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ODOT points to TripCheck as way to avoid delays, hazards

Oregon's highway department says the state's "TripCheck" service is more important than ever because of winter weather and the rising level of road construction.

ODOT called attention to the service, available at TripCheck.com, in a statement from Salem.

The site offers current travel information including condition reports on highways and passes.

According to ODOT, TripCheck is more useful than ever as construction ramps up on Interstate 5, Interstate 84 and other major routes across the state,

mostly due to ODOT's \$1.3 billion OTIA III State Bridge Delivery Program.

The bridge program, part of the agency's 10-year, \$3 billion Oregon Transportation Investment Act, is repairing and replacing hundreds of bridges across the state. On I-5 alone, drivers will pass through more than 20 active work zones between Portland and Medford in 2007.

At TripCheck.com, people can access current construction updates, view the latest road conditions via road cameras, get winter travel updates, and find tips on how to travel by bus, rail or ride-

share.

Travelers can access information about construction zones and approximate delay times by simply passing their cursor over an icon on a map. Alternately, the 511 system, created by the federal government in 2000, delivers traffic and weather information directly to callers over the phone.

"It's a simple, easy-to-use system that focuses on timely information for Oregon travelers," said Galen McGill, who oversees TripCheck as ODOT's manager of intelligent transportation systems.

In an average month, 1.2

million unique visitors consult the site, and during severe winter storms, usage has spiked as high as 3.3 million unique visitors.

The OTIA III State Bridge Delivery Program is part of the Oregon Department of Transportation's 10-year, \$3 billion Oregon Transportation Investment Act.

OTIA funds will repair or replace hundreds of bridges,

pave and maintain city and county roads, improve and expand interchanges, add new capacity to Oregon's highway system, and remove freight bottlenecks statewide.

Each year during the OTIA program, construction projects will sustain about 5,000 family-wage jobs, ODOT said.

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