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June OTA Board Meeting Wrap-Up

Board approves PlatePay rates for four turnpikes as part of cashless conversion of tolling system

The Oklahoma Turnpike Authority Board established the new PlatePay toll rates for four turnpikes in Eastern Oklahoma ahead of their upcoming cashless conversion, which is expected to be complete by the end of 2024.

The new PlatePay toll rates will replace the cash rates once installed on the I-44/Will Rogers Turnpike, the I-44/Turner Turnpike, the US-351/Muskogee Turnpike and the US-375/Indian Nation Turnpike. The board action Tuesday setting the rates allows the cashless system upgrades to proceed with items such as ordering signage and the cashless technology for these turnpikes.

Secretary of Transportation and OTA Executive Director Tim Gatz said PlatePay offers a safe and convenient way to keep traffic flowing while allowing motorists to handle tolls at their convenience online. PlatePay helps create a safer turnpike system by eliminating sudden speed changes needed to pay cash tolls. PlatePay cameras photograph a vehicle's license plate, enabling the Authority to mail an invoice to the vehicle's registered owner. The OTA plans to have all Oklahoma toll roads converted to PlatePay by the end of 2024.

PIKEPASS account rates have not changed and remain the most cost-effective tolling option, which costs about 50 percent less than PlatePay rates. Another way to pay tolls is through the PlusPass mobile app where customers can create an account that offers savings on average of 25 percent less than PlatePay rates.

"We are committed to exploring every opportunity to provide options to motorists, and we are working hard to consider and implement other web-based options that allows motorists to pay their tolls as conveniently as possible," Gatz said.

The new PlatePay rates for the Turner, Will Rogers, Muskogee and Indian Nation turnpikes may be found online in the June 6 Authority Board meeting [agenda](#) packet. These rates are higher than the current cash rates due to administrative costs of the program.

Board members also received an update on a \$434,956 contract awarded to Built Right Construction for emergency repairs to a bridge along I-44/Turner Turnpike. The bridge near Chandler was hit by illegal over-height vehicles two times in late May. The bridge remains open and is safe for travel, but repairs to damaged beams are scheduled to begin in July. The newest repairs will include bridge beams that are shallower to add a few more inches of vertical clearance. OTA also is working on a future project to further raise the bridge's vertical clearance as an interim solution. This bridge also is scheduled in the ACCESS Oklahoma long-range plan for replacement.

"Fourteen feet is the legal height for trucks using our highway system," Gatz said. "We're continuing to see illegal, over-height trucks cause issues like this one in Chandler. If you believe you're close to the 14-foot legal height limit, measure not once, but twice to ensure that you are safely navigating Oklahoma's transportation system."

Gatz also highlighted to the board that Tuesday is national Secure Your Load day as a reminder for those taking advantage of summer weather to move large loads to completely secure all items before traveling to ensure motorist safety.

The board, a six-member panel appointed by the governor to an eight-year term to oversee turnpike development, awards project contracts for road and bridge construction on a monthly basis.

The next Oklahoma Turnpike Authority board meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m. Tuesday, July 11, at the Oklahoma Department of Transportation Commission Room, 200 N.E. 21st St., Oklahoma City. The July meeting will be available to view live online.