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96th Street Bridge Closure

Stone Harbor Boulevard (CR657) Bridge over Great Channel, locally referred to as the 96th Street Bridge, is closed to all traffic due to a large crack discovered in one of the main span girders. The bridge is also closed for any opening required by marine vessels. There is no time frame as to when the bridge will be reopened to traffic, however we are working on reopening the bridge as quickly as possible.

Motorists are advised to use either North Wildwood Boulevard (NJ Route 147)/Ocean Drive (County Road No. 619) or preferably Avalon Boulevard (County Road No. 601)/Ocean Drive (County Road No. 619) as alternate routes. Due to the weight restriction of the Ocean Drive Bridge over Grassy Sound, **all trucks are to use Avalon Boulevard/Ocean Drive as their alternate route.**

The main span of the bridge consist of two movable leaves that open to allow for the passage of marine vessels. The bridge opens through the use of motors by pivoting about a bearing. The vertical crack in the girder occurred near this pivoting point.

The crack was discovered by a County crew performing electrical maintenance on the main span on Friday, October 28, 2016. Bridge engineers and inspectors from Michael Baker International, Inc. (Baker) of Hamilton, NJ were called to the bridge to investigate the crack and to develop a repair scheme to reopen the bridge to traffic.

Baker is currently working under contract with NJ Department of Transportation on the biennial inspections of county-owned bridge in Cape May County. Just last week, the Baker team was performing electrical, mechanical and safety inspections of the 96th Street Bridge. However at that time there was no signs of a crack in the girder.

The 96th Street Bridge was originally constructed in 1930. The main span, called "Rall Type Bascule" is one of what is believed to be only six (6) of its kind constructed in the United States. As a result of this type of construction, the movable span is deemed to be of historical significance. In 1983-85, the approach spans of the bridge were replaced and the components of the main span were reconstructed. The County repainted the main span and had structural repairs made to the bridge in 1998. Some of the mechanical components of the main span were replaced in 1999.