FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE                                                                                     BRISTOL - 54
CONTACTS: Brenda Waters, VDOT Public Affairs                                                                 5-16-2008
                                          (276) 669-9999                                           
Michelle Earl, VDOT Public Affairs                                                                         (276) 669-9901
                                          
VDOT BRISTOL’S HIGHWAY SAFETY CHALLENGE TRAFFIC ALERT:                                                       May 19 - 25, 2008
BRISTOL, Va. – Virginia’s highway safety partnership — VDOT, the Department of Motor Vehicles, State Police and Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control — challenges drivers to help prevent highway fatalities.

- Buckle up
- Avoid distractions
- Share the road
- Drive drug and alcohol free
- Obey speed limits

For more information on the Virginia’s Highway Safety Challenge, visit www.safeVAhighways.org.

In an effort to keep motorists informed, VDOT provides weekly information about highway construction and maintenance projects in southwestern Virginia. When traveling through highway work zones, use caution and be alert to changes in traffic patterns and slow-moving or stopped traffic. **Motorists face a maximum fine of $500 for speeding in highway work zones.** Law enforcement officers monitor highway work zones throughout the region.

**Underlined entries with asterisks (*** ) indicate the listing is new or the status of the project has changed since last week’s traffic alert.**

INTERSTATE MAINTENANCE PROJECTS
**Overhead signs replacement project on I-81 and I-77 in Wythe County:** Be alert to lane closures due to the replacement of overhead signs at various locations on northbound I-77 between Mileposts 29 and 32 and north and southbound I-81 between Mileposts 72 and 76. (Completion: December 1, 2008)
**I-77 Tunnels – rehabilitation project:** A rehabilitation project at I-77 East River Mountain and Big Walker Mountain tunnels is now underway. Lane closures are scheduled as follows for the week of May 19:

**Big Walker Mountain Tunnel:** The northbound lanes will be restricted to one lane from 7 a.m. Monday (May 19) until 6 p.m. Friday (May 23). There will be no lane closures over the weekend.

**East River Mountain Tunnel:** The southbound隧道 will be restricted to one lane from 7 a.m. Monday (May 19) until 6 p.m. Friday (May 23). There will be no lane closures over the weekend.

Wide loads over 12-feet wide must use Route 19 or Route 460 as the detour during lane closures at the tunnels. For local motorists, VDOT recommends motorists travel through the tunnels during the morning hours, when traffic flow is at its lightest to avoid congestion. (Completion: fall 2008)

**Interstate 81 maintenance activities:** The week of May 19, be alert to a lane closures due to bridge deck patching northbound near Exit 45 in Smyth County.

**Interstate 77 maintenance activities:** No lane closures due to maintenance activities scheduled the week of May 19.

**PRIMARY HIGHWAYS AND HIGH TRAFFIC SECONDARY ROADS:**

**Regional**

**Pavement Markings - mobile, rolling work zones:** Motorists should be alert to a caravan of slow-moving trucks applying pavement markings on highways at various locations in Washington County and the Stoney Fork area of Wythe County.

**Bridge repairs – various locations:** In the coming weeks, be alert to the possibility of lane closures at the following locations due to bridge repairs:

- Route 80 – Dickenson County
- Route 607 – Dickenson County
- Route 19 – Russell County
- Route 82 – Russell County
- Route 23 – Scott County
- Route 619 – Scott County
- Route 768 – Wise County

**Buchanan County**

**Route 645:** A section of Route 645 in the Big Rock area of Buchanan County is closed until May to allow workers to improve a curve on the route and perform slide repairs. The closure is located between Route 650 and the intersection of Route 643. (Completion: December 2008)
Route 460 bridge repair at Weller Yard: Concrete barriers have been installed on the Route 460 bridge at Weller Yard restricting the single travel lane width to 10-feet. Traffic signals are controlling one-lane traffic across the bridge while repairs are underway. The speed limit through the work zone is reduced to 35 mph. Be alert to flaggers and the new traffic signal. (Completion: May 2008)

Route 460 Grundy: West and eastbound Route 460 traffic in the Town of Grundy has been moved from Riverside Drive to the newly constructed portion of Route 460 to allow for the removal of Riverside Drive. A temporary traffic signal has been added at the intersection of Route 83 and the traffic signal adjacent to the movie theater and redevelopment site has been removed.

