

About Construction

When did construction start? When will it end?

Construction for the South Hillsborough Pipeline began in November 2025. The pipeline must be in service by the end of 2028; final restoration will be completed by summer 2029.

What are the construction hours? Will there be night work?

Crews are working 10 hours per day, six days per week, to complete construction as soon as possible. Construction typically occurs Monday through Saturday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. unless otherwise notified. Night work is needed on occasion for major road crossings or connections. When night work is required, the project team will provide advance notice to residents or businesses to minimize inconvenience. If you have not already done so, [please sign up for email alerts](#) to ensure you receive these notices.

What is involved during construction?

Crews are installing the South Hillsborough Pipeline using both open-trench and tunneling construction methods. Before construction begins in a location, shallow wells will be installed and pumped continuously to remove shallow groundwater from the areas to be excavated. These dewatering systems must run 24 hours a day until construction in an area is complete. These systems include noise-minimizing diesel pumps and a small-diameter, temporary pipeline to direct water away from the construction area so trenches and tunnel shafts can be safely built and proper soil compaction can be achieved.

For open-trench construction, crews use heavy equipment to excavate trenches into which they place trench boxes to keep crews safe while they are installing the pipe segments. After the pipe is installed, crews will backfill the trenches. If roads are disturbed during construction, temporary, drivable surfaces will be restored. Once construction is complete, all disturbed roadways will be repaved and restriped. Within six months of completed work, all construction areas will be restored to the same or better condition than before construction began.

In addition to open-trench work, there are 17 locations where crews are tunneling under roads or waterways using specialized equipment and construction techniques. Tunneling under roads is done with a tunnel boring machine. Launch and receiving pits are excavated on each side of the road and a tunnel boring machine is placed in the launch pit and tunnels toward the receiving pit, simultaneously excavating and installing the pipeline.

Is construction taking place on one street at a time, or are crews working on multiple streets simultaneously?

Construction is taking place in multiple locations simultaneously to ensure the 26-mile-long pipeline is operational by 2028. Tunneling operations and open-trench construction are in progress at multiple locations across the pipeline route. The construction team anticipates moving about 25-50 feet every day during open-trench construction. Individual homes will likely be impacted for a few days to a week, depending on location.

What should residents expect during construction?

Those living and working near the project site can expect to see traffic control measures, such as variable message boards, detour signs and barricades to route traffic around construction zones. Residents will also see machinery, excavators, dump trucks and other equipment in the area. Residents can expect to hear noise associated with construction. Our construction crews will minimize dust by using water trucks to suppress airborne particles in work areas, and all trash will be picked up regularly to maintain cleanliness. In some locations, temporary access roads will facilitate access to homes, subdivisions and residential streets and businesses.

Maintaining Traffic and Access

How are you maintaining traffic flow during construction?

All temporary traffic control plans are designed by a traffic engineer to meet the State design criteria requirements. Those plans are submitted to Hillsborough County for review, comment and approval. Once approved, Hillsborough County issues a temporary traffic control permit which provides the dates, time and conditions for each road closure, lane closure or traffic diversion requested by the project team.

How do you notify motorists of road closures and detours?

Variable message boards, which are flashing electronic signs, are placed two weeks in advance of road closures, detours or lane diversions to ensure motorists have advance notice of traffic pattern changes. The project team also places directional signage leading up to closures and diversions and places detour signs to help motorists navigate construction zones. All road and lane closures are posted on SouthHillsboroughPipeline.com. If you have not already done so, [please sign up for email alerts on the website to ensure you receive these notices](#). Please follow all posted detours as construction will make some areas impassable.

How are you maintaining access for residents who live in the construction zone?

Vehicular or pedestrian access for residents will be maintained, except for short periods when crews are trenching directly in front of driveways or other construction related activities. Those periods may be anywhere between 15 minutes to a couple hours and will be coordinated with residents ahead of time. While open-trench construction is in process, local access to a road will be from one direction or the other, but there will be no through-traffic. In some locations, temporary access roads will facilitate access to homes, subdivisions, residential streets and businesses. Construction Coordinators will be onsite 24/7 to help residents access their homes.

What should residents expect when driveways are inaccessible?

Residents may not have access to their driveways during the short period when active construction is in front of their homes. When necessary, contractors will identify temporary parking for those vehicles during that time. During open-trench construction, we will have Community Coordinators on the construction site 24/7 to support the neighborhoods affected by the project. In cases where residents need to temporarily park in a different location, the Community Coordinators will provide transportation between residents' vehicles and homes. Construction crews will sequence work to avoid ending the work for the day directly in front of a driveway.

Will mail, package and food delivery or garbage/recycling pick-up be interrupted during construction?

During construction, Community Coordinators will help residents with mail and package delivery, if needed. They will help ensure that garbage and recycling services continue.

Safety and Emergency Services

How will you ensure safety at the construction sites?

