

# THE CONNECTOR

e-EDITION

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

FEBRUARY 2025



As we head into February, SCDOT crews are winding down from their winter weather response. In the last month, South Carolina experienced two major winter storms.

Winter Storm Cora kicked things off in the Upstate, delivering snow and ice to the Greenville and Spartanburg areas.

More than a week later, Winter Storm Enzo hit the Coastal region. Crews worked to treat the roads for ice in the Charleston area throughout the storm.

Crews worked diligently before and after both winter storms to ensure the traveling public and emergency workers could safely use the roads.



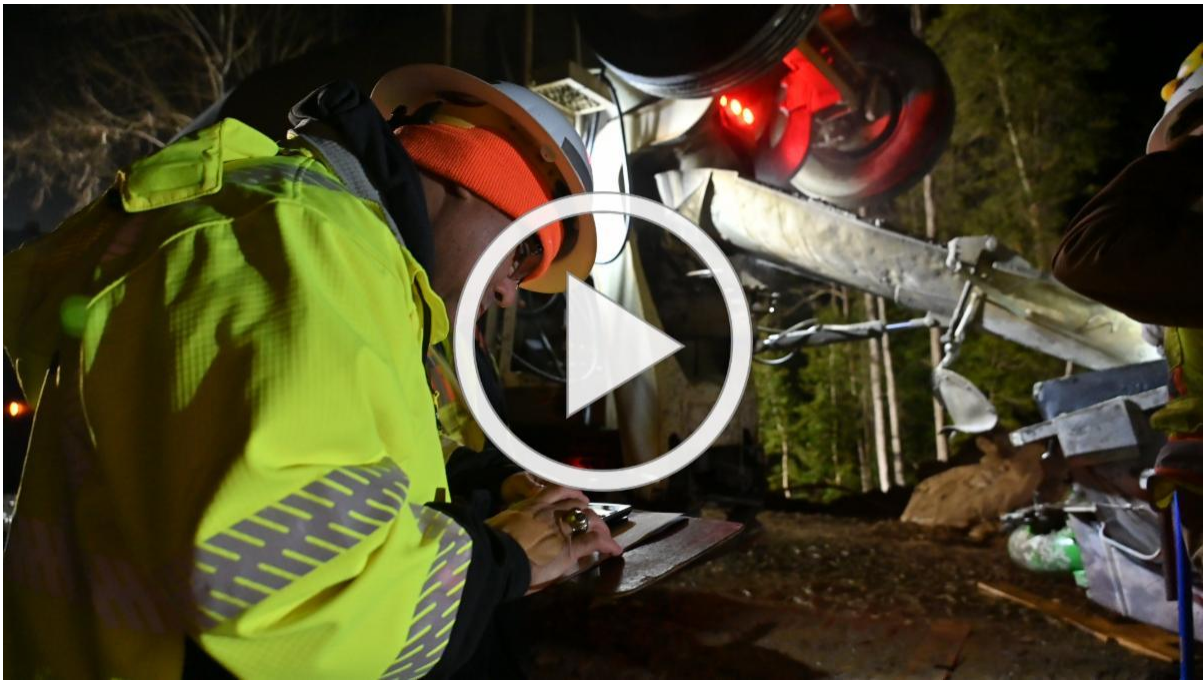
This month, Secretary of Transportation Justin Powell thanks our SCDOT team members who've worked through the state's recent weather events. Through our ongoing Hurricane Helene debris cleanup efforts and our winter storm operations during Cora and Enzo, our team here at SCDOT has repeatedly shown us why we are the best of the best.

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## **Wildwood Lane Bridge Sees Major Progress**

Construction crews have been working in Elgin to build a new bridge over Twenty-Five Mile Creek. The former bridge saw issues with flooding due to the occasional rising of the creek. The new structure will be raised, and additional safety features will be added to preserve the bridge's life for the next 75 years. Construction is anticipated to be complete by the fall of 2025.

The video below details the current construction phase and the remaining steps to finish the bridge.





