



# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## I-5 ACCIDENT CLOSURE UPDATE

**LOS ANGELES** – Emergency crews working through the night cleared the Newhall Pass tunnel this morning of wreckage and debris caused by a 29-vehicle pile-up on the southbound Golden State Freeway (I-5) truck bypass and subsequent tunnel fire that occurred Friday night.

I-5 remains closed on the northbound side at SR-14 and southbound at Calgrove Boulevard.

Three fatalities have been confirmed, and 10 injured were taken to local hospitals, eight with slight injuries and two with moderate.

“Caltrans would like to extend our sincere condolences to the families of the victims,” said Doug Failing, District Director. “We have families as well and drive these same roads, so we feel the loss.”

Inspectors found heavy damage to the tunnel walls under the north portal, he continued. “There was a lot of spalling (concrete failure at high temperatures) and exposed rebar (reinforced steel bars), both of which can cause a loss of vertical support.” The tunnel roof, or bridge, is sound, he added.

The tunnel is a 550 ft- long reinforced concrete boxed girder, built in 1975. It was last inspected in April 2007, and no problems were found at that time.

Currently, contractor CC Myers is on site with materials and workers to perform any needed repairs. Emergency funding for the repairs has been authorized.

“Yesterday, Caltrans Director Will Kempton promised that southbound I-5 would be open by Tuesday and crews are working 24/7 to make that happen,” Failing said. Northbound I-5 is expected to open about 24 hours after the southbound lanes, he





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added. The southbound I-5 truck lanes will remain closed for approximately a month and all traffic will be diverted onto the auto lanes.

Kempton said that Governor Schwarzenegger is closely monitoring the situation to ensure that all the necessary resources are available.

I-5 Detours at the Newhall Pass area are as follows:

## **Northbound Detour:**

For those proceeding to northern California on I-5, transition to northbound SR-14; proceed to westbound SR-138 (Avenue D). This will connect back to northbound I-5.

## **Southbound Detour:**

From southbound I-5, exit at Calgrove Boulevard; continue south on Calgrove Boulevard to The Old Road, which becomes San Fernando Road; continue on San Fernando Road to Sepulveda Boulevard; continue south on Sepulveda Boulevard to the southbound I-5 on-ramp at Roxford Street.

Updates will be provided as they become available.

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