



# NEWS RELEASE

VirginiaDOT.org

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## **VDOT READY FOR YEAR-END HOLIDAY TRAVEL**

### *Most lane closures suspended for Christmas and New Year's holidays*

**RICHMOND** — The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is clearing a path for travelers this holiday season by lifting lane closures over the extended Christmas and New Year's weekends.

VDOT will suspend lane closures from noon Friday, Dec. 23, to noon Tuesday, Dec. 27, and again from noon Friday, Dec. 30 to noon Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2012.

“We want everyone to arrive safely at their destinations during the year-end holidays,” said VDOT Commissioner Greg Whirley. “We are opening lanes where appropriate to increase lane capacity on our interstates and other major roads. I encourage motorists to do their part to keep one another safe by obeying all traffic laws, staying alert and engaged behind the wheel, and being courteous to your fellow motorists.”

While temporary work zones are lifted during the holiday period, VDOT is always prepared to mobilize in case of inclement weather. VDOT will monitor weather forecasts for any snow or ice that could affect travel over the holidays. Its offices and snow-removal equipment will be fully staffed in the event of any accumulation.

### **Additional Travel Tools**

VDOT has several resources available for travelers to monitor road conditions and traffic incidents in real time as they travel and plan their journey.

For real-time traffic conditions or to view traffic cameras, visit VDOT's 24-hour travel information website, [www.511Virginia.org](http://www.511Virginia.org).

511Virginia also is available by calling 511 from any phone in Virginia.

A mobile version of the 511 Virginia website, designed for handheld devices, is available at [mobile511virginia.org](http://mobile511virginia.org).

Remember to pull over when using your mobile phone or have another passenger in your vehicle use the device. *Don't drive distracted.*

Lane closures and crash reports available on 511 Virginia are also communicated through VDOT's Twitter accounts, targeted for different parts of Virginia and specific interstate corridors, such as I-95 or I-81.

Visit [www.VirginiaDOT.org](http://www.VirginiaDOT.org) for a list of VDOT's Twitter accounts and how to subscribe.

VDOT's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/VirginiaDOT](http://www.facebook.com/VirginiaDOT) is updated with statewide travel and transportation news.

To report a road hazard or to get answers to your transportation question, you can call VDOT's Customer Service Center at 1-800-FOR-ROAD (1-800-367-7623) around the clock.

For information about major long-term construction projects on Virginia's interstates and primary roads, visit [http://www.virginiadot.org/travel/major\\_road\\_construction\\_projects.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/travel/major_road_construction_projects.asp) for VDOT's "Road Construction Ahead" map.

### **E-ZPass**

Virginia belongs to the E-ZPass electronic toll-collection network. E-ZPass customers can use their transponders at toll facilities in Virginia and 13 other states. For more information on E-ZPass, visit [www.ezpassva.com](http://www.ezpassva.com).

### **Move Over Law**

Virginia's Move Over Law requires motorists to move to the next lane, when possible, when approaching vehicles with flashing blue, red or amber lights stopped on the side of the road.

More information about the Move Over law and other rules of the road is available at [http://www.virginiadot.org/travel/move\\_it\\_move\\_over.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/travel/move_it_move_over.asp).

## **NORTHERN VIRGINIA HIGH OCCUPANCY VEHICLE (HOV) SCHEDULE:**

### **Christmas**

- The I-95/395 reversible lanes will be open to all traffic:
- **Southbound** from 6 p.m. Friday, Dec. 23 until 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 24

- **Northbound** from 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 24 until 6 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 27 when HOV-3 takes effect

- HOV restrictions on I-95, 395 and 66 are lifted on Monday, Dec. 26

### **New Year's**

- The I-95/395 reversible lanes will be open to all traffic:

- **Southbound** from 6 p.m. Friday, Dec. 30 until 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 31

- **Northbound** from 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 31 until 6 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 3 when HOV-3 takes effect

- HOV restrictions on I-95, 395 and 66 are lifted on Monday, Jan. 2

### **HAMPTON ROADS HOV SCHEDULE, TUNNELS AND OTHER INFORMATION:**

#### **Lifting Lane Closures**

Contractors on the Gilmerton Bridge replacement project will lift overnight closures from Friday, Dec. 23, through Jan. 2, 2012. Overnight lane closures (Sunday through Thursday, 8 p.m. to 5 a.m.) will resume Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2012. For more information, visit [www.GilmertonBridge.org](http://www.GilmertonBridge.org).

