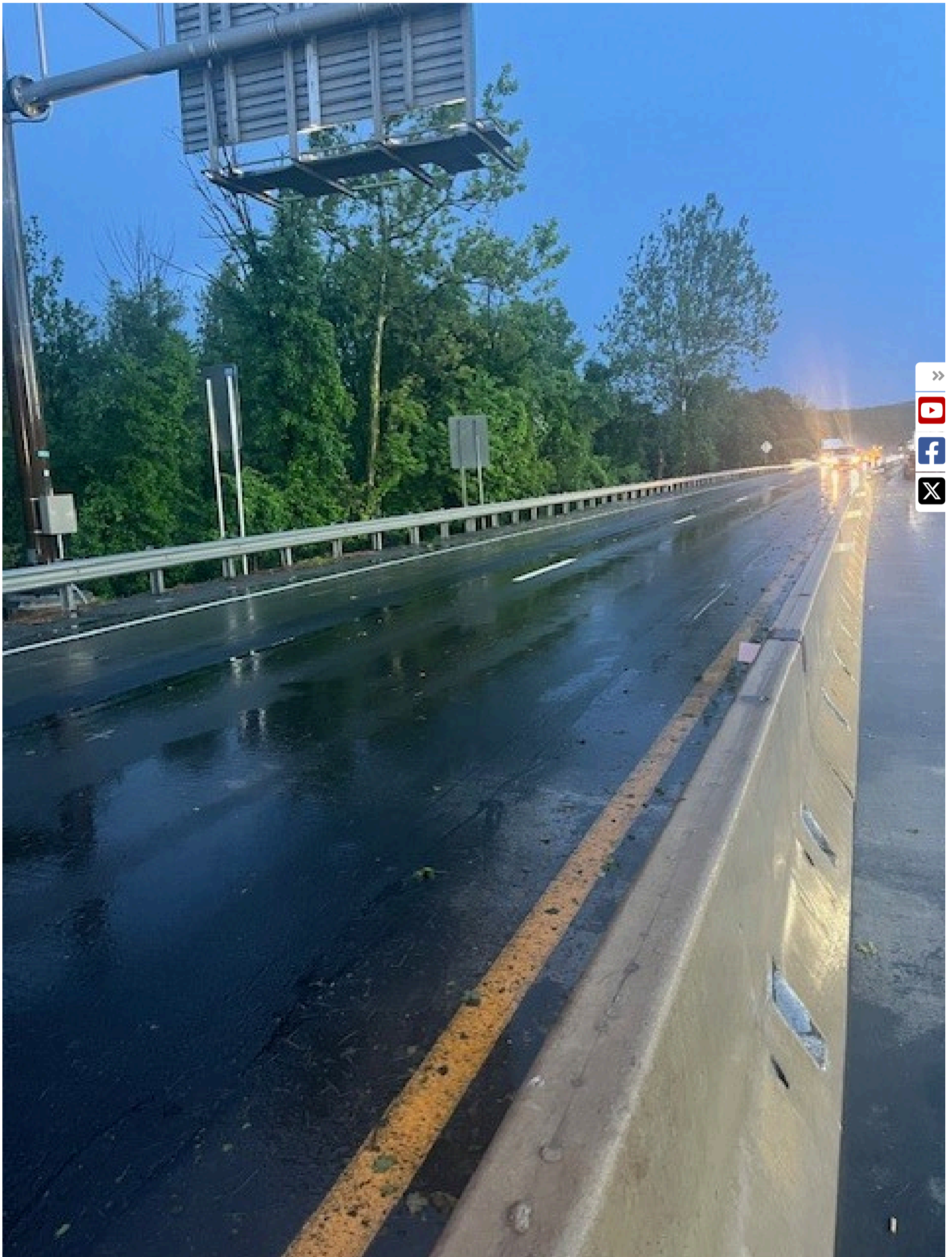
Construction timeline is based on current ground conditions and is subject to change



[Click here to open Project Schedule.pdf](#)







EMERGENCY REPAIR PHASES

The path to completing emergency repairs and reopening I-80 eastbound has several phases. The timing for each phase has not yet been determined. However, the entire repair is expected to take approximately two months:

- **Geotechnical tests** to assess the condition of the roadway base **are complete**. These tests established our work area and helped identify approximately 150 locations to drill and grout.

