

KDOT Explains Bridge Delays

(KAIR)--The demolition of the former Amelia Earhart Memorial Bridge has been delayed at least twice in the past month, and these changing dates have many area residents confused as to what is going on with the demolition, and more importantly, when the demolition will actually take place. The most recent delay was caused by equipment issues, and Kimberly Qualls with the Kansas Department of transportation explains the reason for this delay, as well as some of the logistics that go into cleaning up after a blast. After each blast, there is a 48 hour window in which crews have to clear the debris from the site. A crane that was needed to remove this debris was unavailable due to equipment issues, which pushed the work back.

Qualls further states that there are three different demolition dates due to the size of the bridge, it cannot be safely taken out all at once. A different section of the bridge will be taken out with each blast. The first blast is bringing down the entire truss section, basically everything above the bridge deck. The bridge deck itself is being manually removed. The remaining two blasts will bring down the bridge piers.

Drivers who regularly utilize the new bridge should expect some delays both before and after each blast. The new bridge will be closed to all traffic starting at 8:00 each blast morning. Qualls estimates that there will be a hour to a hour and a half wait after each blast before the bridge is reopened. KDOT will give the all clear as soon as everything is safe for both drivers and pedestrians. She suggests that drivers utilize a different route that day just in case something unforeseen occurs.

There are a lot of different factors that go into planning a demolition of this size. Some factors that have to be considered include the bridge location in relation to metropolitan areas, its proximity to the new bridge, and weather conditions.

The first blast is tentatively set for this coming Monday morning at 9:00

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