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MoDOT Working to Get Flooded Routes Open

Jefferson City, Mo. – Motorists in northwest Missouri may be traveling a little easier in the coming weeks as the Missouri Department of Transportation works on the next steps to get flooded roads open as quickly as possible. MoDOT crews have begun repairing Route 136 in Atchison County that was damaged by Missouri River flooding. The initial work includes repair of the roadway and shoulders by MoDOT maintenance forces. In addition, the department advertised a project Monday for emergency repairs to Route 59 in Buchanan County, and will advertise another emergency repair project for Route 136 in Atchison County today.

“Our primary goal is to get these roads open and safe as soon as we can to alleviate travel frustrations for the people who live, work and travel in this area of the state,” said Don Wichern, district engineer for the MoDOT Northwest District. “We’ve been constantly monitoring the water levels on all our flooded routes, and the water receded enough in the last couple of days on these routes for us to get in there safely to begin some repairs.”

MoDOT will work to make repairs as quickly as possible and is using a combination of internal and contract work to get the job done.

“Even with the water flowing over these roads since the beginning of June, we’ve been making plans to be ready to move forward as soon as we could to get the roads open,” Wichern said. These plans include assessing damages where possible, getting prepared to let emergency contracts, stockpiling materials for repairs like tens of thousands of tons of rock to fill holes and gaps in the pavement, and working with officials to request federal funding.

Other routes in the northwest area that are a top priority for travelers include Route 159, Route 111 and numerous lettered routes. Many of these still have water over the road, but are being closely monitored. Interstate 29 in Missouri does not have any water on the road and except right at the Iowa border has remained dry. However, due to water over the road and damage on the Iowa side, the interstate will remain closed until Iowa is able to open their portion.

Until roads are officially open, MoDOT urges drivers to stay away from flood-damaged and closed roads. Drivers should never drive around barricades, fences or other road-closure devices. Doing so is illegal and places motorists at risk due to damage to the roadways and bridges, unexpected pavement failures and heavy equipment at work.

Check MoDOT’s traveler information map for the latest road information, and visit modot.org/northwest/2011floodcoverage.htm for photos of the some of the routes damaged by the flooding.

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