

## Bridge Condition Terminology

The term "**structurally deficient**" means that the department believes a bridge should undergo a series of repairs or replacement within the next six years. The department's policy is to repair or replace all the structurally deficient state owned bridges during that time. The department also recommends that local governments follow the same schedule for their structurally deficient bridges.

The term "**functionally obsolete**" only means that a bridge does not meet current road design standards. For example, some bridges are "functionally obsolete" because they were built at a time when lane widths were narrower than the current standard.

The "**health index**" is a tool that measures the overall condition of a bridge. The health index typically includes about 10 to 12 different elements that are evaluated by the department. A lower health index means that more work would be required to improve the bridge to an ideal condition. A health index below 85 generally indicates that some repairs are needed, although it doesn't mean the bridge is unsafe. A low health index may also indicate that it would be more economical to replace the bridge than to repair it.

The "**sufficiency rating**" is a tool that is used to help determine whether a bridge that is structurally deficient or functionally obsolete should be repaired or just replaced. The sufficiency rating considers a number of factors, only about half of which relate to the condition of the bridge itself. The sufficiency ratings for bridges are part of a formula used by the Federal Highway Administration when it allocates federal funds to the states for bridge replacement.