



NEWS RELEASE

06-087

Today's Date: Thursday, December 7, 2006
District: 1 - Eureka
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Caltrans Announces Changes at Drake Hill Road/Route 101 Intersection

Caltrans announced today that later this month it plans to make changes at the Route 101/Drake Hill Road intersection in the interest of safety.

The Drake Hill Road intersection is one of ten at-grade public road intersections within the expressway portion of Route 101 between Rio Dell and Fortuna. Expressways differ from freeways because the crossings are at-grade, same elevation as the highway. These crossings can be unforgiving to inattentive drivers.

Previous actions by Caltrans to improve safety:

- The installation of "CROSS TRAFFIC AHEAD" signs with solar-powered flashing beacons (installed April 2003) on Route 101 for both northbound and southbound traffic.
- A Daylight-Headlight Section was implemented in December 2004 to help motorists on Route 101 be more visible.

Collision History:

- For the period January 1, 2001 to the present, approximately 6-years, 16 collisions have been reported.
- 12/16 collisions involved cross-median movements.
- 9/16 collisions involved WB/NB broadside collisions.
- 2 resulted in fatalities and 5 were injury collisions.
- 3/5 injury collisions occurred since 9/28/06. They occurred 9/28/06, 10/3/2006, and 11/3/2006.

To address the collision pattern, Caltrans will close the median at the Route 101/Drake Hill Road intersection.





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The work is planned in two phases:

Phase one will most likely occur this month, depending on weather. Electronic message boards advising motorists of the median closure will be placed a week in advance. Roadside signs will be installed providing guidance to motorists who frequent Drake Hill Road directing them to Kenmar or Sandy Prairie Road.

Phase One—Median Closure Traffic Changes

Northbound Route 101 motorists:

- Must use Sandy Prairie Road to access Drake Hill Road west of Route 101.
- Will be able to turn right onto Drake Hill Road.

Southbound Route 101 motorists:

- Must use the Kenmar Road Interchange to access Drake Hill Road east of Route 101.
- Will be able to turn right onto Drake Hill Road.

Phase two closure will go into effect once Caltrans finalizes plans with the City of Fortuna and County of Humboldt. Work will involve the side street closure of Drake Hill Road. This work will be done, as a safety measure, in advance, of planned work on a future project being developed to build an interchange at Route 101/36. Construction of the interchange, a \$20 million project currently in the design phase, is expected to begin in late 2008, depending on funding. The Alton interchange project will upgrade the expressway from Van Duzen River and Fortuna, to freeway.

Phase Two—Side Street Closure

- Motorists will be unable to access Drake Hill from US-101.
- The east intersection of Drake Hill Road and Route 101 will be closed. The alternate route will be the Kenmar Interchange for both northbound and southbound traffic.
- The west intersection of Drake Hill Road and Route 101 will be closed. Sandy Prairie Road will allow access to Drake Hill west of Route 101.

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