

media release

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Security systems increasing safety at Pocahontas 895

Pocahontas 895 is implementing a four-point plan to increase safety and security around the main line toll plaza and the adjacent operations and administration buildings.

The security plan includes:

- Security cameras
- Intercom connecting toll collectors and control room
- Building access controls
- Fire detection and security alarm systems

The security measure most likely to be noticed by Pocahontas 895 customers are the security cameras, said Bill Dale, Pocahontas 895 operations manager.

Six cameras have been mounted in toll booths. "Every booth has its own camera, which looks over the shoulder of the toll collector to see the driver of the car," Dale said.

Two cameras are positioned on poles on either side of the road to capture a wide view of the three eastbound booths and the three westbound booths.

Additional cameras have been installed in the access tunnel that toll collectors use to travel from the operations building to the westbound booths.

Still more cameras have been mounted for views of the parking area outside the administration and operations buildings, and at the loading docks where armored trucks come to collect cash deposits for transport to the bank.

In all, 18 cameras have been installed.

Images from the cameras display on a bank of new monitors in the operations building. The monitors have split-screen capability and can show 16 views at once.

The cameras are movable on their mounts, controlled by directional software and linked to discreet panic buttons installed in each booth. If a panic button is activated, all cameras will immediately turn toward the direction of the affected booth and begin recording images at different angles, Dale said.

Panic button signals will transmit to the operations supervisor and directly to an external security company. The supervisor can then use the new intercom system to communicate with the toll collector or just listen in.

“The cameras and panic buttons provide an additional level of safety and security to everyone in the tolling area – our customers and our staff,” Dale said.

The one-way listening option also can be used in a non-crisis situation, Dale said – for example, to monitor the kind of customer service being delivered by toll collectors.

Other security enhancements include upgraded building access technology. Access to the operations and administration buildings will be controlled through biometric thumbprints. Authorized Pocahontas 895 staff and vendors will have fingerprint readings on file to gain access; all others will be pre-screened before being allowed inside.

Finally, both buildings are being equipped with fire detection and security alarm systems. The systems will detect both heat and smoke, and then activate audible alarms.

A local firm provided and installed the security equipment, Dale said. The system is expected to be operational as soon as software is installed and tested.