Use caution in this area and be alert to the possibility flaggers directing traffic in the area. The posted speed limit is 25 mph in the work zone. Motorists should use caution and pay close attention to signs directing traffic through the work zone. (Completion: summer 2009)

Shuttle Service during Route 460 relocation project in downtown Grundy: A complimentary downtown Grundy shuttle service continues to be offered during the Route 460 relocation project. The service operates from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 7:30 a.m. until 6:30 p.m. Fridays.

There are three temporary parking lots for the shuttle service: the parking garage at the movie theatre, Grundy Church of Christ and the town’s redevelopment site. The shuttle will stop at each lot and at the corner of Walnut and Main Streets every 15-20 minutes. Two temporary shelters for shuttle patrons to use during inclement weather are located adjacent to the Grundy Church of Christ and near the redevelopment site.

Lee County
Routes 654, 619, 421 and 58 – bridge repairs: In the coming weeks, be alert to the possibility of lane closures at the following locations due to bridge repairs:
- Route 654 at Hurricane Bridge.
- Route 619 bridge near the intersection of Old Woodway Road over the Powell River.
- Route 421 bridge at Woodway.
- Route 58 bridge over CSX Railroad near Lee County Regional Medical Center.
(Completion: June 2008)

Grayson County
Route 58 – underground utility work: Due to the installation of fiber optic cable, be alert to shoulder closures along Route 58 in Grayson County between Galax and Route 274. Use caution in this area and obey work zone signs. (Completion: December 2008)

Route 16 – bridge project: Traffic signals are currently controlling one-lane traffic due to repairs to the Route 16 bridge over Fox Creek in Grayson County. The project is just south of Route 876. (Completion: June 2008)
**Russell County**

**Route 636- Kent’s Ridge Road:** Due to a roadway widening project, a section of Route 636 – Kent’s Ridge Road will be closed from 7 a.m. until 5 p.m. every Monday through Friday for approximately four months. The closure will be located from the Swords Creek Community Church to Route 711.  (Completion: late June 2008)

**Route 618:** A section of Route 618 in the Rabbit Ridge section of Russell County has been closed to allow Paramount Coal Company Virginia LLC to perform surface mine operations in the area. The 0.4-mile section begins about one-mile east of Route 600 and extends eastward. When the mining operations are complete, Paramount Coal Company Virginia LLC will rebuild the closed section of Route 618, eliminating steep grades and sharp curves along the existing section of Route 618.  (Completion: spring 2008)

**Russell County- Water Line Installation:** Work to install water lines in the following areas of Russell County will restrict traffic to one lane during daylight hours:
- Routes 640, 1070 and 1074 in the Castlewood Heights and Claremont subdivisions.  (Completion: fall 2008)
- Route 19 between Elk Garden School and the Poor Farm area, including the Ridgewood Subdivision. (Completion: early June 2008)

**Scott County**

***Route 613 – Big Moccasin:*** Route 613 - Big Moccasin will be closed Monday, May 19 from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. at the bridge located between Routes 688 and 891 to allow the contractor to install shoring for an on-going bridge project. The bridge is located 4.5 miles east of the intersection of Route 71.  In case of inclement weather an alternate date is scheduled for Tuesday, May 20th during the same hours. (Completion: May 19, 2008)

**Routes 619 and 65 – bridge repairs:** In the coming weeks, be alert to the possibility of lane closures due to bridge repairs on the Route 619 bridge over Stony Creek and the Route 65 bridge over CSX Railroad in Dungannon.  (Completion: June 2008)

**Route 671:** A bridge replacement project is underway on Route 671 in the Snowflake Community of Scott County. One-lane traffic is being controlled by signals.  (Completion: July 2008)

**Routes 58, 23 and 224 – Moccasin Gap Bypass:** Be alert to temporary lane closures along Routes 23, 58 and 224 due to road widening, drainage improvements and the construction of turn lanes in the Moccasin Gap Bypass work zone. Motorists are advised to use caution in this area. (Completion: July 2008)

**Tazewell County**

**Route 19/460 bridge project:** Due to replacement of the southbound Route 19/460 bridge near Pounding Mill Quarry, two-way traffic has been diverted to the northbound lanes. The Lake Street entrance to Route 19/460 is temporarily detoured onto Post Street due to the construction. Additionally, the entrance to Quarry Road will be temporarily detoured through the Miner's Oil entrance. There will be a 12-foot-width restriction in the work zone.  (Completion: June 2009)
**Washington County**

