



Jason Hornick/News & Messenger

The Virginia Department of Transportation closed the 125-year-old bridge connecting Aden Road in Nokesville due to advanced deterioration of the timber plank deck. The bridge reopened Tuesday.

## Century-old bridge reopens

By LILLIAN KAFKA

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The 125-year-old bridge on Aden Road reopened Tuesday afternoon after planks and fasteners had been replaced on the National Register of Historic Places structure.

"Our bridge inspector, Nick Roeper, believes it's safe to open," said Joan Morris, spokeswoman for the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Before VDOT shut down the bridge on Aug. 30, about 2,000 vehicles a day used the structure.

Inspectors closed the bridge because there were too many rotted, old deck planks that moved up and down when cars traveled over them.

Since then, the owner of the bridge, Norfolk Southern, replaced all of the severely worn and damaged deck planks, Morris said.

Norfolk Southern also owns the two railroad lines under the bridge.

VDOT performed a bridge joint inspection Tuesday just before it announced the re-opening.

The bridge, built in 1882, is

still under a 6-ton weight restriction, Morris said. That means no school buses or dump trucks.

VDOT will maintain a regular inspection schedule for the bridge — once every three months with informal inspections more frequently, she said.

VDOT employs about 100 bridge inspectors to conduct between 11,000 and 12,000 inspections a year. The agency maintains more than 20,000 bridges and large culverts.

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