



WINTER WEATHER
GET IT TOGETHER



State of Illinois
JB Pritzker, Governor

Illinois Department of Transportation
Omer Osman, Secretary

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‘Winter Weather – Get it Together,’ plan ahead for snow and ice

Annual safety campaign reminds public: Get ready for winter weather

SPRINGFIELD – With the days growing shorter and temperatures gradually getting colder, the public is being reminded that it’s time for “Winter Weather – Get it Together.” The Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois State Police and Illinois Tollway are prepared for whatever snow-and-ice season has in store, but also are asking you to get ready for winter travel over the coming months.

“The unseasonable weather might mean snow and ice are the furthest from your mind, but conditions will change very soon. You don’t want to be caught by surprise and unprepared,” said **Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman**. “Our team at IDOT spends the entire year getting ready for winter by bringing in extra help, stocking up on materials and making sure our equipment is ready to go. By doing your part now, we can ‘Get it together’ and make this the safest winter ever on Illinois roads.”

Now is a crucial time to begin practicing basic winter driving skills and preparing for even routine trips to take longer, even though temperatures are above freezing during the day and roads appear clear. As part of the “Winter Weather – Get it Together” campaign, travelers are encouraged to follow these simple guidelines:

- Bookmark IDOT’s [GettingAroundIllinois.com](https://www.idot.gov/GettingAroundIllinois.com) to check road conditions 24/7 before heading out. Get in the habit of monitoring weather forecasts.
- Do not travel during bad weather unless absolutely necessary. If you do have to drive, check the forecast and make sure someone is aware of your route. Familiarize yourself with public transportation and ridesharing options.

- Give yourself plenty of extra time. Slow down and increase the distance between other vehicles.
- Watch out for black ice. A road may appear clear, but can be treacherous.
- Be especially careful when approaching intersections, ramps, bridges and shaded areas that are prone to icing and can become extremely slick.
- Don't crowd the plow. You might see them, but they might not see you. Also, road conditions are much better behind than in front of the plow. Any plow that's hit is one less resource available to clear the roads.
- Prepare an emergency kit with jumper cables, flares or reflectors, windshield washer fluid, an ice scraper, traction material, blankets, non-perishable food and a first-aid kit.
- Always wear a seat belt. It's the law in Illinois. And it's your best defense in a crash.
- Drop it and drive. Put down the mobile devices. This, too, is the law.
- Give them distance. Obey the Move Over law by slowing down and changing lanes when approaching ANY stopped vehicle.
- Carry a cell phone charger in case of emergency.
- Follow IDOT on [Facebook](#) and [X](#) to see how the agency is responding to winter weather throughout the state.
- For more winter driving tips, check out this short IDOT [video](#).

“Winter weather - snow, ice, freezing rain, arctic winds - always make driving more difficult and more dangerous,” **said ISP Director Brendan F. Kelly**. “Our troopers risk their lives on the roads helping motorists who have crashed or become stranded in the snow and ice. Help keep them, and yourself, safe by planning for extra drive time, slowing down, and moving over for emergency vehicles stopped to help others stay safe.”

For the upcoming winter, IDOT will have more than 1,800 trucks available for deployment to plow almost 45,000 lane miles of roads statewide, the equivalent of driving back and forth between New York City and Los Angeles eight times. Last winter, IDOT crews spread more than 312,000 tons of salt statewide. This winter, salt domes are at capacity, with more than 542,000 tons on hand, a little more than twice the weight of Willis Tower.

The public is advised that snow-and-ice response times could be impacted due to an industry-wide shortage of workers with a commercial driver's license, resulting in challenges in filling plow driver positions. While hiring at IDOT continues for both temporary and permanent positions, staffing levels for the winter response team are down approximately 10 to 15% since the start of the pandemic. For information on job postings throughout the state, visit <https://illinois.jobs2web.com>.

“We're keeping our customers safe this winter by quickly mobilizing our roadway crews and snowplows whenever winter storms strike and by rapidly responding to drivers who need assistance while traveling on our system,” **said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Cassandra Rouse**. “Drivers who become stranded along our roads should dial *999 and then remain with their vehicles until help arrives. We're asking our customers to help us keep them safe this winter by reducing their speed during severe weather and increasing their distance from other vehicles, especially plows and emergency vehicles.”

During winter storms, the Illinois Tollway deploys a fleet of 196 snowplows to clear its 294 miles of roads and this year has stockpiled 112,000 tons of salt to help ensure that even during snowy winter weather its 1.6 million daily drivers can safely reach their destinations.

Tollway Trip Tweets provides real-time roadway incident information and pavement conditions via @94_294_Tollway, @I_90_Tollway, @I_88_Tollway, @I_355_Tollway and @IL_390_Tollway.

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