**Route 736**: Work to improve Route 736 in Washington County, near the Emory Gates just off Route 11, is underway. Be alert to the possibility of flaggers controlling one-lane traffic. (Completion: December 1, 2008)

**Route 58 bridge – Damascus**: The Route 58 bridge located over Laurel Creek is being reconstructed and is restricted to two, 10-foot-wide lanes. Use caution in this area and pay close attention to workers and machinery in the area. (Completion: September 2008)

**Wise County**

**Route 23 – acceleration lanes**: Work is underway to construct acceleration lanes on Route 23 north and southbound at the intersection of Route 610 at Powell Valley Mountain. Use caution in this area and pay close attention to workers in the area. (Completion: summer 2008)

**Route 1202 – bridge repair**: Weather permitting, a bridge repair project is scheduled to begin in May on the Route 1202 bridge located over Route 63 in the St. Paul area. Traffic will be restricted down to one 12-foot-wide lane and will be controlled by flaggers on a daily basis. The Route 1202 bridge will be restricted during daylight hours only. Use caution in the work zone and allow extra travel time. (Completion: late May 2008)

**Route 661**: Be alert to the possibility of lane closures on Route 661 in Wise County due to a spot widening project along the roadway. (Completion: May 2008)

**Business Route 23 bridge**: One-lane traffic is being controlled by signals due to the replacement of the deck of the Business Route 23 bridge located over L&N and Southern railroads just north of Route 68 in Appalachia. Additionally, the width restriction during construction is 16 feet. Use caution in this area. (Completion: late October 2008)

**Alternate Route 58 at Virginia City**: Due to replacement of the eastbound Alternate Route 58 bridge at Virginia City, traffic has been reduced to one lane in each direction and detoured to the westbound lanes of Alternate Route 58. Use caution in this area and pay close attention to signs directing traffic through the work zone. (Completion: May 2009)

**Town of Appalachia – bridge projects**: Be alert to detours and the possibility of delays due to two bridge projects near the old Appalachia Town Hall in Wise County. The bridges, which both cross Callahan Creek, are located on Routes 78 and 1308. The work will be accomplished one bridge at a time so traffic can be detoured onto the other bridge. Use caution in this area. (Completion: August 2008)

**Business Route 23 bridge**: Traffic signals are controlling vehicular and school bus traffic across the Business Route 23 Bridge at Kent Junction. Coal truck traffic is required to use a recently constructed coal haul road on private property, located adjacent to the bridge. (Completion: late June 2008)
**Route 83 in Pound:** Traffic signals are controlling one-lane traffic across the Route 83 bridge in Pound due to replacement of the bridge deck, replacement of the bridge railings and the addition of a sidewalk. The width limit across the bridge is 11-feet.

The stop sign on Route 83 was removed so traffic coming across the bridge onto Business Route 23 will no longer stop at the intersection. Instead, north and southbound traffic along Business Route 23 is being controlled by stop signs at the intersection of Route 83. This keeps traffic from blocking the intersection and keeps traffic flowing across the bridge. Use caution in this area and be alert to the new traffic signals and signs. (Completion: October 2008)

---

**Wythe County**

***Route 690 – Slate Spring Branch:** Be alert to no through traffic on Route 690 – Slate Branch Road in Wythe County on Tuesday, May 20 from 8:30 a.m. until 3 p.m. due to a pipe installation. While the restrictions are in place, motorists will use Route 602 – Cripple Creek Road, route 619 – Gleaves Road and Route 642 – Mule Hell Road to detour. (Completion: November 1, 2008)

**Route 625:** Due to bridge repairs, traffic crossing the Route 625 bridge located between Crockett and Route 11 in Wythe County is being controlled by temporary traffic signals. Traffic is restricted to one 10-foot-wide-lane. Use caution in this area. (Completion: June 1, 2008)

**Route 52 – underground utility work:** Be alert to shoulder closures and the possibility of one-lane traffic on Route 52 in Wythe County between Fort Chiswell and Route 619 due to a water main installation project for Wythe County. (Completion: winter 2008)

**Routes 636 & 619 – Austinville:** Be alert to the possibility of one-lane traffic and shoulder closures on Routes 636 and 619 in Austinville due to water line installation work in conjunction with the construction of a new water treatment plant. (Completion: July 2008)

**Route 100 bridge:** Reconstruction of the Route 100 bridge located near Wythe/Pulaski County line is underway. Use caution in this area and pay close attention to workers in the work zone. (Completion: May 2008)

(END)