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**C O M M I S S I O N      N E W S      R E L E A S E**

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## **Bridge Work on I-476 Widening Project Begins Early April**

*Utility relocation starts next week on Morris Road Bridge above Northeastern Extension.*

The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission advises motorists that the bridge carrying Morris Road (SR 2001) over the Northeastern Extension (I-476) in Upper Gwynedd and Worcester Townships, Montgomery County, will close to traffic the morning of April 26 with a detour in effect until November.

Coordination meetings were held with PennDOT and township officials to discuss the detour's impact to the surrounding communities. The turnpike will be making traffic signal timing changes, constructing two temporary traffic signals and adding two left-turn lanes along the 4.5 mile detour route. Morris Road will be closed outside of the townships detour (Sumneytown Pike) which uses a portion of Morris road that will not be closed. This should allow the Sumneytown Pike detour to operate more effectively. For more information on the Township's Sumneytown Pike project go to [www.uppergwynedd.org](http://www.uppergwynedd.org).

Preparations for the demolition of the 60+ year-old bridge will begin next week with the temporary relocation of communication and utility lines. Motorists should be prepared for an intermittent daytime flagging pattern limiting traffic to one-lane to be conducted by the utility company. Signs alerting motorists to the detour and closure will be posted the week of March 22. Once closed, all traffic will be detoured over Valley Forge Road (Route 363), Skippack Pike (Route 73) and Bethel Road (SR 3006) until the new bridge reopens in November. Morris Road is a state road; therefore, the Turnpike's Morris Road detour must be on other state roads and approved by PennDOT.

Motorists traveling the Northeastern Extension near the bridge at milepost A27.20 should anticipate reduced speeds, lane closures, stoppages and overnight road closures when approaching the work area. Within the work zone speed limits will be reduced to 55 mph and 40 mph when the yellow lights on the activated work zone signs are flashing.

Morris Road Bridge is the first of three to be replaced in the "northern section" of the Turnpike's total reconstruction and widening project between Berks Road (milepost A26) and the Lansdale Interchange. Also scheduled for replacement in the northern section are bridges carrying Sumneytown Pike and Bustard Road over I-476.

J. F. Shea Construction, Inc. of Mt. Pleasant, Pa. was awarded the \$7.8 million contract to replace the bridge on Dec. 16, 2009. The contractor anticipates the new bridge and wider roadway will be open to traffic by Nov. 19.

Questions or concerns about the Morris Road project can be directed to the project hotline at 1-877-855-2545. For additional information on the Northeastern Extension Total Reconstruction and Widening Project, visit the web site at [www.paturnpike.com](http://www.paturnpike.com). The Pennsylvania Turnpike urges the public to stay alert and travel at posted speed limits through all work zones.