




Illinois Department of Transportation

Memorandum

To: Regional Engineers
From: Jack A. Elston 
Subject: Special Provision for Structural Repair of Concrete
Date: September 26, 2025

This special provision was developed by the Central Bureau of Materials and the Bureau of Bridges and Structures to re-format a Guide Bridge Special Provision (GBSP 53) for structural repair of concrete into a BDE Special Provision.

This special provision should be inserted into all contracts with STRUCTURAL REPAIR OF CONCRETE.

The districts should include the BDE Check Sheet marked with the applicable special provisions for the January 16, 2026 and subsequent lettings. The Project Coordination and Implementation Section will include a copy in the contract.

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STRUCTURAL REPAIR OF CONCRETE (BDE)

Effective: January 1, 2026

Add the following Section 532 to the Standard Specifications:

“SECTION 532. STRUCTURAL REPAIR OF CONCRETE

532.01 Description. This work shall consist of repairing concrete on a bridge substructure, culvert, retaining wall, or other structure.

532.02 Materials. Materials shall be according to the following.

Item	Article/Section
(a) Portland Cement Concrete (Note 1)	1020
(b) R1, R2, or R3 Concrete	1018
(c) Packaged, Dry, Combined Materials for Concrete	1017.02, 1017.03
(d) High Performance Shotcrete	1015
(e) Reinforcement Bars.....	1006.10
(f) Anchor Bolts	1006.09
(g) Water.....	1002
(h) Curing Compound	1022.01
(i) Cotton Mats.....	1022.02
(j) Protective Coat.....	1023
(k) Epoxy (Note 2)	1025
(l) Mechanical Bar Splicers	508.06(c)
(m) Polymer Modified Portland Cement Mortar (Note 3)	

Note 1. The concrete shall be Class SI, except the cement and finely divided minerals shall be a minimum 6.65 cwt/cu yd (395 kg/cu m) with no reductions permitted, the cement shall not be below 4.70 cwt/cu yd (279 kg/cu m), the coarse aggregate shall be a CA 16, the strength shall be a minimum 4000 psi (27,500 kPa) at 28 days, and the slump shall be 5-10 in. (125-250 mm). A self-consolidating concrete mixture will also be permitted. Slump flow range, visual stability index, J-Ring, L-Box, and hardened visual stability index requirements shall be according to Article 1020.04.

Note 2. ASTM C 881, Type IV, Grade 2 or 3, Class A, B, or C may also be used.

Note 3. Polymer modified portland cement mortar shall be a packaged product consisting of cementitious materials, fine aggregate, and a polymer modifier; and shall have successfully completed and remain current with the AASHTO Product Eval and Audit Rapid Hardening Concrete Patching Materials (RHCP) testing program. The mortar shall be a workable mix capable of bonding and holding its own plastic weight when mixed and placed according to manufacturer's instructions on vertical and overhead surfaces. It shall have a minimum compressive strength of 1,500 psi (10,300 kPa) at 24 hours, 4,000 psi (27,500 kPa) at 7 days, and 5,000 psi (34,500 kPa) at 28 days when tested according to

ASTM C 109 or AASHTO T 106. In addition, the mortar shall have a minimum bond strength of 1,500 psi (10,300 kPa) at 7 days when tested according to ASTM C 882. For prestressed concrete applications, the mortar shall have a water-soluble chloride ion content of less than 0.06 percent by weight of cementitious material when tested according to ASTM C 1218 or AASHTO T 260; and for non-prestressed concrete applications, the water-soluble chloride ion content shall be less than 0.15 percent by weight of cementitious material. The Department will maintain a Qualified Product List of Polymer Modified Portland Cement Mortar.

532.03 Equipment. Equipment shall be according to Article 503.03 and the following.

Item	Article/Section
(a) Hydrodemolition Equipment.....	1101.11
(b) High Performance Shotcrete Equipment (Note1)	

Note 1. The batching, mixing, pumping, hose, nozzle, and auxiliary equipment shall be for the wet-mix shotcrete method and meet the requirements of ACI 506R.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS

532.04 General. The repair method shall be either formed concrete repair or shotcrete according to the following.

- (a) Formed Concrete Repair. For formed concrete repair, a subsequent patch to repair the placement point after initial concrete placement will not be allowed. As an example, this may occur in a vertical location located at the top of the repair.

Formed concrete repair shall not be used for overhead applications except as noted for polymer modified portland cement mortar.