# An Upstate Bridge Update

After Hurricane Helene ravaged many parts of the state last September, SCDOT prioritized several emergency repairs and replacements. One of which includes the US 76 bridge over the Chauga River in Oconee County. A washout from the storm damaged a portion of the deck, exposing the piles and causing a slope and roadway failure. Crews are onsite working daily, and the new bridge is expected to open to traffic later this year

**Helping His Hometown through Service**



Jesse Hames is a Special Projects Engineer for District 4 at SCDOT. Hames grew up in Gaffney, South Carolina, and now serves his community by building roads and bridges.

"I really enjoy it. I'm very blessed to be able to have this type of position in my hometown. I feel like it's unique. I take a lot of pride in it," Hames said.

With every road and bridge complete, Hames hopes to make his wife and two children proud.

Listen to Hames talk about the joy he finds in giving back to his hometown in the video below.



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## **Alligator Road Complete After Widening Project**



The Alligator Road widening project in Florence County is complete. With just a few punch-list items remaining, all travel lanes of the two-phase project are open to traffic.

Overall, the project widened Alligator Road (S-21-107) from its intersection with U.S. 301/52 to its termination with U.S. 76.

Roughly half of the nearly 7.5-mile project was widened from 2 to 3 lanes, while the other half was widened from 2 to 5. In addition, two bridges, totaling 385 feet in length, were reconstructed, and two signalized interchanges were upgraded to accommodate the widening.

The second and final phase of the project began in March 2021 and was completed in November 2024.

Alligator Road is located at the southern edge of Florence, SC, an area that has seen substantial population growth over the past several years.

The project's primary purpose was to improve the roadway's operational efficiency to accommodate existing and future traffic conditions. Its secondary purpose was to enhance local connectivity around the City of Florence.

Alligator Road is classified as a collector route, connecting multiple side streets and neighborhoods to and from two separate primary routes.

The project's completion puts a check mark on the sixth and final project of the Florence County Forward Project of 2007, which was the county's recent penny sales tax program.

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## **Sinkhole on Romney Street Sees Major Improvements**



# ROMNEY STREET UPDATE

## CHARLESTON, SC



AUG 2024



JAN 2025



On August 7, 2024, during Tropical Storm Debbie, a large sinkhole formed on Romney Street, just past the Interstate 26 off-ramp, between King Street and Meeting Street.

This severe weather event brought over one foot of rainfall to parts of Charleston County, leading to significant infrastructure damage.

Upon inspection, the Charleston County SCDOT team discovered collapsed drainage pipes at the site, causing roadway instability. In response, they launched an immediate, around-the-clock repair operation, utilizing rotating 24-hour crews to restore the roadway as quickly and safely as possible.

To complete the repair, the team deployed a range of specialized equipment, including:

- Multiple trucks, trailers, and excavators
- Vacuum trucks for debris removal
- Backhoes and a 210 Excavator for excavation
- Plastic pipes for drainage replacement
- Mortar and hydraulic concrete mix for structural integrity
- 20 tons of 57 stone and recycled soil for backfill
- Flowable fill to ensure long-term stability

This location has since been fully restored and operational for the traveling public.

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## Calhoun Crews Reopen Dirt Road After Flooding



Begonia Road in Calhoun County is now open to traffic again after SCDOT crews completed emergency repairs. Flooding in early November of 2024 caused a severe washout, making the roadway impassable.

After identifying the damage, an engineer and foreman with SCDOT's Calhoun County Maintenance Office assessed the site and determined that the road needed to be closed for public safety. A detour route was established, and advanced signage, barricades, and notifications were installed to alert motorists.

"Our goal is to build everything back the way it previously was or better so that it can be opened back for the traveling public," said Jennita Sumter-Jacobs, the Resident Maintenance Engineer of SCDOT in Calhoun County.

Begonia Road is one of the few unpaved roads SCDOT maintains.

