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Old I-74 bridge materials are getting a second life

Removed overpass concrete will be crushed and used on the interstate's new ramps

October 25, 2003

By MATT BUEDEL
of the Journal Star

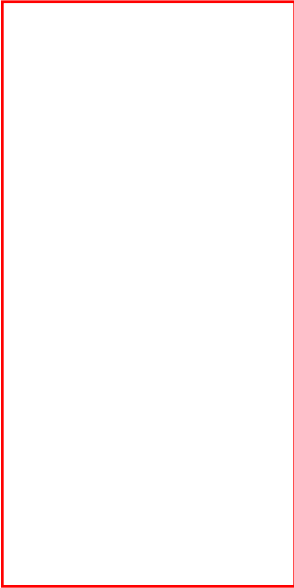
PEORIA - The next time you test drive a new car or hop on some heavy Caterpillar machinery, a part of Interstate 74 may be with you.

Tons of steel I-beams, miles of steel reinforcing rods and truckloads of concrete have been ripped from overpasses since the I-74 overhaul started, and those materials are being recycled into myriad products, including car frames and diesel engine blocks.

The first reprocessing step for support beams and steel rebar torn from area bridges takes place at Behr Peoria Inc. in South Peoria, where scrap metal is sheared, shredded and separated according to grade. Other companies buy the separated material, melt it down, use it in their products or resell it.

Behr Peoria president David Rumer said the company separates scrap for area clients like Caterpillar and ships materials to other corporations that further refine the product for automobile and heavy equipment manufacturers.

The scrap yard at Behr is a synthetic menagerie of stripped, flattened cars, appliances, tanks of all sizes, lawn mowers, lawn chairs, electric motors, radiators and



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enough wire to complete a skyscraper's circuitry.

Just about everything large and metal that no one ever sees again ends up there. It is then thrown together with other similar pieces and shipped out on one of 10 to 15 rail cars loaded with finished scrap per day.

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