

Construction crews starting to make up ground after shutdown



(WCAX)

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Summer construction is picking back up after months of no work. The Vermont Agency of Transportation had to shut down their construction projects on March 25 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but now they are back working again and beginning to make up some ground.

They were allowed to have five-person crews working the first week of May and increased to 10-person crews a few weeks later.

Now, they are back operating at full speed. And with easing restrictions, VTrans say they are able to catch up on weeks they missed.

Construction season in Vermont officially begins April 15, so according to Douglas Bonneau, a construction engineer with VTrans, there weren't major delays. And since more people are working from home, there have been fewer cars on the road.



"We have noticed a reduced traffic volume and it's starting to pick up now as we get further into the summer, and it will likely pick up more as restrictions lift, but it has been beneficial in some regards," said Bonneau.

But Bonneau says there were some setbacks. Projects that haven't already started are being extended a season, so they can be completed without the pressure of coronavirus.

Bonneau added that with the short construction season, it was all about getting caught up quickly as well as adjusting to new worksite guidelines.

"I think we are back to a pretty steady state now with our projects and it's just about new protocols with wearing facemasks and being aware to not share tools and not gather in common areas for lunch and that kind of thing," said Bonneau.

He says following state guidelines during the pandemic is up to the contractors on-site at each project. He says the Association of General Contractors of Vermont provided training, including training on social distancing, sanitation, and wearing masks to keep employees safe.