- **Drilling and grouting operations** to probe subsurface conditions are complete. This work has stabilized the area under the roadway by filling holes and small voids and outlined the area where a more extensive repair is required.
- **Repairing I-80 eastbound and westbound is ongoing.** The repair will include excavating the area, installing a base of large stone and micropiles into the bedrock to support a concrete slab. Additional fill and soil will be placed on top of the concrete and compacted before several layers of asphalt will be applied to reconstruct the road.
- **Quality assurance testing** will be done while repairs are being made and following completion of the repair to ensure the long-term stability of the roadway and the integrity of the repairs.
- **Installing a monitoring system** to track surface and underground conditions will be done as part of the repair. There will be three types of monitors. Remote sensing technology on poles will scan the pavement for changes, while sensors beneath the road will detect early signs of subsurface movement. Deeper underground devices will monitor long-term soil stability.
- **Milling and paving** the work area for a safe, smooth driving surface and reopening the road is the final phase.



Median Excavation

EMERGENCY FUNDING

Governor Phil Murphy declared a State of Emergency for Morris County on March 8 to enable access to Federal funding. The Declaration was one step in the process to apply for emergency federal funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). NJDOT is continuing to work with FHWA.

TRAFFIC MITIGATION

The Department is continuing to work closely with local officials and the New Jersey State Police to improve mobility along the detour and alternate routes in the region, including evaluating requests made by neighboring communities along Route 46 that are seeing higher volume due to the I-80 westbound closure.

NJDOT continues to adjust the timing of signals on Route 15, Route 10, and Route 46 to minimize the impact of the I-80 westbound detour. NJDOT and New Jersey State Police will continue to monitor traffic conditions and make adjustments as necessary to mitigate delays.

Motorists are advised to consider these options to help reduce delays on I-80 and the surrounding roadways:

- **NJ TRANSIT is offering a 50 percent discount** on roundtrip travel for those affected by the ongoing emergency repair work on I-80. The 50 percent discount offer will remain in effect for the duration of the repairs and aims to provide an alternative travel option while alleviating congestion in the impacted area. For more information, see the [NJ TRANSIT press release](#).
- Consider **working from home** if that is an option.
- Businesses and employees are encouraged to **adjust working hours**, if possible, to avoid driving during the morning and evening rush hours.
- **Please remain on the designated detours or alternate routes.**
 - Due to the significant impact of the closures, **GPS and other map services may reroute traffic onto local roads that are not designed to handle commercial vehicles or increased traffic volume.**
 - **This is particularly important for trucks as there are low bridges and weight restrictions on many roads in the area.**



- In addition, **Picatinny Arsenal is a restricted Military Installation** and roads through the Arsenal are **not accessible to the public.**
- Follow all posted signs and regulations, and if you are approaching an intersection, please “Don’t block the box.”
- A new [I-80 travel time page](#) has been added to www.511NJ.org and has current travel times on the detour routes and alternate routes.

In addition, NJDOT is using technology to send messages to commercial truckers to provide information about the closure, detour, and alternate routes. The Department is also using digital messaging signs and working with our regional transportation partners to share information so drivers can make informed decisions about potential alternate routes to take.

