

DOT: Another major storm could swallow part of I-405 🇺🇸

10:49 PM PST on Tuesday, December 11, 2007

By TRAVIS PITTMAN / KING5.com



RENTON, Wash. – The large sinkhole along Interstate 405 left by last week's rainstorm is worse than first thought and will undergo emergency repair due to fear that a similar storm will lead to major damage and a potential shutdown of the freeway.

The work will force round-the-clock closures of at least one lane of the freeway.



WSDOT

This culvert underneath I-405 in Renton collapsed after last week's floods, creating a huge sinkhole 30 feet under the freeway.

The sinkhole was formed off the shoulder of southbound I-405 at Benson Road and Main Avenue S. It's 30-feet by 80-feet, and is 30 feet underground. The Washington State Department of Transportation says the culvert that carries Thunder Hills Creek under the freeway has failed, causing the sinkhole to form.

Crews poured 1000 cubic yards of rock into the hole to prevent more sliding, but the materials have since washed away. Now, the concern is that with the culvert failing, there will be no place for the water to go. If that happens, it could collapse the roadbed underneath the freeway.

Contractors will begin work Tuesday night to build a new system to divert the water. The right lane of northbound I-405 will be closed for 20 hours per day for up to two weeks, and round-the-clock closures will begin Saturday. WSDOT plans to keep all lanes open during the weekday morning commute.



SkyKING

WSDOT says without emergency repair to a sinkhole and nearby culvert, another major storm could cause part of I-405 in Renton, Wash. to be swallowed up.

"We know this will lead to congestion in Renton. There are only three lanes in the area," said Lisa Hodgson, WSDOT Project Engineer. "But if we don't have these pumps in place and we get another big storm, we could be forced to close I-405 entirely. And that simply isn't an option."

After the temporary fix is done, work will begin to replace the culvert.

Cost to repair the damage is estimated at \$5 million. The state will ask for federal assistance.