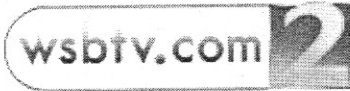


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Updated: 8:11 a.m. Monday, June 10, 2013 | Posted: 6:03 a.m. Monday, June 10, 2013

First day of rush-hour commute on Diverging Diamond

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GWINNETT COUNTY, Ga. — Drivers endured their first taste of rush-hour Monday morning on the Diverging Diamond Interchange. The unique intersection designed to speed up the commute in one of Gwinnett County's busiest areas.

There were mixed reactions to the new interchange at Interstate 85 and Pleasant Hill Road bridge in Gwinnett County.

The project involves shifting traffic to the opposite side of the Pleasant Hill Road bridge, which will make left turns onto the interstate easier and improve the flow of traffic across the bridge, officials said. That means no right on red off the interstate.

Channel 2's Sophia Choi got feedback from drivers, including some who complained about the confusing interchange. Police were stationed along the bridge on Pleasant Hill Road to assist drivers.

The interchange opened to traffic Sunday, ahead of schedule.

"You're expecting to go left or right, but not in between or around, so to speak," driver Donald Reed told Channel 2's Ashley Swann on Sunday night.

"I thought it went smooth. No problems," said Reed. "It's different, but different isn't bad."

"Riding on the opposite side of the street was kind of different," added Arthur Jenkins. "When I first came up I was like, man am I going the wrong way?"

The Department of Transportation said the interchange to reduce traffic and accidents. But Monday's rainy weather raises a concern for potential problems, GDOT said.

The DDI at Pleasant Hill Road and I-85 is Gwinnett's first diverging diamond interchange and the second in Georgia. The first was constructed at Ashford-Dunwoody by Perimeter Mall in DeKalb County.

For information on how to drive the diamond, including a video rendering of the completed project, visit www.gwinnettDDI.com

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