



Protecting people, bridges and roads™

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Chautauque Lake Bridge To Test De-Icing Product ***By GREGORY BACON***

Believe it or not, it may be safer driving west on I-86 when crossing Chautauque Lake than traveling east.

That's because the westbound bridge has been coated with a new ice prevention overlay system, that, if proven successful, may be used across the state.

Earlier this fall, the state Department of Transportation coated the bridge with a new surface called Cargill SafeLane – an epoxy overlay for roads and bridges that protects road surfaces and acts as an anti-icing agent.

It is licensed and marketed by Cargill Deicing Technology in Minneapolis, Minn. and was developed by Michigan Technological University.

According to company spokesman John Feld, the SafeLane Ice Prevention Overlay system combines the pavement sealing and renewal characteristics of epoxy overlays with a unique aggregate that stores and automatically releases anti-icing chemicals.

“The epoxy overlay adheres to small pieces of limestone,” he said during a telephone interview.

By doing this, SafeLane is meant to help prevent dangerous frost and ice formation before it begins, while sealing the roadbed to prevent damage caused by intrusion.

Feld noted with traditional anti-icing programs, de-icing chemicals must be applied at every frost. With SafeLane, the de-icer is applied before the snow falls to prevent frost and ice from ever forming. A single application will treat multiple frost or ice events.

The product has been tested for several years in Candon, Wis. Feld said there is a bridge in that area that averaged four accidents every winter until 2003 when the bridge was coated. “There's been none since then,” he said.

It's also been tested in Virginia, Cleveland and Indiana. Most of those tests have been either on bridges or on/off highway ramps.

Feld said it's unlikely whole roads will be covered with SafeLane because of the cost of the product. It costs \$9-12 a square foot compared to \$5-7 a square foot for other epoxy overlays.

Along with making the road safer, the product is also designed to be a protectant. The glue acts as a sealant, preserving bridges and concrete from harsh chemicals and moisture.

Susan Surdej, the public information officer for the Western New York DOT, said the preservation is the real reason they're trying it.