



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Contact: Paul Marshall
(404) 635-8017

NEW RAMP METERS ON I-285 EAST SIDE GO ON JULY 28

ATLANTA, Ga. – The Georgia Department of Transportation has installed 11 new meters on I-285 entrance ramps between Chamblee-Tucker Road (Exit 34) and Glenwood Road (Exit 44). The meters will begin operating during afternoon rush hour on Monday, July 28. The entire corridor should be operational by Friday, August 1. Fourteen additional corridors with 129 ramp meters will be phased in within the next year.

Ramp meters are turned on before rush hour, and operate at different times of day depending on traffic patterns. Every 3-5 seconds, a cycle from red to green allows one vehicle at a time to merge onto the freeway. On two-lane ramps, the left and right lanes have alternating lights, so the left lane goes while the right is stopped, and vice versa.

“Although motorists will spend a little extra time on the ramp, they should see a decrease in overall travel time,” Georgia DOT Operations Director Steve Henry said. “We’ll monitor these new ramp meters very carefully. If traffic starts to back up on the ramp, sensors will speed up the meters to allow more vehicles to move through. If our cameras show traffic spilling out onto the surface streets, we can turn them off completely.”

Thirty-four ramp meters currently operate in metro Atlanta: four on I-75 northbound between Midtown and Cumberland Mall, four on I-75/85 southbound, fifteen on I-285 on the north side of Atlanta, and 11 on I-85 in northeast Atlanta. They have reduced average rush-hour commute

times in these corridors by 10 to 22 percent. Other benefits include reductions in fuel consumption, merging accidents, and vehicle emissions.

“There will be a short learning curve period in the first few days as the public adjusts,” Georgia DOT Media Relations Manager Mark McKinnon said. “We realize that we may need to tweak specific meters. Please bear with us, and keep in mind that there is no one ‘silver bullet’ solution to eliminate congestion. Ramp meters are just one of several tools that can help fight it.”

Ramp meters have been used for over 20 years in more than 20 cities across the country. They are placed on entrance ramps to help control the flow of traffic from the surface streets onto the freeway. Without metering, vehicles push their way all at once onto the interstate in a disorderly and potentially dangerous manner. Once these vehicles reach the merge point, they force their way into the travel lanes, causing additional congestion due to stop-and-go merging activity on the freeway. When this happens on already traffic-heavy freeways, there is a total breakdown of free-flow near the on-ramps, which has a ripple effect on traffic for many miles. Even with no stalls or accidents, heavy on-ramp traffic causes congestion that both extends and continues throughout the rush-hour.

The ramps that will be operational during the week of July 28 are:

Chamblee-Tucker Road (northbound and southbound)

Lavista Road (northbound and southbound)

Northlake Parkway (northbound only)

Church Street / East Ponce de Leon Avenue (northbound and southbound)

Covington Highway (northbound and southbound)

Glenwood Road (northbound and southbound)

The Georgia DOT urges travelers to call 511 for updated information about this or any other construction project on interstates and state routes. Georgia 511 is a free phone service that provides real-time traffic and travel information statewide, such as traffic conditions, incidents, lane closures, and delays due to inclement weather. Callers also can transfer to operators to

request assistance or report incidents 24 hours a day, seven days a week. More information is available at www.511ga.org.

The Georgia Department of Transportation is committed to providing a safe, seamless and sustainable transportation system that supports Georgia's economy and is sensitive to both its citizens and its environment. For general information on the Georgia DOT, please visit our Web site (www.dot.ga.gov).

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