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I-70 project near Effingham complete

EFFINGHAM – The Illinois Department of Transportation announced today the completion of the 8-mile reconstruction project on Interstate 70 from just west of Effingham to Altamont.

The project, which started in 2018, involved resurfacing, improved drainage and safety upgrades. This section of I-70 carries more than 23,000 vehicles daily with truck traffic consisting of about 45% of those vehicles.

In 2019, the westbound lanes were closed, and traffic was maintained utilizing crossovers. This allowed for one lane of traffic in each direction. The work zone saw several severe crashes occur, where slow-moving or inoperative vehicles and distracted driving were primary factors.

With traffic at a standstill from the crashes, secondary crashes occasionally occurred, however, those crashes were often more severe. Additional advance message boards and work-zone speed limit signs were installed to warn approaching traffic and remind motorists to maintain a safe speed through the work zone. These additions helped, but crashes were still occurring.

The newly constructed westbound lanes opened in fall 2019, and work in the eastbound lanes began in 2020 with two-way traffic in the westbound lanes. Prior to this, several safety measures were implemented to help reduce the number of crashes.

Four emergency pull-off points were constructed in each direction for motorists to use in case of emergencies. Signs reminding motorists to maintain the 55 mph work-zone speed limit were installed, as were additional signs informing motorists the distance to the end of the work zone.

As work progressed, it was evident that the additional pull-off points and safety improvements helped reduce crashes. Additionally, with fewer crashes in the work zone and traffic continuing to maintain safe speeds, severe crashes were greatly reduced. With the new safety measures and the continued communication with emergency responders, IDOT was able to provide a safer environment for motorists as well as workers in the construction zone.

Over the next six years, IDOT is planning to improve more than 3,300 miles of highway and 8.4 million square feet of bridge deck as part of the Rebuild Illinois capital program, which is investing \$33.2 billion into all modes of transportation. Year One included approximately \$2.7

billion of improvements statewide on 1,706 miles of highway, 128 bridges and 228 additional safety improvements.

For more information on IDOT projects, click [here](#). For IDOT District 7 updates, follow us on Twitter at [@IDOTDistrict7](#) or view area construction details on IDOT's [traveler information map](#) on GettingAroundIllinois.com.

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