

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Drivers, pedestrians should avoid 2nd Street between S.W. Van Buren Street and Kansas Avenue in Topeka

Out of an abundance of caution, the Kansas Department of Transportation and City of Topeka are recommending people avoid walking and driving on 2nd Street between S.W. Van Buren Street and Kansas Avenue until additional repairs to the concrete barrier (railing) of the Polk-Quincy Viaduct can be made. On Monday evening, June 13, the City of Topeka closed two sections of 2nd Street from S.W. Van Buren to S.W. Jackson and between S.W. Jackson and Kansas Avenue to both vehicle and pedestrian traffic. The cross streets will remain open.

Upon further inspection and review of the fallen barrier, KDOT staff's preliminary determination is the 60-foot concrete barrier which fell into a vacant parking lot in downtown on Saturday, June 11, was likely caused by deterioration of the steel that connects the concrete barrier to the viaduct deck. This deterioration combined with high temperatures caused the concrete barrier to break along an expansion joint of the viaduct.

While it appears another break in the concrete barrier is unlikely, because temperatures are forecasted to be above 95 degrees throughout the week, KDOT is recommending people avoid the area as an added precaution. The two sections on 2nd Street closed to traffic are located within 50 feet of the expansion joints on the viaduct above.

This is a temporary closure until work can be completed on the viaduct to prevent additional breakages.

It's important to note that concern is with the concrete barrier and not the structure of the I-70 Polk-Quincy Viaduct, which remains open to traffic. KDOT has placed dump trucks on the closed outside lane as a temporary barrier until repairs can be made.

"The safety of drivers and pedestrians is our top priority," said KDOT Secretary Julie Lorenz. "This additional precaution is to prevent injury to people walking or driving in the area if additional breakage of the barrier should occur, though it is unlikely."

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