



Maine Turnpike News

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Busy Holiday Week Expected on Turnpike

--Turnpike Paving Operations Suspended for the Week to Keep Traffic Flowing--

YORK—Traffic volumes entering Maine through the Maine Turnpike's York toll plaza during the week of July 1 through July 7 will increase by as much as 6% over the comparable period last year, according to a forecast prepared by the University of Maine system Center for Tourism Research and Outreach (CENTRO).

“The fact that July 4th is on a Wednesday this year changes the incoming flow of traffic,” according to Dr. Charles Colgan of the University of Southern Maine who prepared the forecast. “A warm outlook for the July 4th holiday week and fuel prices that have dropped when compared with Memorial Day will encourage trips to Maine,” he said.

The Maine Turnpike Authority has suspended paving projects at the Saco Interchange and on a six mile section of highway in Gray throughout July 4th week to accommodate traffic flow.

Colgan said that traffic on the weekend before July 4th (June 29 – July 1) is likely to be lower than in 2006, but volumes will recover next week and overall traffic for the period will be up.

Sunday July 8, may prove to be the heaviest traffic day of the period as more than 41,000 vehicles depart Maine on the Turnpike in the southbound direction.

Looking ahead, CENTRO is forecasting moderate growth in total Turnpike traffic for July and August. Turnpike traffic is expected to grow by about 1.8% in July and 1.5% in August.

The July and August outlook is based on expectations that Maine and the Northeast will see warmer temperatures this year compared with the last few years. This is based on the climatological forecasts of the National Weather Service and other sources. Oil prices are expected to increase somewhat over the summer as high temperatures push up energy demand, though a return to the very high prices of the period around Memorial Day is not expected, according to CENTRO.

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