



ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 1, 2021

ILLINOIS TOLLWAY PREPARED FOR WINTER STORM

Drivers urged to reduce speed, be alert for plows and any vehicles on the roadside

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – The Illinois Tollway is mobilizing its full fleet of 196 snowplows and opening its Snow Operations Center to manage the agency’s systemwide response to a winter storm bringing snow and freezing rain into the region today.

The Tollway is advising drivers to slow down and allow additional time for their New Year’s Day travels. Roadway conditions may vary as freezing rain moves through the area before turning later to snow.

“Keeping our customers safe is our highest priority and we will have crews working continuously throughout this storm to maintain safe driving conditions on our roads,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez. “We are asking drivers to help us protect them by increasing their distance from other vehicles to allow themselves more time to react to unexpected traffic or roadway conditions. We also want to remind drivers to give plows and emergency vehicles the extra room they need to do their work.”

To respond to this weather event, the Illinois Tollway has a full complement of more than 200 staff and supervisors working per shift, around the clock, if necessary, to ensure that roadways are kept clear of snow and ice. The Tollway is fully equipped to keep its system operating, beginning the winter driving season with more than 80,000 tons of roadway salt, nearly 50,000 gallons of liquid calcium chloride and more than 3,900 tons of roadway abrasives in its inventory. The Tollway has used an average of about 56,000 tons salt usage annually over the past four winters.

Drivers whose vehicles become disabled or who need help should remain in their cars, activate their hazard lights and dial *999 from a cellphone for assistance from the Illinois Tollway and Illinois State Police District 15. Drivers will be asked to note the roadway they are using, as well as the direction of travel and nearest milepost or crossroad. For crashes involving property damage only, drivers should report the incident to 630-241-6800 ext. 5042 and continue driving.

Tollway Travel Tips

The Tollway also offers the following tips for winter weather events:

- Slow down and leave enough time to reach your destination.
- Do not make sudden lane changes and always use your turn signal.
- Don't follow too closely and increase your intervals between vehicles.
- Reduce speed in cash lanes at toll plazas.
- Remember to always wear your safety belt and ensure children under the age of 8 are securely restrained in child safety seats.
- [Drop It and Drive](#). Don't text or use a hand-held cellphone while driving. Both are illegal.
- More information about safe winter driving is available at illinoistollway.com

Drivers can receive real-time information on pavement conditions and roadway incidents by signing up for Tollway Trip Tweets at twitter.com from the Tollway’s website at www.illinoistollway.com. Tweeters can follow all five Tollway Trips or just the roadways that interest them. The five are: 94_294_Tollway, @I_90_Tollway, @I_88_Tollway, @I_355_Tollway and @IL_390_Tollway.

The Illinois Tollway reminds motorists the state’s “Move Over Law” **requires** motorists to change lanes or to slow down and proceed with caution when passing any vehicle stopped on the side of the road with hazard lights activated. Drivers may visit <https://www.illinoistollway.com/roadway-safety> for more information on *Give Them Distance*, *Drop it and Drive*, and other Tollway safety campaigns aimed at making the road safer for everyone.

The Illinois Tollway also reminds customers that [oases located along the Tollway system](#) serve as warming centers and also provide drivers an opportunity to check their vehicles, fill their gas tanks or simply take a break. On the Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294/I-80), there are four oases: Lake Forest, O’Hare, Hinsdale and Chicago Southland Lincoln in South Holland. There is an oasis on the Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88) in DeKalb and on the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) in Belvidere.

About the Illinois Tollway

The Illinois Tollway is a user-fee system that receives no state or federal funds for maintenance and operations. The agency maintains and operates 294 miles of roadways in 12 counties in Northern Illinois, including the Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88), the Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355), the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90), the Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294/I-80) and the Illinois Route 390 Tollway.

#