DETOURS AND ALTERNATE ROUTES

I-80 eastbound traffic is being detoured at Exit 34. The following detour remains in place:

I-80 eastbound Exit 34 Detour:

Motorists on Route 15 southbound wishing to take the bridge over Rockaway River will be directed to:

- Motorists on I-80 eastbound are being directed to take Exit 34 to Route 15/Wharton/Dover/Sparta
- At the end of the ramp, stay right following signs for Route 15/Jefferson/Dover/Sparta/Picatinny Arsenal
- Stay in the right lane on North Main Street following signs for Route 15 North/Jefferson/Sparta
- Bear right toward Route 15 northbound/Picatinny Arsenal
- Stay left, following signs for Pondview Drive/U and Left Turns
- Using both lanes, make a U-turn at the Pondview Drive traffic signal and merge onto Route 15 southbound
- Stay left to take the exit to I-80 eastbound

I-80 westbound traffic is being detoured at Exit 34B. The following detour is in place:

I-80 westbound Exit 34B Detour:

Motorists on Route 15 southbound wishing to take the bridge over Rockaway River will be directed to:

- Motorists on I-80 westbound will be directed to take Exit 34B to Route 15 north/Jefferson/Sparta
- Keep left on Route 15 northbound
- Use the left two left lanes at Pondview Drive to make a U-turn onto Route 15 southbound
- Stay right to take the ramp to I-80 westbound

Note

Traffic is advised to use Exit 28 to take Route 10 eastbound or Route 46 eastbound as an alternate route to avoid the area.

Route 10 eastbound Alternate Route:

- Motorists on I-80 eastbound are advised to take Exit 28/Route 46 eastbound to Route 10/Ledgewood/Lake Hopatcong, which is several miles before the closure
- Continue on Route 46 eastbound
- Stay right to take Route 10 eastbound
- Take the exit to I-287 northbound
- Stay right to take the ramp to I-80 eastbound

Route 46 eastbound Alternate Route:

- Motorists on I-80 eastbound are advised to take Exit 28/Route 46 eastbound to Route 10/Ledgewood/Lake Hopatcong, which is several miles before the closure
- Continue on Route 46 eastbound
- Stay in the two left lanes to turn left at the traffic signal to continue on Route 46 eastbound
- Turn left onto Route 15 northbound in Dover, back to I-80
- Stay right to take the ramp to I-80 eastbound
- OR
- Continue on Route 46 eastbound for about 12 miles and stay left for I-80 eastbound





Location Map



NJDOT

About NJDOT

- ABOUT - HOME
- CONTACT Us (NJDOT)
- ASSET MANAGEMENT
- COMMISSIONER OF TRANSPORTATION
- COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITIES
- DIRECTIONS
- DIRECTORY
- EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
- EXECUTIVE STAFF
- HIGHWAY SAFETY
- INSPECTOR GENERAL
- MISSION STATEMENT
- ORGANIZATION CHART
- NEWS RELEASES
- NJDOT 50TH ANNIVERSARY
- PUBLICATIONS
- STATUTORY AUTHORITY/RULES & REGULATIONS
- VIDEOS, YouTube
- WINTER READINESS
- STORMWATER MANAGEMENT TRAINING VIDEOS

Capital Program

- CAPITAL PROGRAM - HOME
- ANNUAL OBLIGATION REPORTS
- ANNUAL TRANSPORTATION CAPITAL PROGRAM (PUBLIC LAW 2013, CHAPTER 252)
- ALTERNATIVE PROJECT DELIVERY
- CAPITAL PROGRAM DOCUMENTS
- CAPITAL PROJECT DELIVERY
- ELECTRONIC STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM 2024 - 2033
- FIXED GUIDEWAY
- STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM 2024 -2033
- TRANSPORTATION CAPITAL PROGRAM 2025
- DRAFT TRANSPORTATION CAPITAL PROGRAM 2026
- TRANSPORTATION TRUST FUND AUTHORITY
- STATEWIDE CAPITAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY (SCIS)
- STIP ARCHIVES

Community Programs

- COMMUNITY PROGRAMS - HOME
- CLEAN UP NJ!
- CONTEXT SENSITIVE DESIGN
- LOCAL AID AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/GRANTS
- PUBLIC MEETINGS
- SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL/GRANTS
- SCENIC BYWAYS
- TRANSIT VILLAGE INITIATIVE

