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## **Stroud bridge over I-44/Turner Turnpike opens earlier than expected after emergency bridge repairs**

Work completed on emergency repairs early Tuesday morning on the Stroud bridge over I-44/Turner Turnpike. All lanes and ramps to Stroud are now open.

Work began Friday night and completed in four nights. The bridge, which serves as the westbound on- and off-ramp to SH-99 (mm 179) in Stroud, was damaged by an illegal, over-height semi-tractor trailer that sheered off a bridge beam over the westbound lanes overnight Nov. 8. The damage was extensive to the bridge beam, the bridge deck and the parapet wall resulting in lane and ramp closures and a detour for westbound traffic to reach Stroud.

"This work proceeded faster than expected thanks to the diligent work by the contractor and our staff," said OTA Chief Engineer T.J. Dill. "We were fortunate that we were able to locate a new bridge beam in less than 24 hours, which allowed work to begin last Friday night earlier than expected."

Oklahoma Turnpike Authority engineers said last week that the damage done to the bridge was more severe than any of them have seen in their transportation careers.

According to the Oklahoma Highway Patrol, the load carried by the semi-tractor-trailer was above 15-feet in height and struck the bridge with such force that it dislodged the outside bridge beam. As the bridge beam fell to the ground, it impacted a second semi-truck following the first truck, causing severe damage to the vehicle.

OTA maintenance crews were called to the scene by OHP within minutes of the bridge hit and quickly closed I-44/Turner Turnpike lanes and the westbound I-44/Turner Turnpike on- and off-ramps while the bridge was assessed and crews and first responders cleared the scene.

Secretary of Transportation and OTA Executive Director Tim Gatz made an emergency declaration Thursday morning, which allows immediate repairs to restore the bridge's structural integrity, making it safe for the public traveling on and below the bridge. An emergency contract was issued to Built Right Construction. The repairs are expected to cost about \$300,000, which includes a \$25,000 per day incentive for early completion. The contractor completed the repairs two days earlier than anticipated.

This bridge will be removed as part of a future ACCESS Oklahoma project in OTA's long-range infrastructure improvement plan. OTA will continue widening I-44/Turner Turnpike to six lanes between Tulsa and Oklahoma City. Widening projects are anticipated to begin in 2024, however, the realignment and widening of the I-44/Turner Turnpike at Stroud is expected to occur later in the 15-year long-range plan. Learn more about the long-range plan at [www.accessoklahoma.com](http://www.accessoklahoma.com).



Crews completed emergency bridge repairs early Tuesday morning at the bridge to SH-99 in Stroud. The outside bridge beam was knocked down by an illegal, overheight semi-truck late Nov. 8. Repairs were made in four nights.



This photo was taken Nov. 9 showing the damage to the westbound I-44/Turner Turnpike bridge to Stroud where a bridge beam was dislodged by an illegal, over-height semi-truck late Nov. 8.



The damaged bridge beam is shown Nov. 9 lying on the shoulder of westbound I-44/Turner Turnpike at Stroud next to other debris from the bridge as well as large pipes knocked loose from the top of the illegal, over-height semi-tractor trailer load after it hit the bridge about 11 p.m. Nov. 8.