

## Report says bad roads cost Missouri drivers \$4.5 billion



[Lindsey Berning](#), Reporter

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. - According to a new report, bad roads cost Missouri drivers \$4.5 billion a year, and the average Jefferson City driver more than \$1,300 a year.

TRIP, a national transportation research group, looked at Missouri roads and found more than 20 percent of major local and state-maintained roads are in poor condition.

The report also said 66 percent of major roads in Jefferson City are poor to mediocre

condition. And if there is not an increase in funding, road conditions will only get worse.

"What it's really going to lead to is we're probably going to close some bridges," David Silverster, MoDOT Central District Engineer said. "And we actually have some bridges around the state that are closed right now. Will we close roads to go along with that? You know if the road falls into a disrepair state that we can't keep up with and it become an unsafe road, yes we'll probably close the road."

A lack of funding is nothing new to the Missouri Department of Transportation. Earlier this year, MoDOT announced its "325 system plan" that it will start in 2017 to deal with a large cut in funding. Under the plan, only 8,000 of Missouri's 34,000 miles of major roads will be maintained and kept in good condition.

Randy Allen with the Jefferson City Area Chamber of Commerce said bad roads are not only bad for your pocket, but bad for the city's economy as well.

"We always get a survey of site selection and business development companies that say what are the factors for locating in a particular area," Allen said. "And transportation infrastructure is always one two or three in those surveys. So it's really important, people look at it very strongly. And if your system is not doing well, they will not locate in your community."

The \$1,300 in cost to Jefferson City drivers comes from three main areas:

- nearly \$700 from extra vehicle operating costs like extra repairs, higher fuel consumption and tire wear,
- more than \$400 for lost time and fuel with growing traffic delays and
- more than \$200 for traffic crashes in which bad roads were a factor.

Thursday, the Missouri Senate is debating a bill that would increase the state gas tax by two cents, which would raise the tax to about 19 cents per gallon. But MoDOT officials said that would only be a temporary fix to the lack of funding.