



## Kentucky Transportation Cabinet • District 1

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### **UPDATE: U.S. 51 Cairo Bridge Between Wickliffe and Cairo to Remain Closed as Repair Plan is Developed**

No reopening timeline available

**PADUCAH, Ky. (July 7, 2026)** – The U.S. 51 Ohio River “Cairo” Bridge connecting Wickliffe, Ky., and Cairo, Ill., remains closed until further notice.

For public safety, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) District 1 closed the bridge Monday, July 6, conducted a special inspection and identified a problem with a bearing pad on the Kentucky approach.

A bearing pad shifted out of place, causing the bridge deck to become misaligned by approximately two to three inches at an expansion joint. A repair is needed.

Bearing pads function like cartilage between joints, supporting steel beams while accommodating the bridge’s natural expansion and contraction.

There are no concerns about the bridge’s overall structural integrity.

The repair will require crews to lift a heavy section of the bridge deck to replace the bearing pad. State engineers are working with the contractor and design team to finalize a repair plan as quickly as possible.

The cabinet’s top priority is ensuring the bridge is safe before reopening it to the traveling public.

There is currently no estimated timeline for reopening the bridge. KYTC District 1 will provide updates as more information becomes available.

Motorists should continue to use alternate routes and expect the bridge to remain closed until the necessary repairs have been completed.

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