Polymer modified portland cement mortar shall only be used for repairs between 3/8 in. (10 mm) and 2 in. (50 mm) deep on horizontal, vertical, and overhead surfaces.

- (b) Shotcrete. Shotcrete shall not be used for any repair greater than 6 in. (150 mm) in depth, except in horizontal applications where the shotcrete may be placed from above in one lift.

Shotcrete shall not be used for column repairs greater than 4 in. (100 mm) in depth, unless the shotcrete mixture contains 3/8 in. (9.5 mm) aggregate.

The Contractor shall provide a current copy of ACI 506R to the Engineer a minimum of one week prior to the start of construction.

The shotcrete personnel who perform the work shall have current American Concrete Institute (ACI) nozzlemen certification for vertical wet and overhead wet applications,

except one individual may be in training. This individual shall be adequately supervised by a certified ACI nozzlemen as determined by the Engineer and a copy of the nozzlemen certificate(s) provided to the Engineer.

532.05 Temporary Shoring or Cribbing. When a temporary shoring or cribbing support system is required, the Contractor shall provide details and computations, prepared and sealed by an Illinois Licensed Structural Engineer, to the Department for approval. Whenever possible, the support system shall be installed prior to starting the associated concrete removal. If no system is specified, but during the course of removal the need for temporary shoring or cribbing becomes apparent or is directed by the Engineer due to a structural concern, the Contractor shall not proceed with any further removal work until an approved support system is installed.

532.06 Concrete Removal. The Contractor shall provide ladders or other appropriate equipment for the Engineer to mark the removal areas. Repair configurations will be kept simple, and squared corners will be indicated whenever possible. The repair perimeter shall be sawed a depth of 1/2 in. (13 mm) or less, as required to avoid cutting the reinforcement. If the concrete is broken or removed beyond the limits of the initial saw cut, the new repair perimeter shall be recut. The areas to be repaired shall have all loose, unsound concrete removed completely by the use of hydrodemolition equipment or chipping hammer with a 15 lb. (7 kg) maximum class. The concrete removal shall extend along the reinforcement bar until the reinforcement is free of bond inhibiting corrosion. Reinforcement bars with 50 percent or more exposed area shall be undercut to a depth of 3/4 in. (19 mm) or the diameter of the reinforcement bar, whichever is greater.

The minimum repair depth shall be 1 in. (25 mm). The substrate profile shall be $\pm 1/16$ in. (± 1.5 mm). The perimeter of the repair area shall have a vertical face.

If sound concrete is encountered before existing reinforcement bars are exposed, further removal of concrete shall not be performed unless the minimum repair depth is not met.

If a repair is located at the ground line, any excavation required below the ground line to complete the repair shall be included in this work.

Once concrete removal has started, the Contractor shall have 14 calendar days to complete each repair location.

The Engineer shall be notified of concrete removal that exceeds 6 in. (150 mm) in depth, one fourth the cross section of a structural member, more than half the vertical column reinforcement is exposed in a cross section, more than six consecutive reinforcement bars are exposed in any direction, within 1.5 in. (38 mm) of a bearing area, or other structural concern. Excessive deterioration or removal may require further evaluation of the structure or installation of temporary shoring and cribbing support system.

532.07 Surface Preparation. Prior to placing the concrete or shotcrete, the Contractor shall blast clean the repair area and exposed reinforcement to provide a surface that is free of oil, dirt, and loose material.

The repair area and perimeter vertical face shall have a rough surface. Just prior to concrete or shotcrete placement, the repair area shall be saturated with water to a saturated surface-dry condition. Any standing water shall be removed.

If a succeeding layer of shotcrete is to be applied, the initial shotcrete surface and remaining exposed reinforcement shall be free of curing compound, oil, dirt, loose material, rebound, and overspray. Preparation may be by lightly brushing or blast cleaning if the previous shotcrete surface was less than 36 hours prior. If more than 36 hours prior, the surface shall be prepared by blast cleaning.

532.08 Reinforcement. Exposed reinforcement bars shall be cleaned of concrete and corrosion by blast cleaning. After cleaning, exposed reinforcement will be evaluated to determine if replacement or additional reinforcement bars are required.

Reinforcing bars that have been cut or have lost 25 percent or more of their original cross-sectional area shall be supplemented by new in kind reinforcement bars. New bars shall be lapped a minimum of 32 bar diameters to existing bars. A mechanical bar splicer shall be used when it is not feasible to provide the minimum bar lap. No welding of bars will be permitted.

