

How to Succeed and Thrive During the Coming Two-Weekend Traffic Apocalypse

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Let's hack this thing. Here are 10 ideas, both obvious and not so obvious:

1. **Do what you can during weekdays:** Visit the supermarket, get your prescriptions, borrow your library books and videos then. Gas up the car. Treat this like a coming snow storm without the snow. The highway itself won't be diverted to those detour ramps until 11 p.m., Friday, although entrance ramps will be closed at the interchange at 6 p.m.
 - Darien police have issued an announcement about expected heavy traffic, what they're doing to deal with it and with some advice for you in dealing with it. Part of the announcement said (all boldface from the original announcement):
 - "Although no construction is occurring in Darien, the sheer scope of this project, the major

impact to I-95 through Darien and the proximity of the project to Darien town line makes it clear that **there will be significant traffic congestion and potential significant delays on local Darien roadways during all hours of these two weekends.** [...]

- "The Darien Police Department expects very heavy traffic on most of our major surface streets (Boston Post Road, West Avenue, Mansfield Avenue, Hoyt Street, Tokeneke Road, etc.) as motorists seek alternates to I-95. [...] We expect a large amount of traffic to be exiting I-95 at Exit 11 (especially southbound) onto U.S. 1 [the Post Road]."

2. Take the train: It's likely that you're only experience taking the train is to Grand Central Terminal, but tickets for train rides within Connecticut are dirt cheap, and the parking lots are normally almost empty on weekends. You may actually enjoy the change of pace. Don't miss your stop. Walking is good exercise.

- **SEE ALSO:** [State Issues CARMAGGEDON Warning for Two Weekends of I-95 Closures at Exit 9, Starting 6 PM, Friday, May 31](#) (May 20)

3. Expect frustrating traffic: Even if you're only driving around town. Some drivers who may have been waiting on the highway for a while can be expected to try local roads to get around the enormous traffic jam. They have it a lot worse than you, especially if you're only driving around town. So cut them some slack, be sympathetic, get out of their way if you can and say a prayer for them. Nobody needs road rage or car accidents, especially these weekends when cops will be busy. If you've got young drivers in the family, remind them of this. If you're an elderly driver, see #1, above and #9, below.

- From the police announcement: "[T]ry to limit traffic trips if possible. Please allow for **significant** extra time if you must drive in lower Fairfield County during these weekends."

4. Start out early. You may get somewhat lighter traffic on local roads the earlier you start out. On the highways, you can expect traffic jams right through the night, just like any highway construction project, except this will be worse.

5. Keep the bike in the garage. Especially if it's your kid's. Unless you're on an out-of-the-way cul-de-sac, you'll be sharing the roads with frustrated, angry drivers, many of them unfamiliar with Darien roads, who are rushing to get around the traffic jam they've been stuck in. And you're on a bicycle? You may need to get

your head examined in more ways than one.

6. Don't do anything dangerous at home. It's going to take longer for an ambulance to get to you and then longer for the ambulance to get to the hospital. It's also going to take longer for fire engines. Stay off that ladder. Be careful getting out of the tub. Avoid sharp objects. Lay off the booze. Sleep late.

- It's not as if there won't be extra police on duty, though. From the police announcement: "The Darien Police Department has worked closely with the CT Department of Transportation and all Emergency Services in neighboring towns to coordinate our preparation for this project. We will have additional police traffic personnel working around the clock dedicated solely to traffic management at Darien intersections and areas where delays are to be expected."

7. Take the Merritt. No, no — don't do that. We're just joking! Everybody from out of town will be doing that. You'd be better off getting on all fours and crawling.

8. Expect traffic to the east as well as the west. Even if you're just traveling in the opposite direction from Exit 9, you're likely going to want to return during the same weekend, and you'll face traffic then, too. It wouldn't be surprising if traffic on I-95 is backed up for many miles. Going north should be easier, but you'll find some traffic near the Merritt Parkway exits and entrances.

9. Just stay home. You'll be helping everybody who has to take to the road, just by staying out of their way. Netflix and Amazon Prime have new streaming videos on the first of the month.

- Police: "Please consider avoiding the area during these weekends and try to limit traffic trips if possible."

10. Count yourself lucky. This bridge was not judged to be unsafe, for now, but it was built with the highway in 1958 and is beyond its expected useful life. Replacing it is a much better alternative to having it collapse, [like the Mianus River bridge](#) in Greenwich. Darien police: "Bear with us and please realize that enduring two weekends of epic delays are far superior to two years of ongoing traffic congestion and frustration."

- *Police also said:*
- "There will be live streaming video feeds of construction during the weekends when the bridge is installed on the project website. This live feed, and complete information on the project, can be found at: I95Exit9.com."