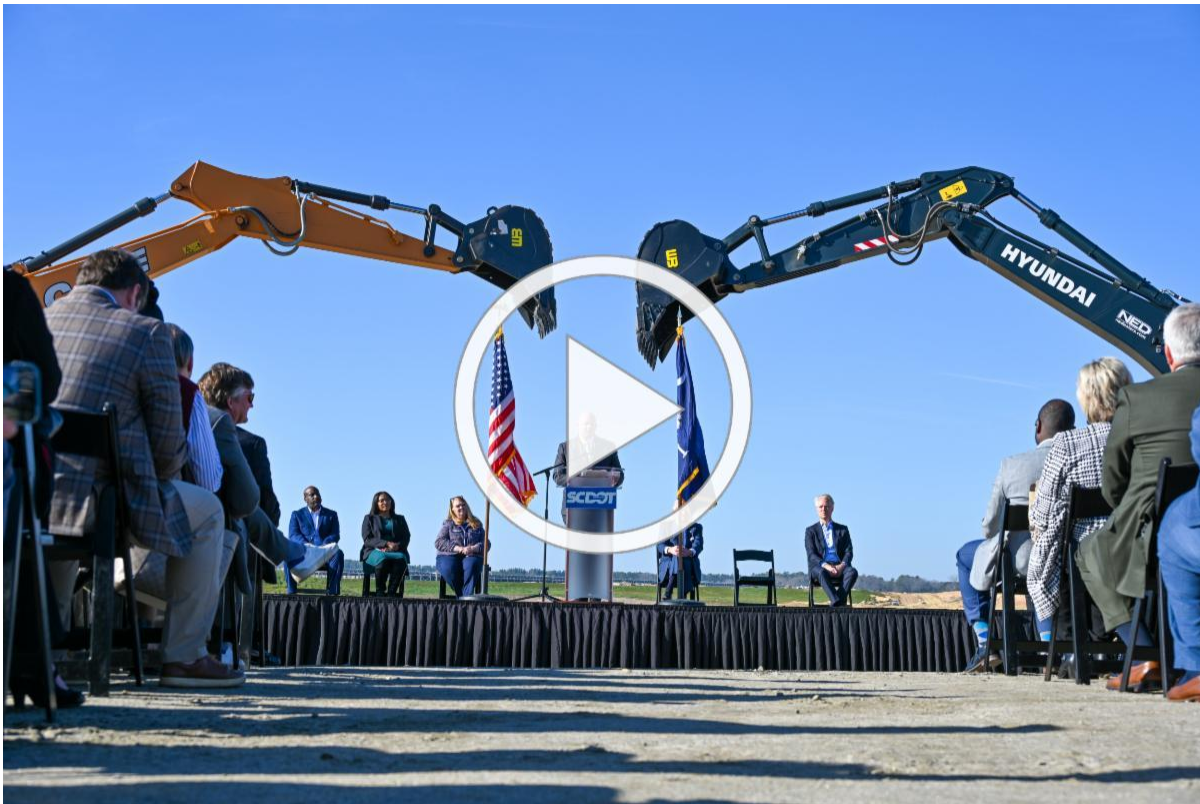
Jacobs says a lack of paving presents a unique challenge when performing repair work.

"For example, if a project consists of a road that is washed out, the roadway will be excavated, unfit material will be removed, and materials such as borrow [soil or sand]... will be placed in the area and compacted. If this project previously had pipe we will determine what size and type (CPP)... Then the ground will be stabilized."

SCDOT crews are continuing repair work and recovery efforts to get the communities in Orangeburg and Calhoun back on the road, whether paved or unpaved.

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## **SCDOT is Paving the Way for Scout Motors**



Take a look at this recap of the Scout Motors Drive Interchange groundbreaking ceremony led by the South Carolina Department of Transportation.

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## MEETING ST. (U.S. 52) IN CHARLESTON, SC



MARCH 26, 1951



JANUARY 17, 2025



## Safety Spotlight: Inspecting Equipment After Severe Weather



In the last several months, many parts of our state have been affected by inclement weather. Though recovery is prioritized during severe weather events, it is important to ensure that work zones are equipped with safe and operable equipment. Heavy rain, wind, and snow could potentially damage the machinery on construction sites. Inspect all of your equipment thoroughly before resuming every operation.



Employee Updates

February 2025

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**Pictured:** Alonzeo Drummings with SCDOT Aiken Maintenance testing the potency of a batch of brine.

[T.J. Johnson named Chairman of the South Carolina Department of Transportation Commission](#)

[SCDOT requests comments on projects in Oconee and Spartanburg counties](#)

[SCDOT to implement temporary lane closures on part of I-95 Southbound for traffic shift in Dillon County](#)

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