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District: Los Angeles/Ventura

Contact: Judy Gish

Phone: (213) 897-3487

I-5 TRUCK TUNNEL TO OPEN SEVERAL DAYS EARLY

SACRAMENTO – Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today announced the re-opening of the southbound Golden State Freeway (I-5) Newhall Pass truck lanes tunnel on Thursday, November 15, 15 days before the earliest projected opening date.

“Keeping people and goods moving across our state is vital to our economy, so I am proud to announce the early opening of this tunnel for the thousands of motorists who depend on I-5,” said Governor Schwarzenegger. “I want to thank motorists for their patience during this emergency. I commend Caltrans Director Will Kempton and his entire team for working around-the-clock to get this project completed ahead of time.”

A contract for the repair work was awarded to Security Paving of Oxnard on October 29 and the company has been working around the clock since then. The tunnel has been closed since October 12, when a 31-vehicle pile-up ignited a devastating fire inside it, closing I-5 in both directions.

The contract included an incentive/disincentive clause to encourage early completion. The contractor will earn a \$2.9 million bonus for completing the \$11 million project by or before November 15. As a disincentive, failure to complete the contract in a 33-day period would have caused the contractor to owe the State \$150,000 per day for each day of uncompleted work over 33 days plus liquidated damages.

The emergency repair project involved slab replacement, concrete barrier and metal beam guardrail repair, drainage and landscaping. Structure work included partial ceiling replacement/repair and repair of abutment walls, including new rebar (reinforced metal bar) support.

While tunnel repair work was underway, motorists were sharing southbound I-5 in this area with commercial vehicles, causing additional congestion during commute hours.