Intersecting reinforcement bars shall be tightly secured to each other using 0.006 in. (0.15 mm) or heavier gauge tie wire and shall be adequately supported to minimize movement during concrete placement or application of shotcrete.

Where the depth of concrete removal is greater than 8 in. (205 mm) and there is no existing reinforcement extending into the repair area, the Contractor shall anchor the new concrete to the existing concrete with 3/4 in. (19 mm) diameter hook bolts spaced at 15 in. (380 mm) maximum centers both vertically and horizontally, and a minimum of 12 in. (305 mm) away from the perimeter of the repair according to Section 584.

532.09 Repair Methods. Within 3 calendar days of the surface preparation and after the repair areas are approved by the Engineer, the concrete or shotcrete shall be placed according to the following.

- (a) Formed Concrete Repair. Falsework and forms shall be according to Articles 503.05 and Article 503.06. Formwork shall provide a smooth and uniform concrete finish and shall approximately match the existing concrete structure. Air vents may be provided to reduce voids and improve surface appearance. The Contractor may use exterior mechanical vibration, as approved by the Engineer, to release air pockets. The concrete shall be Class SI concrete; packaged R1, R2, or R3 concrete; packaged, dry, combined materials for concrete; or polymer modified portland cement mortar. The concrete shall be placed and consolidated according to Article 503.07.

Curing shall be according to Article 1020.13.

The surfaces of the completed repair shall be finished according to Article 503.15.

- (b) Shotcrete. In the field, shotcrete shall be tested for air content according to Illinois Modified AASHTO T 152 or AASHTO T 152. The sample shall be obtained from the discharge end of the nozzle by shooting a pile large enough to scoop a representative amount for filling the air meter measuring bowl. Shotcrete shall not be shot directly into the measuring bowl for testing.

Compressive strength shall be according to ASTM C 1140, except the test panel shall be cured according to Article 1020.13(a)(3) or (5) while stored at the jobsite and during delivery to the laboratory. At the discretion of the Engineer, the test panel may be reduced to 18x18x3.5 in. (457x457x89 mm).

The method of alignment control (i.e., ground wires, guide strips, depth gages, depth probes, and formwork) to ensure the specified shotcrete thickness and reinforcing bar cover is obtained shall be according to ACI 506R. Ground wires shall be removed after completion of cutting operations. Guide strips and formwork shall be of dimensions and a configuration that do not prevent proper application of shotcrete. Metal depth gauges shall be cut 1/4 in. (6 mm) below the finished surface. All repaired members shall be restored as close as practicable to their original dimensions.

Air temperature limits according to the first paragraph of Article 1020.14(b) shall apply in cold weather. Shotcrete shall not be applied when the air temperature is greater than 90 °F (32 °C). The applied shotcrete shall have a minimum temperature of 50 °F (10 °C) and a maximum temperature of 90 °F (32 °C). The shotcrete shall not be applied during periods of rain unless protective covers or enclosures are installed. If necessary, lighting shall be provided to provide a clear view of the shooting area.

The shotcrete shall be applied according to ACI 506R and shall be done in a manner that does not result in cold joints, laminations, sandy areas, voids, sags, or separations. In addition, the shotcrete shall be applied in a manner that results in maximum densification of the shotcrete. Shotcrete which is identified as being unacceptable while still plastic shall be removed and re-applied.

The nozzle shall normally be at a distance of 2-5 ft. (0.6-1 m) from the receiving surface and shall be oriented at right angles to the receiving surface. Exceptions to this requirement will be permitted to fill corners, encase large diameter reinforcing bars, or as approved by the Engineer. For any exception, the nozzle shall never be oriented more than 4 degrees from the surface. Care shall be taken to keep the front face of the reinforcement bar clean during shooting operations. Shotcrete shall be built up from behind the reinforcement bar. Accumulations of rebound and overspray shall be continuously removed prior to application of new shotcrete. Rebound material shall not be incorporated in the work.

Whenever possible, shotcrete shall be applied to the full thickness in a single layer. When two or more layers are required, the minimum number shall be used and shall be done in a manner without sagging or separation. A flash coat (i.e. a thin layer of up to 1/4 in. (6 mm) applied shotcrete) may be used as the final lift for overhead applications.

