

## South King County Projects Update

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### Signal timing revised at damaged S. 178th overpass; repairs expected this summer

WSDOT signal crews recently improved the temporary signal at the S. 178th Street bridge over I-5 between SeaTac and Tukwila. We examined the daily traffic patterns across the bridge for several days, noting when traffic backed up in either direction. A few weeks ago we revised the signal timing to favor the busier direction of traffic depending upon the time of day. The new signal timing will ease some congestion on the bridge until we complete permanent repairs. Please [let us know](#) how these revisions changed your trips.

We restricted traffic on the S. 178<sup>th</sup> Street bridge after it was struck by a vehicle that exceeded height restrictions on Dec. 13, 2006. At that time, our bridge inspectors determined that the bridge was safe for drivers but because of the [damage](#), we restricted travel on the bridge to one lane of alternating traffic. The recent damage report concluded that one of the bridge girders needs to be replaced before we can safely allow two lanes of traffic on the bridge again. Bridge engineers are designing a plan for these repairs and working to obtain the necessary construction permits. Repairs will likely be scheduled over the summer. We'll keep you informed of our progress through these e-mail updates and our [project Web site](#).

### Good fences make good neighbors: crews building new noise wall in Federal Way

The four miles of I-5 between S. 320<sup>th</sup> Street and the Pierce County line is one of the busiest stretches of freeway in the state. Over the past few weeks crews have been installing concrete panels for a new [noise wall](#) from S. 320 Street to S. 336<sup>th</sup> Street. The wall, which varies in height from 12 to 23 feet, will help reduce noise for people who live near I-5. The first row of houses next to the wall will experience a five to seven decibel noise reduction and homes in the second row will experience at least a three decibel reduction. Crews are closing lanes on southbound I-5 each weeknight to place the noise wall panels.

The work is part of our project to [add HOV lanes on I-5](#) through Federal Way. Weather permitting, crews expect to open the new northbound HOV lane later this spring. We'll open the new southbound HOV lane in late spring or early summer. The new HOV lanes will increase the number of lanes through Federal Way from eight to 10.

## WSDOT launches biggest construction season ever

On Monday Secretary of Transportation Doug MacDonald joined reporters, elected officials and project engineers on the rooftop of the Safeco Field parking lot to [launch](#) WSDOT's biggest construction season ever.

This summer, you can expect to see WSDOT crews all over the Puget Sound region. "We are everywhere because drivers are everywhere," said MacDonald. "We are delivering projects that will relieve bottlenecks and chokepoints, improve traffic flow and increase safety for all drivers no matter where their destination." This summer we'll spend nearly \$168 million on 160 projects in King County. You can [download a map](#) [pdf 660 kb] highlighting our biggest projects in King County this summer.

As we head into the summer construction season, remember to plan ahead using our real-time traffic tools. Get updates on current closures with our online [construction update report](#). When you're out and about, you can dial 5-1-1, our toll-free driver information line, for current construction closures and incidents affecting your commute.

## The dangers of highway litter

Highway litter spoils scenic landscapes and can create safety hazards. Some facts:

- In 2004, the American Automobile Association Foundation found that approximately 25,000 collisions involve road debris in North America each year - nearly 100 of those collisions were fatal.
- Road debris is involved in about 400 vehicle accidents on Washington state highways each year - more than one a day.
- In 2005, the Washington State Patrol issued 3,636 citations for littering.
- The greatest number of citations were given for failure to secure load (37.8 percent), followed by debris escape (23.3 percent), and tossing lit cigarettes (22.6 percent).
- You can incur a \$1,025 [fine](#) for potentially dangerous litter (including lit debris).
- In fiscal year 2006, WSDOT recorded approximately 23,000 cubic yards of litter collected - enough to cover a college football field 41 feet deep!

WSDOT, the Washington State Patrol, the Washington State Department of Ecology, and citizen Adopt-A-Highway groups all work to maintain litter-free highways. The Washington State Patrol enforces litter laws on state highways. Please help us keep our highways litter-free: keep a [litter bag](#) in all of your vehicles, [secure and cover your load](#) (pdf 800 kb), and report litterbugs to the 24-hour litter hotline (866-LITTER-1) or [online](#).