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## Business

# Mystic Businesses Ready For Season Of Construction To End

Mystic Drawbridge To Close For 54-Hours

By [Bree Shirvell](#) | [Email the author](#) | April 5, 2011

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At 11 p.m., today, the drawbridge will close for 54 hours. From 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. Friday, cars and pedestrians will be unable to cross from one side of the bridge to the other.

The closure comes after months of snarled traffic and pedestrians donning earplugs to protect themselves from the noise of construction as they walked across the bridge. But it also marks the beginning of the end for this season of construction.

While the bridge is closed, the scaffolding will come down and fresh paint will go on. But when the bridge reopens on Friday morning, one-way traffic will remain in place until April 11, when the barriers come down. By April 12, two-way traffic will resume. By April 16, the bridge will return to normal. At least until construction resumes next winter.

For many, the return to normalcy, however brief, can't come soon enough. Walk into any downtown Mystic store and often there are hardly any other shoppers.

"It's been rough," said Cheryl Robdau of [Mystic Drawbridge Ice Cream](#). Robdau said even though it's winter, the historically slow time for the popular ice cream spot, business is down 60 percent from the same time last year.

The drawbridge, dividing the towns of Stonington and Groton, is the lifeline for the village of Mystic. With shops and restaurants on both sides of the river, the drawbridge serves as tourist destination and connector for Mystic.

And for the Mystic Drawbridge Ice Cream and [Cee Cee's of Mystic](#), the two businesses that sit closest to the bridge on the Groton side, access to the bridge is vital to their businesses.

"It's been slow between the weather, economy and construction—it's a triple whammy," said Carol Morosky of Cee Cee's.

Not only have Mystic Drawbridge Ice Cream and Cee Cee's faced bridge construction, but the ongoing streetscape project has left them with a dug up sidewalk. Even with "we're open" signs hung in the window, Robdau said people were coming in last week surprised the store was open.

"There's only a few more weeks," Morosky said, adding that next year will be better because at least when the bridge construction starts up again the sidewalk will be done. "Should be gorgeous next year."

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Just over the bridge on the Stonington side, [Mystical Toys](#) is also feeling the hit in business. While the toy store doesn't have the same problems Cee Cee's and the Mystic Drawbridge Ice Cream have with a torn-up sidewalk, the toy store does have a bunch of orange construction cones and road work signs right outside.

Owner Frank Sinnet said business in the winter is usually slow, and while there's plenty of parking on their side, he doesn't know if people are coming into downtown or coming across the bridge.

"If people would move and just get through the bridge, but instead like an accident everyone wants to look and then ten cars get through instead of the 25 that are suppose to—that's just the way we are," Sinnet said.

Despite the loss of sales, all three businesses were appreciative of the work.

"They're doing a beautiful job," Sinnet said.

Robdau mentioned how accommodating everyone has tried to be during the construction, adding that the workers helped her put up signs. For her, it's much better that the 54-hour closure happens during the week instead of the weekend, as was originally planned.

"We just have to grin and bear," Robdau said.

Will you make a point of stopping into a Mystic store over the next few days? Or will you avoid downtown Mystic? [Tell us in the comments.](#)

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