Prior to application of a succeeding layer of shotcrete, the initial layer of shotcrete shall be prepared according to the surface preparation and reinforcement bar cleaning requirements. Upon completion of the surface preparation and reinforcement bar treatment, water shall be applied according to the surface preparation requirements unless the surface is moist. The second layer of shotcrete shall then be applied within 30 minutes.

Shotcrete shall be cut back to line and grade using trowels, cutting rods, screeds or other suitable devices. The shotcrete shall be allowed to stiffen sufficiently before cutting. For depressions, cut material may be used for small areas. Rebound material shall not be incorporated in the work. For the final finish, a wood float or a manufacturer approved finishing aid shall be used to approximately match the existing concrete texture.

Contractor operations for curing shall be continuous with shotcrete placement and finishing operations. Curing shall be accomplished using wetted cotton mats, membrane curing, or a combination of both. Cotton mats shall be applied according to Article 1020.13(a)(5), except the exposed layer of shotcrete shall be covered within 10 minutes after finishing and wet curing shall begin immediately. Curing compound shall be applied according to Article 1020.13(a)(4), except the curing compound shall be applied as soon as the shotcrete has hardened sufficiently to prevent marring the surface, and each of the two separate applications shall be applied in opposite directions to ensure coverage. Note 5 of the Index Table in Article 1020.13 shall also apply.

When a shotcrete layer is to be covered by a succeeding shotcrete layer within 36 hours, the repair area shall be protected by wet curing with either burlap or cotton mats until the succeeding layer is applied. Intermittent hand fogging may be used for the first hour and a half if wet curing with mats begins within 10 minutes after fogging has ceased.

The curing period shall be for 7 days, except when there is a succeeding layer of shotcrete. In this instance, the initial shotcrete layer shall be cured until the surface preparation and reinforcement bar treatment is started.

The concrete or shotcrete shall not be placed when frost is present on the surface of the repair area, or the surface temperature of the repair area is less than 40 °F (4 °C). All repaired members shall be restored as close as practicable to their original dimensions.

If temperatures below 45 °F (7 °C) are forecast during the curing period, Protection Method I according to Article 1020.13(d)(1) or Protection Method II according to Article 1020.13(d)(2) shall be used.

532.10 Protective Coat. Protective coat shall be applied to the completed repair at reinforcement bar locations with less than 3/4 in. (19 mm) of cover according to Article 503.19, except blast cleaning shall be performed to remove curing compound.

532.11 Inspection. After curing but no sooner than 28 days after placement of concrete or shotcrete, the Contractor shall provide ladders or other necessary equipment for the Engineer to inspect the repaired areas.

A repaired area with cracks, voids, or delamination shall be considered as nonconforming. Any of the following shall be cause for removal and replacement of a repaired area.

- (a) A single surface crack greater than 0.01 in. (0.25 mm) in width and greater than 12 in. (300 mm) in length.
- (b) Two or more surface cracks greater than 0.01 in. (0.25 mm) in width that total greater than 24 in. (600 mm) in length.
- (c) Map cracking in one or more regions totaling 15 percent or more of the gross surface area of the repair.
- (d) Two or more surface voids with least dimension of 3/4 in. (19 mm) each.
- (e) A repaired area not within 1/4 in. (6 mm) of the original dimensions.

Cracks greater than 0.007 in. (0.2 mm) in width shall be repaired with epoxy according to Section 590. For cracks less than or equal to 0.007 in. (0.2 mm) in width, the epoxy shall be applied to the surface of the crack as determined by the Engineer. Voids shall be repaired according to Article 503.15.

532.12 Method of Measurement. This work will be measured for payment in place and the area computed in square feet (square meters). For a repair at a corner, both sides will be measured.

532.13 Basis of Payment. This work will be paid for at the contract unit price per square foot (square meter) for STRUCTURAL REPAIR OF CONCRETE (DEPTH GREATER THAN 5 INCHES or STRUCTURAL REPAIR OF CONCRETE (DEPTH EQUAL TO OR LESS THAN 5 INCHES.

Concrete protected according to Article 1020.13(d) will be paid according to Article 503.22.

When not specified to be paid for elsewhere, the work to design, install, and remove the temporary shoring and cribbing will be paid according to Article 109.04.

With the exception of reinforcement damaged by the Contractor, supplemental reinforcement bars, mechanical bar splicers, hook bolts, and protective coat will be paid according to Article 109.04.”