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Be prepared before you head out on the highway
From Matt Garrett,
director, Oregon Dept. of Transportation
Salem

This Memorial Day, Monday, May 28 will mark the kick-off of one of the busiest construction seasons in Oregon's history.

Work on the Oregon Dept. of Transportation's OTIA III State Bridge Delivery Program has shifted into high gear, with 63 bridges currently under construction and another 55 entering construction later this year. Already, 56 highway bridges have been completed and opened to traffic since the bridge program started in 2003.

Across the state, you'll see ODOT workers and Oregon contractors working hard to repair, replace and modernize vital highway corridors and highway bridges. Travelers on Interstate 5 alone will pass through 19 active work zones between Portland and Medford.

I can't overstate how important this work is for Oregonians. Our highway system is the lifeline that keeps our state moving forward. Our economic competitiveness depends on our ability to move people, goods and services more efficiently in our growing economy.

Our commitment to motorists is, "Better roads ahead," and I'm happy to say we're seeing the truth in that statement every day.

No travelers, especially people on vacation, want to be slowed on the way to their destinations. That's why we've taken steps, where possible, to schedule work at night or during off-peak hours. We've also coordinated projects so that truckers, commuters and visitors get where they're going as smoothly and safely as possible.

Still, it's possible that delays could be encountered.

To minimize that inconvenience, ODOT has two

great resources for up-to-date information about construction and traffic for anywhere in Oregon. Be prepared before hitting the road by visiting TripCheck.com or phoning 511.

And, when you see ODOT construction teams, remember that they are working to make Oregon's roads and bridges safer. So please, slow down in construction work zones.

Visit oregon.gov/ODOT/C O M M / video_podcasts.shtml for a video message from me about the 2007 construction season and how to be prepared -- Better roads are ahead for Oregon.