Brief Mackinac Bridge closures early Wednesday morning for equipment move

June 26, 2018 -- Two brief closures of the Mackinac Bridge are scheduled for Wednesday morning so painting contractors can remove two large movable scaffold platforms from the north tower.

The two platforms, which were used to help crews safely reach and contain paint removed from the struts - the horizontal sections linking the bridge legs - will be removed separately. The first 30-minute closure to remove one platform is tentatively scheduled for 5 a.m., with the second 30-minute closure at 6:15 a.m. The closure schedule was selected to minimize the effect on traffic and is weather-dependent.

The equipment change is part of a two-season, $6.3 million project by contractor Seaway Painting to repaint the bridge's north tower. The project marks the first time in the bridge's 60-year history of one of the iconic ivory towers being stripped down to bare metal and repainted.

In 2017, Seaway worked on stripping and painting within the bridge's interior "cells," as well as the tower legs beneath the roadway. The project is required to be completed by Dec. 31. The new paint, which is zinc-based, is expected to last at least 35 years with periodic maintenance.

As painting continues, the outside two lanes of the bridge near the north tower will be closed to stage equipment. Closures on the northbound lanes will be lifted on Fridays and on southbound lanes on Sundays during peak traffic weekends. Lane closures also will be removed as needed for other high-traffic volume times, such as holidays.
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