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Crash at Hallett toll plaza emphasizes importance of motorist safety and PlatePay at toll booths

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A semi-trailer truck crashed into the eastbound US-412/Cimarron Turnpike Hallett toll plaza at SH-99 (mm 48) in Pawnee County on Monday morning, injuring the toll booth attendant inside. She was treated by emergency medical personnel at the scene.

The crash signifies the importance of driver safety in toll booth plazas across the 624 miles of turnpikes across Oklahoma. Drivers must be attentive, putting away all distractions and monitoring slowing traffic in reduced speed zones for the safety of all motorists and the turnpike maintenance employees.

Turnpike maintenance workers quickly worked to replace the damaged toll booth, including electrical wiring, and had it operational by Monday night.

“Unfortunately, we see the highest number of crashes on Oklahoma turnpikes at toll plazas where we have motorists slowing down at varying speeds and changing lanes at the last second,” Oklahoma Turnpike Authority Deputy Director Joe Echelle said.

The crash also provides a prime example of OTA’s systemwide implementation of PlatePay and the safety enhancements that come with cashless tolling. PlatePay creates a free flow of traffic and a safer, more efficient means of travel with cameras at toll plazas photographing a non-PIKEPASS vehicle’s license plate, enabling the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority to send the vehicle’s registered owner an invoice.

The John Kilpatrick and Kickapoo Turnpikes in the Oklahoma City metro have already converted to PlatePay with the nine existing turnpikes scheduled to convert during the next two years. The Cimarron Turnpike, where Monday’s toll plaza crash occurred, is the next turnpike scheduled to convert to PlatePay later this summer.

“PlatePay will eliminate toll plazas, allowing motorists to remain at turnpike speeds without sudden slowing, stopping or merging,” Echelle said. “We used to have weekly crashes at the old Kilpatrick toll plazas and haven’t had one at those plazas since converting that turnpike to cashless. Safety is our top priority, and PlatePay will significantly reduce the number of crashes on state turnpikes.”

PIKEPASS remains the most cost-effective way to travel Oklahoma turnpikes, providing customers the lowest toll rate. To open a PIKEPASS account, visit PIKEPASS.com. Learn more about PlatePay at PlatePay.com.

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Damage from a semi-trailer truck colliding with an eastbound US-412/Cimarron Turnpike toll booth is shown Monday, May 9, 2022. The toll booth attendant working in the booth was injured and treated on scene.