Doing Business

- DOING BUSINESS - HOME
- AASHTOWARE PROJECT SOFTWARE
- AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES / SECTION 504
- AUDIT
- AWARDED PROJECTS
- BEFORE YOU DIG
- BROADBAND
- BUREAU OF RESEARCH, INNOVATION & INFORMATION TRANSFER
- CAPITAL PROJECT DELIVERY
- CIVIL RIGHTS AFFIRMATIVE ACTION
- DESIGN SERVICES
- DIRECTORY
- INSPECTOR GENERAL
- INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS
- LOCAL AID & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT / GRANTS
- MOBILITY AND SYSTEMS ENGINEERING
- NONPROFIT INFORMATION
- OUTDOOR ADVERTISING

- MAJOR ACCESS E-PERMITTING
- PERMITS INFORMATION
- HIGHWAY ACCESS PERMITS
 - HIGHWAY OCCUPANCY PERMITS
 - TV & FILM PRODUCTION HOP
- WIRELESS PERMITS
- PLANNED ADVERTISEMENTS(SIX-MONTHS)
- PROCUREMENT
- RIGHT OF WAY
- FOOD, GAS, LODGING AND TOURISM SIGNS
- TRAFFIC CAMERA VIDEO LOG REQUEST
- VENDOR HELP

Engineering

- ENGINEERING - HOME
- ANNOUNCEMENTS
- CONSTRUCTION AND MATERIALS
- DESIGN
- DRAWINGS
- ELECTRICAL
- FORMS
- MARKOUT REQUESTS
- MANUALS
- OPERATIONS
- PERMITS AND LICENSES
- POLICY
- PROCEDURES
- PROJECTS
- SPECIFICATIONS
- SUPERSEDED
- VENDOR/CONTRACTOR ASSISTANCE



In the Works

- IN THE WORKS - HOME
- FREIGHT PLANNING
- LIBERTY CORRIDOR
- LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN
- MARITIME PILOT & DOCKING COMMISSION
- MARITIME RESOURCES
- NEW JERSEY CARBON REDUCTION STRATEGY
- OUR PROJECTS & THE ENVIRONMENT

Multimodal/Freight

- FREIGHT, AIR AND WATER - HOME
- AVIATION
- FREIGHT PLANNING
- LIBERTY CORRIDOR
- MARITIME PILOT & DOCKING COMMISSION
- MARITIME RESOURCES
- MULTIMODAL GRANTS AND PROGRAMS
- RAIL
- TRUCKING

NJCommuter

- TRAVELER INFO - HOME
- 511 NJ TRAVEL INFO
- AVIATION
- BIKING IN NEW JERSEY
- BUS & TRAIN SCHEDULES
- CAMERAS
- COMPLETE STREETS
- CONSTRUCTION UPDATES
- DRAWBRIDGE SCHEDULES
- MOTORIST ASSISTANCE
- PEDESTRIAN SAFETY
- POTHOLE / MAINTENANCE REPORTING

RIDESHARING
WORKZONE SAFETY

References

REFERENCE - HOME
CRASH RECORDS
CADD SUPPORT
COUNTY ROAD SIDEWALK INVENTORY
GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN
OPEN PUBLIC RECORDS ACT
RESEARCH LIBRARY
ROADWAY INFORMATION & TRAFFIC

I-80 Sinkhole

MONITORING SYSTEM PROGRAM
ROADWAY VIDEOLOG
SOIL BORINGS
STATUTORY AUTHORITY/RULES & REGULATIONS
STRAIGHT LINE DIAGRAM
TRAFFIC CAMERA VIDEO LOG REQUEST
TRAFFIC REGULATIONS
HELPFUL LINKS
 COMMUNITY LINKS
 COMMUTER LINKS
 ENGINEERING LINKS
 PLANNING LINKS
 REFERENCE LINKS
HR NEOGOV
SITE MAP

Statewide

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LT. GOVERNOR TAHESHA WAY
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