

TRANSPORTATION



Tolls, gas, and time: I-95 detours will cost commuters

PennDot’s suggested detour adds 11.6 miles each way — 23.2 miles roundtrip — to a commute that would’ve typically traveled straight on I-95, through the 4.4 mile that are closed.



Traffic is diverted from a collapsed section of I-95 in Philadelphia. (AP Photo/Matt Rouke) ... [Read more](#)

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by **Punya Bhasin**

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The collapse of an I-95 bridge in Northeast Philadelphia is going to cost commuters more than just convenience. It's going to cost them money — up to \$10 extra per day.

Lindsay Boysen, who commutes three times per week from her home in South Philly near Pat's King of Steaks to her job in Bensalem, said she drove an extra 20 miles total on June 12 just to get to and from work. Her commute, which normally takes about 35 minutes, took over an hour and a half.

A section of the highway shut down on June 11 due to a [truck fire and partial road collapse](#). I-95 is closed around the collapse site, and PennDot and SEPTA have [outlined detours and suggested routes](#) for those affected by the shutdown.

The closed section of I-95 going north is about 4.4 miles, and the closed section heading south is about 0.4 mile.

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PennDot's suggested detour adds 23.2 miles round trip to a commute that would have typically traveled straight on I-95, through the closed section. The extra miles add up for commuters in both time and money.

Additional gas costs: \$2 to \$5 per round trip

The average sedan gets 31.7 mpg. With the average cost of gas in Philly at \$3.656 per gallon, that means the increased cost for a sedan driving the detour round trip will be about \$2.68 per day, or \$13.40 per week if commuting five days.

For drivers of trucks, which get an average of 18 mpg, the increased cost to

drive the suggested detour will be \$4.71 for each round trip, or \$23.55 if commuting five days a week.

For commuters with hybrid vehicles, the costs are slightly less, with the average costs for the increased commute being \$2.42 extra per round trip for a hybrid SUV and \$1.88 extra for a hybrid sedan, or \$12.10 per week for a hybrid SUV and \$9.40 per week for hybrid sedan if commuting five days a week.

Additional toll costs: \$3 to \$5 per round trip

Drivers encountering toll booths as a result of the I-95 collapse will face more added costs. Tolls are collected as drivers exit New Jersey.

To cross the Ben Franklin, Walt Whitman, and Betsy Ross Bridges, the toll is \$5.

You can also use the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge or the Burlington-Bristol Bridge, which cost \$3 using an E-ZPass and \$4 if paying with cash.

Additional time: varies

While the exact amount of time that commuters will face will vary depending on the day, the time, the weather, and other drivers, it's safe to expect anywhere from an extra couple of minutes to an added hour.

Boysen said she thinks the commuting struggles and costs may have her and fellow commuters considering adjustments to their hybrid schedules, where she hopes to go from three days in the office to potentially only two.

“At the time when I made that decision, there was a freeway, and now that’s changed quite a bit,” Boysen said.

But Boysen said the financial costs aren’t the only costs on the line — there’s also an emotional cost.

“I mean, honestly, people already hate the traffic and this only adds to the emotional toll,” Boysen said. “You’re getting off work and you just want to get home, and now it just feels like a fight to get home and decompress.”

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