



5400 Auto Club Way, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55416-2576 * Phone (952) 927-2671 * Fax (952) 927-2559

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Dawn Duffy
AAA Minneapolis Public Relations
Office: (952) 927-2671
Cell: (952) 994-0350

**AAA OFFERS ALTERNATIVE ROUTINGS AROUND I-35W;
AUTO CLUB'S ONLINE MAPS INDICATE HIGHWAY CLOSURE**

MINNEAPOLIS (August 1, 2007) – The tragic I-35W bridge collapse over the Mississippi River near the University of Minnesota is expected to cause significant traffic congestion for motorists, heading both into and out of downtown Minneapolis, a back-up that will likely clog the entire west metro freeways system for weeks or months.

AAA Minneapolis, serving more than 190,000 members in Hennepin County, has announced the following suggested alternate routes for commuters and other motorists heading into downtown Minneapolis from the north, northeast, and northwest metro:

- Motorists from the **north** and **northeast** suburbs (Fridley, Columbia Heights, New Brighton, etc.) will face the greatest challenge getting to work. They are urged to take westbound I-694 to southbound I-94 into downtown Minneapolis.
- An alternate route for those in the **north** and **northeast** is to take I-35W southbound to SR 280, heading south to I-94 west into downtown and exiting on 5th Street.
- Other less-traveled alternate, non-freeway-style alternate routes from the **northeast** include Central Avenue to the 3rd Avenue bridge; or taking University Avenue or East River Road/Marshall Street across the Broadway Avenue bridge to Washington Avenue and then into downtown Minneapolis.
- If you are coming from the **northwest** suburbs (Maple Grove, Brooklyn Park, Brooklyn Center, etc.) take I-694 east to I-94 heading south into downtown and take the 4th Street or 7th Street exits.

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- Another route from the **northwest** would be I-494 east to I-394 east to the downtown Minneapolis exits.

“AAA Minneapolis advises that downtown Minneapolis-bound motorists begin their commute one to two hours earlier than normal and expect long delays,” said Dawn Duffy, AAA Minneapolis spokesperson. “If possible, please take public transportation (Metro Transit bus and light rail) to and from work, instead of driving personal vehicles.”

AAA Minneapolis is prepared to continue responding to general AAA member calls for emergency roadside assistance in all metro areas accessible to service vehicles.

The national AAA mapping database is updated to indicate closure of I-35W going into downtown Minneapolis near the U of M. AAA’s Internet mapping software, www.AAAmaps.com, is equipped to provide updated routings for AAA members that avoid the downtown Minneapolis area.

AAA Minneapolis (www.aaaminneapolis.com), in its 105th year, is a full-service automotive, travel, insurance and financial services organization serving more than 190,000 members in Hennepin County.

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