## Rail work to require Ben Franklin Bridge restrictions

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CAMDEN, N.J. - People who commute between southern New Jersey and Philadelphia are in for a rough summer.

Work on the tracks and electrical systems on the PATCO Speedline will mean a less frequent schedule for the train line used by 40,000 per day and closed car lanes on the Ben Franklin Bridge, which carries trains - and 100,000 cars daily - over the Delaware River.

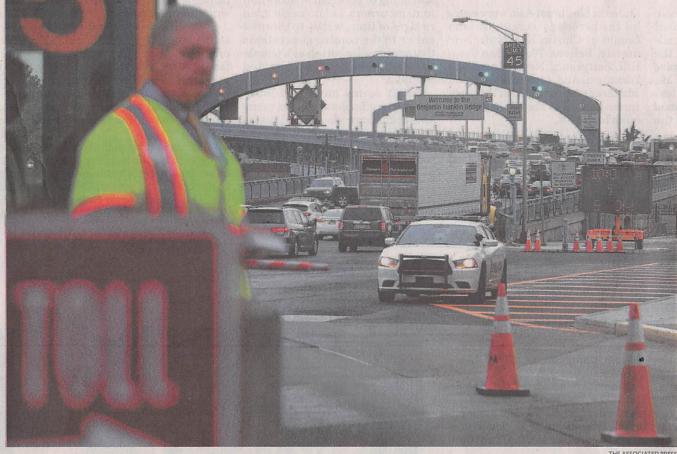
"I have no choice but to catch the train because the parking is horrible and expensive over there," Juanita King, who works as a scheduler at Philadelphia's Pennsylvania Hospital, said before she hopped on her train recently at Camden's Ferry Avenue Station, a popular place for park-and-ride customers from Camden and Gloucester counties.

A round-trip ride from there is \$4.50 a day and most of the parking is free.

If King drives to work from southern New Jersey, she'd ing expenses starting at \$9 if she could arrive in time for the early-bird rate.

The Delaware River Port Authority, which operates PATCO and four bridges, is replacing the tracks and ties on the train line for the first time since the 1980s and electrical systems that in some spots date to 1935.

Authority CEO John Hanson, who has attended forums for commuters and greeted them at train stations, was out the other morning handing



pay a \$5 bridge toll and park- When one of the two sets of PATCO train tracks over the Ben Franklin Bridge between Philadelphia and Camden, N.J., are closed for two months to be replaced, riders and drivers can expect problems.

information cards to drivers at the toll lanes of the bridge.

ers to telecommute, carpool or struction lasts. And if none of prepare for delays.

He said the \$103 million PATCO overhaul is due and there is no way to do it with- traffic lanes over the bridge out inconvenience.

Starting June 3, the train two lanes will be closed at

tracks on the south side of the bridge will be closed. During He is encouraging commut- that time, they will be taken out and then rebuilt. When use other bridges while con- that project is over, the same will be done on the north those solutions work for them, tracks. Altogether, the track they'll need to leave early or replacement will take about four months.

While the track work is going on, one of the seven will be closed at rush hours; other times.

After the tracks are rebuilt, delays. the electrical systems will be replaced. That will take al- retary, said her bosses know most two more years and will sometimes cause delays.

March, starting Friday afternoons and lasting through the weekend.

versity of Pennsylvania Hos- tracks are rebuilt, all PATpitals scheduler, said he's on CO train cars will be refurprobation at work for show- bished.

ing up late because of train

But Judi Burrell, a legal secabout the delays and are being flexible. Still, she's trying to Work on the line began in figure out if there's a bus that would be a better option for her for the next few months.

But the news isn't all bad: Ed Bogaard, another Uni- About the same time the