



How VDOT inspects bridges

Video: *“Snooper truck” on Coleman Bridge, Route 17 over York River*

Audio, male narrator: The Virginia Department of Transportation’s bridge inspection process is precisely planned and rigidly scheduled.

Video: *Bridge inspectors in snooper truck basket, bridge inspectors on Phoenix Bridge in Botetourt County, shot of large culvert*

Audio: Going well beyond federal inspection requirements, VDOT’s 100 full-time, highly trained and qualified bridge inspectors, plus qualified consultant inspectors, keep a close eye on over 20,000 bridges and large culverts.

Video: *Tight shot of inspectors examining structure of bridge*

Audio: These inspections are done up close, where the technicians and engineers can actually touch the structure.

Video: *Bridge inspectors on Route 666 bridge over Elk Creek in Bedford County*

Audio: Working in teams, they check all steel, concrete and wooden timbers for cracks, excessive corrosion and deterioration.

Video: *Inspectors making measurements under Route 522 bridge over south fork of the Shenandoah River*

Audio: Measurements are taken to ensure that each beam and each component is exactly where it’s supposed to be and that no dangerous shifting or warping has taken place.

Video: *Snooper truck under bridge, inspectors working from buckets with sensors*

Audio: Some bridge components require more extensive testing and the highest technology available is used. Devices, such as ultrasonic sensors, are used to peer deep into the steel or concrete to check for hidden flaws.

Video: *Underwater shots of bridge footings*

Audio: Parts of a bridge that are underwater are inspected as well by qualified bridge inspectors who are also trained divers.

Video: *Anwar Ahmad, assistant state structure and bridge engineer*

Audio, Ahmad: “Our inspectors are well-trained and qualified to detect problems. That’s their job. If they encounter unsafe conditions in the field, they are trained to take appropriate action; and that action varies from contacting the responsible manager to coordinate traffic control and address the problem and program the needed repairs to, perhaps, closing the bridge on the spot.

Video: *Snooper truck arm under bridge, inspectors inside bucket*

Audio, Ahmad: “They know what to look for. They know how to look for problems and detect these problems before they become catastrophic.”