



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“91 Steer Clear” Weekend Full Closure of 91 to Proceed as Planned

The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) announced today that the weekend full closure of the 91 between the 71 and Interstate 15 in Corona will proceed as planned, from Friday, Feb. 19 at 9 pm to Monday, Feb. 22 at 4 am. Through its “91 Steer Clear” public outreach campaign, RCTC is reminding motorists to plan ahead, avoid the area or stay home.

Although there is a chance of showers on Wednesday night and Thursday before 11 am, weather is not expected to be a factor in the weekend closure. Crews will work, unless heavy rainstorms or very high winds occur that could compromise the safety of the crews performing various operations, Executive Director Anne Mayer said.

The 55-hour weekend closure will enhance safety by removing cars from the roadway where crews will be working. The closure also will allow several major work efforts to be consolidated for the 91 Project. Crews will demolish the west half of the Maple Street Bridge over the 91, install support beams over the westbound 91 lanes for the new westbound Maple Street on-ramp flyover bridge, and pave the new eastbound 91 alignment near I-15.

“We had considered performing this work over a series of 20 consecutive night closures, but we know how important it is for Corona commuters to get on the road very early each morning. By consolidating this work into one weekend, we are able to create a safer working environment for our crews and the motoring public and cut by more than half the amount of anticipated travel delays to the public,” Mayer said.

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Crews will begin closing ramps and lanes at 9 pm on Friday. Once the roadway is cleared, the three operations will begin. Approximately 200 crew members will be working 12-hour shifts to complete the work. Crews also will use the closure time to complete work on selected ramps and bridges, repair potholes, paint K-rail, clean up trash, and investigate rehabilitation needs for pavement throughout the 91 Project limits.

Motorists are urged to avoid the 91, the 71 and I-15 near Corona. Other options are the 57, 60, 10, 210, 215, or 605. Drivers who use the 91, 71 or I-15 may encounter delays of three to four hours. Another travel option is Metrolink, which has partnered with RCTC to double the number of trains on the 91 Line and Inland Empire Orange County Line and to offer “Buy One, Get One” fares on Feb. 20 and 21.

Mayer encouraged Corona residents to stay close to home for the weekend and to patronize local businesses. The “Shop 91-Shop Local” section of the 91 Project website, sr91project.info, includes a listing of businesses that offer special discounts through the project’s Business Support Program.

Ongoing coordination between RCTC, emergency responders, regional agencies and local agencies has been a major component in the “91 Steer Clear” planning process.

Motorists will see an increased number of units from the Riverside County Sheriff’s Department, Corona Police Department, Riverside Police Department, and from other law enforcement agencies in the region. There will be a heavy presence by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) within the closed section of the 91, at the closure limits, and among the detour routes.

An Incident Command Center will be established at the City of Corona’s Traffic Management Center, said CHP Captain Kevin Porter.

“Corona’s TMC is a state of the art facility that will allow our team to see and respond to real-time traffic situations,” Porter said. “Staff can dispatch emergency responders to problems, send tow trucks, adjust traffic signals remotely, and work hand-in-hand with the Caltrans TMC to post travel information and other updates to the overhead message signs around the region.”

Other efforts are being made to manage traffic and emergency response efforts, including:

- RCTC has increased the number of Freeway Service Patrol tow trucks on duty for the weekend, in order to provide free roadside help to stranded motorists. Eight trucks will offer service on the 91, 15, 71 and 60; Orange County will use its existing Freeway Service Patrols and will add coverage to the 57.
- The Orange County eastbound 91 Express Lanes and the 241-North to 91-East connector will be closed for the weekend.
- The westbound 91 McKinley on-ramp will be closed and crews will monitor the need to close other ramps, based on travel delays.
- Emergency responders will have full access to the closed routes. Police, fire and ambulance services will be able to respond quickly to traffic, medical or domestic emergencies. Extra units will be on hand during the weekend and stationed strategically in Corona and in neighboring areas.

Caltrans has been working closely with RCTC and other Caltrans districts to plan for a successful and safe operation.

“Safety is the #1 priority and Caltrans is working with all the agencies involved to keep the 91 Steer Clear closure safe for the motoring public and the workers,” Caltrans District Director John Bulinski said.

Roadwork on the detour routes in Riverside County, San Bernardino County, Orange County, Los Angeles County and San Diego County has been suspended for the weekend. Caltrans overhead changeable message signs will be updated with travel time estimates throughout the weekend, based on real-time traffic conditions.

Additional information about traffic conditions and the status of the weekend work will be posted to social media, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram; search “sr91project” and the project website, sr91project.info. Mayer recommended visiting IE511.org or downloading the IE511 mobile app. Waze and other mapping applications are available to view traffic conditions and obtain relatively reliable travel time estimates.

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Although the weekend full closure allows for the completion of multiple work items, including the placement of support beams over the westbound lanes of the 91 near Maple Street, the massive size of the on-ramp flyover bridge does not allow crews enough time to place the support beams over the eastbound 91 lanes during the weekend closure. Crews will perform that activity on weeknights, on or about Feb. 22-27, from 10 pm to 5 am nightly. This work will require closures of the eastbound 91 at Maple Street. Motorists can exit Maple Street and reenter the 91 at Paseo Grande while this night work is under way.

The Riverside County Transportation Commission's 91 Project is adding regular lanes, tolled express lanes, auxiliary lanes and direct express connectors from the northbound 15 to the westbound 91 and from the eastbound 91 to the southbound 15. Improvements to interchanges, ramps, lanes and surface streets also will be made along the 91 between the Riverside County/Orange County Line in Corona and Pierce Street in Riverside. The new lanes are expected to open in 2017.

For more information, visit sr91project.info, call the helpline at 877-770-9191 or email sr91project@rctc.org.

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