

Issue: 06/15/2015

Contractor Steps Un To Finish Willimansett Bridge Rehab

06/10/2015

By *Johanna Knapschaefer*

Text size: **A** **A**

Related Links:

[In New York City, Alexander Hamilton Bridge Gets Complicated Rehabilitation](#)

[As Pulaski Deck Replacement Begins, Officials Push Hard to Manage Both Traffic And Public Trust](#)

Northern Construction is nearing completion of the \$19.3-million Willimansett Bridge Rehabilitation ahead of schedule despite the challenges of a hard winter and taking over after Canton, Mass., contractor Pihl Inc. went broke.

The 125-year-old, 800-ft x 50-ft bridge carries Massachusetts Route 116 over the Connecticut River and Pioneer Valley Railroad between Holyoke and Chicopee in western Massachusetts.

"MassDOT [Massachusetts Dept. of Transportation] was helpful," says Shawn Clark, project manager for Northern Construction, Palmer, Mass. "But this has been challenging with a tight schedule."

The bid-build contract has a \$3000-per-day incentive, capped at \$90,000, to finish before July 11 with a late penalty of \$6,222 per day until the bridge opens, Clark says. After November 7, liquidated damages will take effect at \$1,500 per day until all work is completed. The original \$18-million contract had a final completion date of May 13, 2014, according to MassDOT.

Since Northern Construction took over last May at 35% completion, it has had to work two 10-hour shifts daily. Work has included repairing or replacing sway bracing, lower lateral bracing, gussets and other steel members on trusses; replacing existing rivets with new high-strength bolts and cover plates; and bolstering all the numerous existing connection plates, Clark says.

"The existing deck is off the bridge, so we had to engineer temporary steel-plate decking so we could utilize a small crane to access repairs in the middle of the bridge," Clark says. In winter, painting required tent enclosures with heat maintained above 50° F and ongoing snow removal, he says.

The project completion cost to MassDOT did not increase due to Pihl's Chapter 7 bankruptcy, filed in September 2013, MassDOT says, since the contractor's bonding company paid \$6.4 million.

Keywords: [Willimansett Bridge](#); [Northern Construction](#); [Pihl Inc.](#); [MassDOT](#)



- [This week's content](#)
- [Archive](#)
- [Subscribe to ENR](#)
- [Order back issues](#)
- [Manage Subscription](#)
- [Newsletter Subscriptions](#)

Most Viewed on ENR.com

- [Fatal Crash Results in Vehicular Homicide Charges for Ready-Mix Firm President](#)
- [Tennessee Contractor Appeals OSHA Fine, Judge Increases It](#)
- [The 10 Longest Arch Bridges in the World](#)

Most Commented On enr.com

- [Architect Swanke Hayden Connell Files for Bankruptcy Protection](#)
- [Review: The Lego Movie is a Blockbuster, Sort Of](#)