



# NJDOT TRAFFIC ADVISORY

**For Immediate Release:**  
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## **Route 71 Bridge over Shark River Emergency repairs expected to complete by May 31 Free shuttle will continue to run 7 days a week from 6 a.m. to 2 a.m**

**(Trenton)** – The emergency repairs to the Route 71 Drawbridge over Shark River between Belmar and Avon-by-the-Sea are nearing completion and are expected to be finished by Friday, May 31.

The installation of all the new components is ongoing and expected to be completed by Monday, May 27. Crews will be working throughout Memorial Day Weekend to complete the work. Marine operations will remain unimpeded through Memorial Day, Monday, May 27. Under federal law, NJDOT is legally obligated to allow marine traffic to pass, as it has the right of way.

Before the bridge can return to normal operating status, it needs to undergo rigorous testing, which requires numerous openings and closings of the bridge. Intermittent Channel closures are required for testing beginning on Tuesday, May 28. Testing is expected to take approximately three days. The goal is to restore the bridge to normal operations by the end of the day Friday, May 31. If the bridge is able to resume normal operations sooner, it will. Crews will continue to work multiple shifts, 7-days a week.

In addition to the emergency repairs to the moveable bridge components, NJDOT is completing high priority structural steel repairs to the expansion joints on the approach spans (the fixed portion of the bridge). These repairs are being done under the bridge.

This work was scheduled before the emergency repairs and has been going on concurrently with the emergency repairs. It is expected to be completed in late June. This work does not affect the operation of the bridge. After the bridge reopens to vehicles, a traffic shift will be necessary. All lanes will be maintained, as well as a sidewalk on at least one side of the bridge for pedestrians.

The free shuttle bus between Belmar and Avon-by-the-Sea will continue to operate in a continuous loop from 6 a.m. to 2 a.m. seven days a week. The service will end when the emergency repairs are completed, and the Route 71 Bridge over the Shark River reopens to vehicles and pedestrians. The bus has 49 seats and standing room for 10 passengers, is ADA accessible, and has bicycle carrying capability. There are 9 bus stops (map attached) and passengers should look for the "Shuttle Bus" signs (photo attached) at the following locations:

### **Stops in Belmar**

- 1) West Railroad Avenue & 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Belmar Train Station)
- 2) Main Street & 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- 3) Main Street & 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- 4) River Road & Main Street
- 5) West Railroad Avenue & 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue

### **Stops in Avon-by-the-Sea**

- 6) Main Street & Sylvania Avenue
- 7) Main Street & Washington Avenue
- 8) Jefferson Avenue & Main Street
- 9) Main Street & Garfield Avenue

Route 71/Main Street remains closed and detoured in both directions. The following detours will remain in place until the repairs are completed:

#### **Route 71/Main Street northbound from Belmar to Avon-by-the-Sea Detour:**

- Motorists on Route 71/Main Street northbound will be directed to turn left onto 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- Turn right on Route 35 northbound
- Continue over the Route 35/Shark River Bridge and follow signs for Avon-by-the-Sea

#### **Route 71/Main Street southbound from Avon-by-the-Sea to Belmar Detour:**

- Motorists on Route 71/Main Street southbound will be directed to turn right onto Sylvania Avenue
- Stay right and take the ramp to Route 35 South/Belmar
- Take Route 35 over the Shark River Bridge into Belmar
- Turn left onto 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and follow to Route 71/Main Street

The Route 71 Bridge over Shark River, built in 1932, is currently non-operational following a mechanical malfunction that took place on March 1. The bridge was successfully opened to marine traffic on March 12 and is secured in the open position. Under federal law, NJDOT is legally obligated to allow marine traffic to pass, as it has the right of way. Consequently, the bridge must remain in the open position to allow all marine traffic to pass until emergency repairs are complete. However, it may be necessary to close the Channel to marine traffic at times for safety reasons during the repair.

NJDOT understands the impact this has on the local community and is advancing the repair as quickly as possible to expedite full functionality of the bridge. Route 71/Main Street will remain closed and detoured during construction.

The precise timing of the work is subject to change due to weather or other factors. Motorists are encouraged to check NJDOT's traffic information website [www.511nj.org](http://www.511nj.org) for real-time travel information and for NJDOT news follow us on X (Twitter) [@NewJerseyDOT](https://twitter.com/NewJerseyDOT) or on the [NJDOT Facebook page](#).

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