

COVID-19 pandemic lessens traffic, increases opportunity for road projects

Submitted: 04/21/2020



Zack White
Reporter
zwhite@wjfw.com

- Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, fewer people are driving on Wisconsin roads, which may prove beneficial to construction and maintenance projects.

According to a graphic by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT), traffic volume has decreased by nearly 45% since the beginning of March.

DOT officials said those empty roadways could make construction and maintenance projects finish up faster by allowing more lanes to be closed at one time on major roadways, and having all-around safer conditions for workers.

Wisconsin DOT Communications Manager Mark Kantola said even though traffic has decreased people still need to be careful.

"This presents a good opportunity to begin projects or conduct project tasks because it's safer for the workers and they're less of an impact to the public," said Kantola.

In higher volume traffic areas, maintenance usually takes place in the middle of the night when roads are less crowded, but now Kantola said crew work hours can be modified.

"Now with decreased traffic, we are looking at opportunities to close lanes during the day time and modify worker hours so they can work during the day time as well," said Kantola.