



NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION **NEWS**

For Immediate Release:
March 19, 2025

Contact: Jim Barry
Steve Schapiro
609-963-1975

Route 71 Bridge over Shark River fender replacement project begins in Belmar, Monmouth County **Main channel horizontal under clearance to be reduced to 25 feet**

(Trenton) – New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) officials today announced the start of a project to replace the bridge fenders on the Route 71 Bridge over the Shark River in Belmar, Monmouth County.

Beginning at 6 a.m. Friday, March 21, the main navigational channel horizontal clearance under the Route 71 Bridge over the Shark River is scheduled **to be reduced temporarily from 50 feet to 25 feet** to replace the bridge fender system.

Crews and barges will be working in and around the bridge and the navigation channel Mondays through Saturdays from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. The \$18.2 million fender replacement project, which includes both the Route 35 Bridge over Manasquan River and the Route 71 Bridge over Shark River, is expected to be completed by summer. The majority of work on the Route 35 Bridge, which spans the Intracoastal Waterway, was completed during the winter.

The project will not impact traffic on the bridges and the Route 71 drawbridge will remain operational during construction. Vessels able to transit under the bridge with the reduced 25-foot horizontal clearance may do so at any time.

Work crews and barges will be able to clear the navigation span for vessels requiring the full 50 feet of horizontal clearance in accordance with US Coast Guard regulations. Mariners should consult the Local Notice to Mariners for detailed information regarding advance notice procedures. Mariners should adjust their transits accordingly and should use caution when transiting the area.

The new fender system on the Route 71 Bridge has been engineered to accommodate a planned replacement of the bridge, which is currently in the design phase. This new fender system will minimize impacts to mariners during the bridge replacement when that project is in construction.

For NJDOT news follow us on X (Twitter) [@NewJerseyDOT](https://twitter.com/NewJerseyDOT), the [NJDOT Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/NJDOT), or Instagram [@NewJersey.DOT](https://www.instagram.com/NewJersey.DOT).

#