

NEWS RELEASE

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

George N. Campbell, Commissioner

For Immediate Release

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Contacts: Bill Boynton
Public Information Office
(603) 271-6495
Mark Richardson
Bridge Design Bureau
(603) 271-2731

**VILAS BRIDGE CONNECTING WALPOLE, NH AND BELLOWS FALLS, VT
OVER THE CONNECTICUT RIVER IS CLOSED TO ALL TRAFFIC**

A bridge connecting Walpole, New Hampshire and Bellows Falls, Vermont has been closed indefinitely to all vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

The Vilas Bridge, which carries Bridge Street over the Connecticut River, was closed late this morning by the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) to ensure the safety of the traveling public. The closure follows a semi-annual inspection that found continued deterioration of the reinforced concrete bridge deck.

Built in 1930, the Vilas Bridge is a three-span open spandrel reinforced concrete arch and is considered historic. It has been on the State's Red List for over 20 years and is currently #18 on the NHDOT's bridge priority list. It had been posted with a 10-ton limit.

On average, 4,600 vehicles cross the 635-foot long bridge daily. A detour will allow motorists and pedestrians to use the Church Street Bridge, which is located less than a mile upstream from the Vilas Bridge.

The Vilas Bridge is scheduled for rehabilitation in 2015 in New Hampshire's Ten Year Transportation Plan. Studies and reviews this spring will determine whether a full bridge replacement is needed, and whether the construction project can be done earlier. The bridge is jointly owned by New Hampshire and Vermont.

- XX -