

Highway 24 Rehab

Your tax dollars at work

By Cathy Tyson and Lee Borrowman

Strange plants have started cropping up in the vicinity of Highway 24 and are already spreading to local streets as well. They are generically called "Ramp Closed" and "Detour."

Caltrans has begun the huge rehabilitation project of Highway 24 from the Caldecott tunnel to the western edge of Walnut Creek. This \$41.5 million dollar project, funded by the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) is expected to be completed in mid 2009. Work on the fourth bore of the tunnel will start upon completion of this project. Not only did this section badly need improvement, but this work will extend the life of the freeway for all 160,000 daily motorists for the next 20 years. At the moment, they are working on the Fish Ranch and Gateway area.

When complete, the highway will have approximately 3 inches of new asphalt on the 8 miles of roadway, rehabilitated lanes, shoulders, on and off ramps, guardrails, and improved drainage.

Orinda and Lafayette residents living near the freeway should be aware that it's going to be noisy. They're grinding concrete out there, and that's loud work. Caltrans will keep work and heavy equipment to one mile of roadway to "localize" noise. Some one-mile stretches are not heavily populated, but if that one mile of roadway is in your backyard it's going to be a bumpy ride.

Caltrans spokesman John Cunliffe says, "Residents can check our website after 4:00 on Friday afternoon to find out which stretches will be worked on during the coming week."

http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/24_rehab/. However, a quick check last Saturday morning revealed no current information. Noisy work will not happen nightly, but when it does occur it may continue on consecutive nights. Cunliffe hopes residents will consider the noise "a short term effect, and take whatever mitigation measures they feel are

necessary." Moving in with the grandparents over in Ross-moor for a couple of days, perhaps?

Drivers should note that most of the work, including ramp and lane closures, will be done on weeknights from 9:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. but will be flexible depending on type of "work, location and weather. Caltrans expects "little or no delay" for morning commuters.

Signs will be posted 72 hours in advance of a ramp closure, and traffic will be re-routed to the next most convenient on/off-ramp. Detour signs, already up in Orinda, will direct traffic along surface streets.

Questions or comments can be submitted to Caltrans using a web form: http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/24_rehab/24rehabcontact.htm or you can call them at (925) 957-2001. A recorded message directs you to the website but also offers the opportunity to leave a question of comment and a call-back number.



Eastbound Gateway off-ramp; hmmm...

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