



# NEWS

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## **HOLLYWOOD FREEWAY EXPERIENCES MINOR SETTLEMENT; NO CAUSE FOR CONCERN**

MTA and Caltrans officials announced today that concerns raised regarding settlement of the Hollywood Freeway are unwarranted.

The settlement, which averages less than one inch, poses no threat to the structural integrity of the freeway, the officials noted.

"I want to reassure commuters that the Hollywood Freeway is safe for travel," said Raymond Hinton, Caltrans Chief of Permits. "Since subway tunneling resumed this week in the Lankershim area, Caltrans inspectors are – and will be – on site seven days a week along with MTA's survey contractor to monitor the Lankershim undercrossing."

"Should any problem develop that would either compromise motorist safety or the structure itself, Caltrans and MTA will take immediate action to correct the situation. I want to stress, however, that Caltrans does not anticipate any problem developing on the mainline freeway from this tunneling operation."

The MTA's Interim CEO, Joe Drew said: "We've used a comprehensive grouting program to ensure the stability of the roadway, and we're quite confident we'll stay within the levels permitted for our work by Caltrans."

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The settlement occurred over the past five months as MTA tunneling contractors excavated two access shafts at its Universal City worksite. The average amount of settlement has been less than one inch, with the greatest amount approximately 3 inches. As both tunnels are complete in this area, no additional settlement is anticipated.

"Most of the settlement can be attributed to consolidation of the sedimentary soil as ground water was pumped out of the shafts," said Drew.

"Our surveys indicate the settlement lessens across the roadway to the north shoulder. Only about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch of settlement has been caused by tunneling under the freeway, so we're confident we'll stay under the  $3 \frac{1}{2}$  inches permitted level," said John Adams, the MTA's deputy executive officer for construction.

Settlement on the Lankershim Boulevard overpass has reached its permitted level of one inch, and the MTA has requested Caltrans to amend the permit to  $1 \frac{1}{2}$  inches.

"Caltrans engineers have agreed with us that this small increase poses no risk to the bridge," said Adams.

The MTA is digging two starter tunnels under the freeway to accommodate the tunnel boring machines, being assembled at the Universal City worksite. The machines will be moved through the starter tunnels and begin boring south through the Santa Monica Mountains to Hollywood beginning late next month.

"The soil under the freeway is quite different than the ground conditions in the mountains," said Adams. "We're encountering loose, sandy alluvium here, while most of the tunneling ahead will be through solid rock."

Work at the Universal City site began in July 1995. The tunnels to Hollywood are being built by Traylor Brothers at a contract price of \$126 million.

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