

Route 103 bridge in York to close early

Stimulus cash speeds up start of project

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YORK, Maine — The Route 103 bridge will close Tuesday for 12 to 16 months, according to Water District Superintendent Don Neumann. The closure is ahead of schedule, Neumann told selectmen at the board's Oct. 5 meeting.

The Maine Department of Transportation originally said it would start replacing the bridge in December, but stimulus funds jump-started road projects. The bridge is expected to reopen in May 2011. Detour information will be posted at the location, on the town's Web site and on cable access station Channel 3.

The York Water District is working against the clock to replace a pipe that runs along the bridge. Workers from contractor Bore Tech are drilling a new line under the sand in the harbor.

Drilling began Sept. 21, with the final connection expected by Thursday, according to Neumann. Drilling under the river, rather than running a new pipe across the bridge, will save more than \$100,000, Neumann said. It costs an estimated \$3,000 annually to keep the current pipe from freezing in winter.

"The department of transportation is breathing down necks to get out of the way," Neumann said. "It's taken longer than expected, but we're moving along."

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