

May 27, 2009

Campus bustles with blue collars

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The construction and repair season at Purdue University has begun.

Each year the sound of bustling students is replaced with stone grinding, jackhammers and warning beeps as faculty and staff wonder how to cross the campus without taking a detour.

From now through August, some \$50 million to \$60 million worth of work will be done on the campus, Purdue's Physical Facilities office says. Overall, contractors and university employees will tackle around 90 projects, about the same amount as this time last year.

"From my perspective, it is a very ambitious workload this summer," said Lewie Wallace, Purdue construction superintendent. "We do over a third of our work (for the year) during the summer because the students are gone and we can get more done."

Typically, many projects begin the Monday after final commencement, which was May 17, and last until end of August. Fall semester classes will begin Aug. 24.

The majority of work is repair and rehabilitation, which includes anything from repairing roof leaks to updating electrical systems to meet current demands.

One R&R project this summer is partial replacement of the Purdue University Armory roof. It is expected to last until Aug. 3, project manager Tim Burke said.

Because some types of work can cause dust and odors to enter buildings, precautions are taken, such as adding charcoal filters to air intake systems, he said.

"We are proactive to let people know what we are doing on campus and when we are going to do it," Burke said.

A designated person in each building meets with project managers for repair updates and informs those working in the building of the progress.

Sammie Morris, head of Purdue Libraries' archives and special collections, said summer construction isn't typically a problem unless you are moving books or documents from buildings.

"Some days you wonder how to get around when the sideways are blocked off," she said.

Other projects scheduled on campus this summer are: waterproofing of the Agricultural Administration building's southeast wing plus repairs to asphalt paving and miscellaneous landscaping; adding plantings for Armstrong and Beering halls; repairing exterior masonry at Harrison and Meredith residence halls; and cleaning deteriorated brick and limestone outside Peirce Hall.

Three multiyear construction projects will be finished late this summer:

- Wayne T. and Mary T. Hockmeyer Hall, which will become the new structural biology building, will cost an estimated \$16 million when completed. Ground was broken on the project in October 2007.

- Work on the \$10 million Discovery Learning Center, one of 10 interdisciplinary research centers in Discovery Park, has been under way since 2006. Both it and Hockmeyer Hall were funded by private gifts.
- A new two-tower residence hall, First Street Towers, is scheduled to be completed in late summer at a cost of \$52 million.

In addition, work continues on the Mackey Arena sports complex renovation and addition, scheduled for completion in April 2011.

The \$99.5 million project is being financed with gifts, auxiliary parking revenue and anticipated future athletic department revenues.

Additional Facts

There's a map

For a map showing where repair and construction work is being done on campus go to <http://www.purdue.edu/architect/about/construction/map.htm>