#### **HOV Schedule**

- **Interstate 64/ Interstate 264/ Interstate 564 HOV lanes:** HOV restrictions will be lifted on all HOV diamond lanes as follows:

- Friday, Dec. 23

- Monday, Dec. 26

- Friday, Dec. 30

- Monday, Jan. 2

- **I-64 reversible lanes** will operate with the following schedule:

#### **Christmas**

Thursday, Dec. 22, from 11:30 a.m. – Open to eastbound traffic

Thursday, Dec. 22, from 11:30 p.m. – Open to westbound traffic

Friday, Dec. 23, from 11:30 a.m. – Open to eastbound traffic and remains in this condition through Monday, Dec. 26, at 11:30 p.m.

HOV lanes will resume a restricted schedule at 6 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 27

### **New Year's**

Thursday, Dec. 29, from 11:30 a.m. – Open to eastbound traffic

Thursday, Dec. 29, from 11:30 p.m. – Open to westbound traffic

Friday, Dec. 30, from 11:30 a.m. – Open to eastbound traffic and remains in this condition through Monday, Jan. 2, 2012, at 11:30 p.m.

HOV lanes will resume a restricted schedule at 6 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2012.

### **WORK ZONES AND OTHER TRAFFIC ALERTS**

While VDOT will lift most lane closures during the extended Christmas and New Year's holiday, motorists may encounter permanent work zones or travel delays in the following locations:

#### **Alleghany County**

**Clifton Forge – Main Street (Route 60) Smith Creek bridge replacement project:** Main Street, west from the Ridgeway Street-Commercial Avenue intersection in Clifton Forge, is closed for bridge construction. Westbound traffic detours onto Ridgeway Street, which has two-way traffic both directions. Detour signs in place through the area using Business Route 60 and West Ridgeway Street.

[http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/staunton/alleghany\\_county\\_clifton\\_forge\\_8211\\_bridge\\_over\\_smith\\_creek.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/staunton/alleghany_county_clifton_forge_8211_bridge_over_smith_creek.asp)

#### **Amherst/Nelson county line**

**Route 29 at Tye River:** Replacing northbound bridge. Be alert to changes in traffic pattern.

#### **Highland County**

**Route 250:** Replacing Crab Run bridge in McDowell from east of Route 645 to west of Route 654 (Doe Hill Road). Single-lane traffic with 14-foot width restriction and three-

way traffic signal at Route 654 intersection.

[http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/staunton/highland\\_county\\_-\\_route\\_250.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/staunton/highland_county_-_route_250.asp)

### **Montgomery County**

**Interstate 81 truck-climbing lanes:** Constructing southbound truck-climbing lane, mile marker 120 to 125. Weekday blasting starts at 10:30 a.m. Southbound detour off I-81 for blasting days: exit 132 (Dixie Caverns) onto Route 11/460 to exit 118 (Christiansburg). Detours last about an hour but may vary. Rolling stops northbound on I-81 across from project. No blasting on Friday, Dec. 23, and Monday, Jan. 2, 2012.

[http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/salem/interstate\\_81\\_truck\\_climbing\\_lanes\\_-\\_montgomery\\_county.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/salem/interstate_81_truck_climbing_lanes_-_montgomery_county.asp)

### **Richmond City**

**Midlothian Turnpike (Route 60):** One lane each direction closed between Chippenham Parkway and Covington Street for drainage and road work.

[http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/richmond/midlothian\\_turnpike-german\\_school\\_road.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/richmond/midlothian_turnpike-german_school_road.asp)

### **Roanoke County**

**Route 11/460:** Widening road west of Salem. Speed limit 35 mph; drops to 25 mph near entrance to Richfield Retirement Community where travel lanes are narrowed for bridge work.

[http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/salem/route\\_11-460\\_west\\_main\\_street\\_widening\\_-\\_roanoke\\_county.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/salem/route_11-460_west_main_street_widening_-_roanoke_county.asp)

### **Smyth County**

**Interstate 81 bridges at exit 45 over Scratch Gravel Road:** Delays likely during work to replace portions of bridges over Scratch Gravel Road in Marion. Traffic restricted to one 14-foot travel lane both directions.

[http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/bristol/i-81\\_bridges\\_over\\_scratch\\_gravel\\_in\\_marion.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/bristol/i-81_bridges_over_scratch_gravel_in_marion.asp)

### **Wythe County**

**Interstate 77/Interstate 81 overlap:** High traffic volumes could slow or stop vehicles through this eight-mile section. Be alert to delays on northbound I-77 where it merges with I-81.