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Cold Weather Construction? Not a problem!

The St. Paul Avenue Vertical Lift Bridge project continues through the cold weather. The work through December and January has included forming the west approach span for new concrete pavement and pouring structural concrete in the two piers in the river.

The contractor, Zenith Tech has started installing new lift bridge machinery in the piers. Portions of the lift span are anticipated to be delivered starting in mid-February and will be installed shortly after delivery.

Zenith Tech staff have faced extreme cold weather the past few weeks and the following questions were posed to find out how the workers keep going in the sub-zero temperatures.

What type of work is possible to do during the extreme cold weather and is there a point when the weather is too cold?

Most work can be accomplished in the cold. Placing concrete has some minimum temperature requirements, which in many cases may be met by heating the area sufficiently. There is a point when the weather is too cold and adversely affects production, and it is usually dictated by the ability for people and equipment to handle the elements.

What are some of the challenges and can they be overcome during the extreme cold?

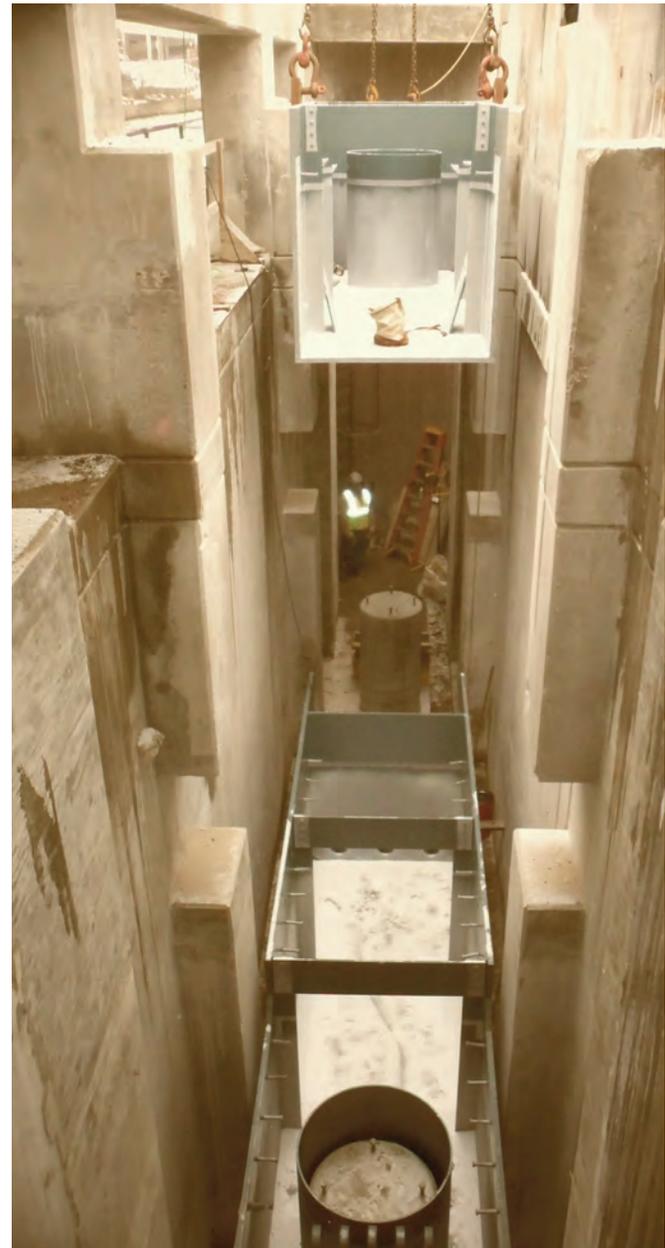
Challenges include dangerous footing due to slippery surfaces, frostbite and other exposure issues, and equipment not starting or running normally. Many of the challenges can be overcome with proper common sense procedures, such as wearing sufficient clothing.

What effect does the extreme cold weather have on the equipment and what type of precautions have to be taken?

Most construction equipment can operate in extreme cold weather, just as one's personal vehicle can operate. However, like one's personal vehicle, it might take a little additional time to get to full operating capacity. In addition, for this project, the contractor needs to deal with ice in the river and clear it out of the way to be able to move equipment.

Thanks to Peter Nilles, Project Engineer, TERRA Engineering, for supplying information for this update.

Construction Photo Gallery



Installing the counterweight box in Pier 2

(more photos on next page)



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Construction Photo Gallery



Clockwise, from top:

- *Equipment has been moved to the east side of the bridge*
- *West approach span decking in preparation for pouring concrete*
- *Structural steel on east approach span, near entrance arch to Historic Third Ward*
- *Bridge work continues in spite of the cold*
- *River walk detour signage*