To ensure safety at the sites, construction areas are barred from public access and are clearly marked with caution tape, safety fences or barricades. Each site is secured during non-working hours. Trenches will be barricaded and secured on a daily basis. Warning signs will instruct people to stay away from construction areas. Residents can help ensure safety by maintaining a safe distance from construction areas and by keeping children and pets away from active work zones. In some areas, security staff or Community Coordinators are stationed overnight to prevent theft and vandalism.

Will emergency services, like the Fire Department, know about the closures?

Yes. Our project team has had several meetings with Emergency Services, including Hillsborough County Fire Rescue, to ensure that emergency vehicles can access the roadways at all times. Our project team is informing Hillsborough County Fire Rescue about our activities to ensure emergency responder access is always planned and assessed. In the event an emergency vehicle needs to travel down a residential street that is under construction, construction crews will immediately stop work and take the necessary actions to ensure emergency vehicles can get through safely. This could include backfilling holes or covering open trenches with steel plates.

Easements, Right of Way and Environment

Why are there flags and stakes in the ground, and can I remove them?

Flags will be placed in the ground to identify the location of existing utilities. Please keep all flags in place so construction crews avoid hitting underground utilities and interrupting service. Stakes marking boundaries of easements or the right of way should be left in place until the project is restored. Upon final restoration, all flags and stakes will be removed.

Flags are not trash, but in fact are important indicators for the project team. There are different colored marking flags to signify different underground utilities:

- **Yellow** – indicates gas, oil or petroleum lines

- **Orange** – indicates telecommunication, cable or fiber optic lines; these are placed by the communications companies
- **Blue** – indicates a drinking water line
- **Purple** – indicates a reclaimed water line
- **Pink** – used to mark survey areas

Stakes with ribbons, either white or pink, are used by the surveyors throughout the course of construction to ensure alignment. Some of these may indicate the route, others may indicate a surveyor's benchmark, which is a reference point used repeatedly to check elevations and measurements.

Will water or sewer services be interrupted?

Tampa Bay Water's regional pipelines do not connect directly to residents' homes or businesses so we do not anticipate any water service interruptions; however, if a situation arises that requires a temporary water service line interruption, property owners and businesses will be notified by Hillsborough County. In the event of an unplanned interruption, Hillsborough County will notify residents as soon as possible.

Can I keep personal items in the temporary or permanent easements? In the right of way?

No. Before construction begins, please remove all personal items including any prized landscaping from the public right of way as well as the temporary and permanent construction easements. After construction, only sod will be restored in areas disturbed by construction activities.

Why are you working in the right of way if you purchased easements?

The contractor needs a minimum 50-foot-wide workspace, so in some areas, they have permission from Hillsborough County to utilize the public right of way as well as the construction easements. This ensures adequate space for safe working conditions, staged materials and excavated soil. Anything disturbed in the right of way will be restored to like condition once construction is completed.

Why are you tagging trees?

Much of the pipeline route is within the roadway to reduce impacts to trees, but in some cases, we must trim tree canopies or remove trees to allow access for heavy machinery and construction equipment. Tagging trees identifies trees to be trimmed, removed or avoided. In some cases, a tree may need to be trimmed to a point where the tree is no longer viable. A certified arborist will inspect the trees to make this determination. In those instances, the tree will be removed completely.

Will the pumping from your dewatering system lower water levels and cause a problem with my domestic or irrigation well?

Dewatering pumps are not expected to affect nearby wells for several reasons. First, construction dewatering pumps focus on the shallowest water table. In most areas, the pipeline is placed approximately 10-15 feet below ground, so that is the depth to which water must be removed. Domestic and irrigation wells generally pump from the deeper, confined aquifer. Second, construction dewatering is focused on a particular location, pumping just enough water away to keep a trench or tunnel shaft dry. It is unlikely that pumping effects from this limited activity would extend outward significantly.

from the construction corridor. Third, dewatering is a temporary activity that is expected to last only a short duration, usually one to two weeks, in any one area.

What will happen to the wildlife (specifically gopher tortoises) that will be disrupted by this project?

Before construction begins, the pipeline must receive permits from several regulatory agencies, including the Hillsborough County Environmental Protection Commission and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, to ensure construction complies with all local, state and federal regulations. For areas with gopher tortoises, we will relocate all gopher tortoises outside of a protective fence that keeps them safe from the active construction. Once construction is complete, the fence will be removed, and the gopher tortoises can return.

Who can I contact if I have questions or concerns about my property?

Please contact the South Hillsborough Pipeline Project Team at (813) 485-6480 or send an email to shpinfo@tampabaywater.org.

How can I get more information on the project?

Information on the South Hillsborough Pipeline is available on the project website at SouthHillsboroughPipeline.com. The best way to stay informed is by subscribing to our email list, SouthHillsboroughPipeline.com/contact. We will be sharing traffic updates and our construction schedule as well as any other information to residents and businesses who are impacted. If you have any questions or concerns, please email shpinfo@tampabaywater.org or call (813)485-6480.