



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Planning to cross the Mackinac Bridge on Labor Day? Plan ahead

August 31, 2017 -- Tens of thousands are expected to walk the Mighty Mac this Labor Day, but if your plans require you to cross the bridge on Monday, there's still time to plan for the bridge closure that will occur during this year's annual bridge walk.

Based on safety and security recommendations from the Michigan State Police (MSP) and U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the bridge will be closed to all public vehicle traffic from 6:30 a.m. to noon during the walk. For those looking to cross the bridge that day, travelers should be aware that if they arrive in the Straits area during the walk they'll need to wait until after noon to proceed. Northbound I-75 will be closed at Exit 337, and southbound I-75 and US-2 will be closed at Exit 344.

Travelers should also expect that access to I-75 north of Gaylord may be restricted during the bridge closure in order to limit the number of motorists stranded on the freeway. MSP troopers will be deployed throughout the region to monitor traffic conditions and reroute traffic if conditions warrant.

"It should be expected that traffic flow in northern Michigan will be impacted to some degree due to the morning's bridge closure," stated Capt. John Halpin, MSP Eighth District commander. "Our best advice for motorists planning to travel these impacted roads is to travel prior to 6:30 a.m. on Labor Day or to delay travel until the afternoon."

"Our hope is that the majority of travelers are fully aware of the planned closure, and will modify their plans so they don't find themselves unexpectedly stopped in traffic during the bridge

walk," said Mackinac Bridge Authority (MBA) Executive Secretary Bob Sweeney. "For those who are delayed, we have plans in place to mitigate travelers' inconvenience."

Portable bathrooms will be placed along US-2 for several miles west of the bridge, water and snack stations will be located on US-2 and I-75 north and south of the bridge, and two MBA mechanics will patrol on both sides of the bridge to assist motorists with vehicle problems.

Typically, about 9,500 vehicles would cross the bridge the morning of Labor Day, and MBA staff believe that at least half of those vehicles were shuttling friends and family across the bridge to participate in the walk.

Every year, between 30,000 and 60,000 people from several states and countries come to the Mackinac Bridge for the Annual Bridge Walk, which has taken place since 1958, the year after the bridge opened to traffic. The event will begin at 6:40 a.m. with the start of the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness Jog, followed by a greeting from Gov. Rick Snyder at 6:55 a.m. Walkers will begin across the bridge at 7 a.m.

For more information on the Annual Bridge Walk, visit www.mackinacbridge.org/annual-bridge-walk/.

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