



The Eagle-Tribune

Friday, December 02, 2005

Online

Plus Edition

Sign In | Info

Home

News

- NH

- Haverhill

Sports

Opinion

Business

Lifestyle

Obituaries

Special Reports

Classifieds

Homes North

Help Wanted

Legal Notices

Lottery-MA

Lottery-NH

Maps

Movies

Phonebook

Stocks

TV

Weather

News

Route 213: New guardrails designed to prevent bad accidents



The state is installing new guardrails on Route 213 in Methuen. The guardrails are a new style designed to keep cars from crossing the median strip into oncoming traffic. Talking about the new guardrails are, from left, state Sen. Steven Baddour, Mayor Sharon Pollard, Mayor-elect William Manzi III, state police Troop A commander Maj. Kevin J. Kelly, Transportation Secretary John Cogliano and state Rep. Arthur Broadhurst.

[\(single page view\)](#)

[\(view as multiple pages\)](#)

By Chris Markuns

Staff Writer

METHUEN — Seven fatalities in 10 years qualified a 1.5-mile stretch of Route 213 for the unfortunate honor of being the first place in the state to receive a new style of guardrail designed to prevent severe median-crossover accidents.

"That's where I've gone to most of my fatalities," said fire Capt. Bill Barry. "I doubt there's a firefighter in Methuen who has 10 years on the job who hasn't been to a fatal on (Route 213)."

The cable-style barriers are designed like rubber bands. When struck, an out-of-control car can push the cables about 10 feet without breaking them. The cables then gently push the car back

Headlines

- ▶ Route 213: New guardrails designed to prevent bad accidents
- ▶ Town's top credit rating threatened
- ▶ Open invitation: Police warn about leaving cars unlocked
- ▶ N.C. inmate is 1,000th person executed in U.S. since 1977
- ▶ Two dead in apparent murder-suicide
- ▶ Mother of 4 needs extra help

[More headlines below ads...](#)



HOMES^{NORTH}

Kathy DeLorenzo
Participating Agent

More Headlines

- ▶ N.C. inmate set to become 1,000th person executed in U.S. since 1977
- ▶ World AIDS Day marked with education campaigns in Africa, marches worldwide
- ▶ Andover Calendar
- ▶ Town takes steps to cut rising energy costs
- ▶ CDC: Deadly bacterial illness appears to be spreading
- ▶ Garner and Affleck have baby girl
- ▶ Storied home was 'down to earth'

into the same lane in which it was traveling.

The federal government endorses them to the extent of picking up 80 percent of the \$400,000 cost, said state Transportation Secretary John Cogliano. The cable-style barriers are half the price of the standard steel ones.

"This is our first time using them (but after the tests conducted in other states), they were pleased with the results," Cogliano said. "It's something we're going to be using across the state."

Route 213 in Methuen was chosen as the first site because of the high number of accidents there, especially in the winter and particularly around the curve leading toward Route 495. Methuen police have responded to an average of 126 accidents on Route 213 each year from 2000 to 2005.

Maj. Kevin J. Kelly, commander of Troop A, said state police records show seven fatalities in 10 years, including one this year and two last year.

"(The new guardrails)" lessen the impact a person feels, but it also keeps them from going into ongoing traffic," Kelly said. "I think it's going to contain them into (their side of the) highway."

Methuen fire Capt. Mike Buote recalled a 2000 crash in which a westbound car rolled across the median near Exit 4, ejected its driver into oncoming traffic, and rolled over an oncoming vehicle in the eastbound lanes. The ejected driver was decapitated, and a Methuen man in the eastbound car was crushed to death.

It's that kind of memory that finally prompted the Methuen Fire Department to call state Sen. Steven A. Baddour last winter with a graphic complaint — "We're tired of picking up body parts," is how Baddour remembers it — and asked the Methuen Democrat if he could address the problem.

As co-chairman of the Legislature's Transportation Committee, he called Cogliano, and the result is the new guardrails now hugging the left lane of Route 213 east. The two-week installation will eventually put them on both sides of the highway — the first location in Massachusetts, which is just the third state to use them.

Local safety officials blame the number of accidents on people driving too fast on the 55 mph highway, but Buote blames the number of devastating crossover crashes on the median's narrow width, the lack of barriers — until now — and level ground. The new barrier can't slow down drivers or make them wear seat belts, fire officials said, but it could keep them on their side of the road.

"I don't think we'll have fewer (accidents) because people just drive so bad," Barry said, "but I think this will save lives."

A press conference was held in the roadway's median yesterday to unveil the new guardrails. Cogliano attended the event as well as Baddour, state Rep. Arthur Broadhurst, Methuen Mayor Sharon M.

- ▶ City may close deal with new superintendent next week
- ▶ Emily the stowaway cat arrives in home state of Wisconsin
- ▶ Community classes on hold when schools close early
- ▶ Town Meeting to decide on deposit to preserve 14 acres
- ▶ Deaths elsewhere
- ▶ 11 Mexican federal agents charged with kidnapping in connection
- ▶ ECN Stocks
- ▶ Dial M for Merry Christmas
- ▶ Environmental group: Gorton's should urge owner to stop killing whales
- ▶ Surgeons in first partial face transplant did not try normal procedures first, ethics questioned
- ▶ Woman thanks surgeons for new face
- ▶ Breaking ground so the hungry can break bread
- ▶ Gateway to city targeted for cleanup
- ▶ A hospital that truly helps: Caritas Holy Family employees aid Katrina victims
- ▶ Key nations in U.S.-led force in Iraq mulling withdrawals or reductions
- ▶ Sunnis, Shiites hold joint prayers
- ▶ FBI seeks help breaking up jewel heist crew
- ▶ Thieves steal store's video cameras, TV monitor and empty safe
- ▶ Lottery
- ▶ Ten indicted on bank fraud charges
- ▶ Massachusetts news in brief
- ▶ Small private plane from New York missing off Nantucket
- ▶ As Romney assumes RGA chair, Democrats brand him AWOL at home
- ▶ Maine boy, 14, charged with killing fellow teen
- ▶ University president under fire for students' 'mush' heads comment
- ▶ News in Brief

Pollard and Mayor-elect William M. Manzi III.

[Click here to become a subscriber](#)

[↑ Back to top](#)

- ▶ Superheroes, baseball stars on new stamps
- ▶ Lawmakers kill retroactive tax
- ▶ Rock band 311, former Creed singer Stapp fight in Baltimore hotel
- ▶ Tax collections in November fall slightly below expectations
- ▶ Montgomery marks 50th anniversary of Rosa Parks' arrest
- ▶ Santa Fund
- ▶ Teens fight to seal gruesome journals
- ▶ Soda industry says school soft drink sales slump
- ▶ Temps
- ▶ U-Haul truck catches fire
- ▶ U.S. war casualties
- ▶ Vaughn and Aniston's car stopped by Scottsdale police
- ▶ Mediterranean aura in beach neighborhood
- ▶ Housing Trust hears neighbor's advice on creating affordable projects
- ▶ World briefly



[Contact Us](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Subscriber Services](#) | [Company History](#) | [Submit an Ad](#) | [Submit a Story](#) | [Careers](#)

© Copyright Eagle Tribune Publishing Company. All rights reserved. Terms of Use.
100 Turnpike Street, North Andover, MA 01845 978-946-2000