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Press Release

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[Bridges & Tunnels](#)

IMMEDIATE

### Verrazano-Narrows Workers Ready Bridge For Annual ING NYC Marathon

With the annual ING NYC Marathon approaching, teams of managers and workers at the Verrazano-Narrows are going over the bridge with a fine tooth comb, smoothing roadway surfaces, cleaning roadway debris and filling in errant potholes to make sure it's smooth sailing for the more than 47,000 runners that will cross the bridge at the start of the 26.2 mile race this Sunday.

"The bridge is designed for vehicular traffic but when you have more than 47,000 pedestrians crossing it, we have to look at cleaning and maintenance with a very different perspective," said Verrazano-Narrows General Manager Daniel DeCrescenzo. "Areas that are not normally used by motorists, including center medians and safety zones, have to be examined and we go above and beyond our normal maintenance to eliminate tripping hazards such as small debris, uneven pavement and sharp edges in these areas."

The soaring 693-foot-tall Verrazano-Narrows Bridge has been the starting point for the race since it became an all-borough marathon in 1976. The race, now in its 42nd year, has grown from 127 runners to more than 47,000, and is televised worldwide.

The general manager and his team of supervisors, managers and Operations personnel work tirelessly in the days leading up to the race fixing broken roadway delineators, cleaning roadway drainage areas, readying electronic message signs, painting start lines, hanging sound systems and temporarily removing guiderails near the toll plaza to give runners easier access from the staging area.

The bulk of the work begins the night before when the upper level of the bridge is closed at 11 p.m. so maintenance crews can cover the bridge's finger joints from beneath the upper level roadway with strong, bendable masonite boards so runners and wheelchair racers have a smooth surface. Mats are securely taped down on the lower level to cover the finger joints, which are metal, intertwined joints that allow the bridge's roadway decks to expand in summer months and contract in winter.

Operations personnel are also responsible for setting up checkpoints, reconfiguring toll plaza lanes so traffic can get across the bridge before it is closed for the race, and coordinating with other agencies and race organizers to set up the toll plaza for the opening ceremony and start of the race.

Once the last runner has left the bridge, there is still more work to be done. Crews of race volunteers armed with shovels and garbage bags, New York City Sanitation workers using front-end loaders, and some Verrazano crews appear even before the last runner has left the bridge to begin scooping up discarded warm-up jackets and pants, water bottles, towels and other debris left behind by the runners. Last year, about 40,000 pounds of clothes were picked up; most of which was donated to charities by the New York Road Runners Club.

After the concrete barriers, guiderails, cones and delineators – removed for the race – are all back in place, the bridge is reopened to traffic, normally by 3 p.m. "We work as fast and efficiently as possible to get the bridge reopened for motorists," DeCrescenzo said.

Attached are two MTA You Tube video links:

2010 NYC Marathon: Runners - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QnxRJhJqCLQ>

2010 NYC Marathon: Behind The Scenes - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iNi0vUjTa\\_g](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iNi0vUjTa_g)



Before: Verrazano-Narrows is ready for its close-up. Photo of the upper level of the bridge just prior to the start of the 2010 race.



After: Post-race photo showing just some of the work that has to be done before the bridge can be reopened.