



# ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**December 18, 2024**

## **ILLINOIS TOLLWAY READY FOR BUSY HOLIDAY TRAVEL SEASON**

*Drivers reminded to follow posted speed limits to safely complete their travels for Christmas, Hanukkah and New Year*

**DOWNERS GROVE, IL** – Drivers using the Illinois Tollway during this busy holiday season should protect themselves and other drivers by slowing down and following posted speed limits as they travel to their Christmas, Hanukkah and New Year’s destinations.

The heaviest holiday traffic is expected on Friday, December 20, when about 1.9 million vehicles are forecast to travel on the Illinois Tollway system, while on Monday, December 23, about 1.7 million vehicles are projected to use the Tollway.

About 1.5 million vehicles are expected on the Tollway system on Tuesday, December 24, and about 1.1 million vehicles on Christmas Day. On New Year’s Day – traditionally the Tollway’s quietest travel day--about 800,000 vehicles are expected on the Tollway system. On an average day, 1.6 million vehicles use the 294-mile Illinois Tollway system.

Drivers who need roadside assistance while traveling on the Tollway should dial \*999 to receive prompt help from Highway Emergency Lane Patrols (H.E.L.P), which the Tollway plans to increase during the holiday season to ensure crews quickly locate and assist stranded drivers by changing tires, jump-starting batteries, dispensing fuel and arranging for tows.

“Our highest priority is protecting our customers, whether it’s by adding motorist aid patrols so customers can rapidly receive any roadside help they need or by urging drivers to slow down and always follow posted speed limits so they arrive safely to celebrate the holidays with family and friends,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Cassaundra Rouse. “Exceeding speed limits puts drivers at risk and gives them less time to react to unexpected roadway situations or changing winter weather conditions. Our most important goal this season is that our customers safely complete their holiday travels.”

### **Drop It and Drive**

Remember to Drop It and Drive because it is illegal to use a hand-held device when driving in Illinois. Sending or receiving a text can take a driver’s eyes off the road for 5 seconds – traveling at 55 miles an hour that’s like traveling farther than the length of football field with your eyes closed. Using a cellphone behind the wheel is considered a moving violation even if the vehicle is stopped at a traffic signal.

### **Give Them Distance**

Illinois requires drivers to slow down, move over and change lanes, if possible, to make extra room when approaching ANY vehicle with lights flashing, stopped on a roadway. The Move Over Law is intended to protect first responders and roadway workers, as well as any driver who may be stopped on the side of the road, and penalties for ignoring the law have been increased to a minimum fine of \$250 for a first-time violation and \$750 for subsequent violations as further deterrent.

### **Two convenient ways to pay tolls**

To make traveling as convenient as possible, the Tollway offers I-PASS and Pay By Plate offer options for both local and out-of-town holiday travelers to pay tolls. The Pay By Plate service allows drivers to be billed for tolls on the Illinois Tollway when accounts are set up within 14 days of travel, while I-PASS allows drivers with pre-paid accounts to pay tolls in Illinois and 18 other states that participate in the E-ZPass system. Drivers can use the Official Illinois Tollway App or go to [www.illinoistollway.com](http://www.illinoistollway.com) to set up and manage their accounts, including adding license plates of family or friends traveling for the holiday.

### **Get real-time road condition updates**

Whether the trip is short or long, sign up for Tollway Trip Tweets with real-time roadway incident information and weather conditions at Tollway Trip 90, Tollway Trip 88, Tollway Trip 355, Tollway Trip 94/294 and Tollway Trip 390.

### **Construction – lane closures suspended for holidays**

Ongoing construction activity will be restricted to better serve Tollway customers during holiday travel with any temporary maintenance and construction lane closures suspended from noon on Tuesday, December 24, through 9 a.m. on Thursday, December 26, and again from noon on Tuesday, December 31, through 9 a.m. on Thursday, January 2. Some construction work zones may remain in place, so drivers are reminded to slow down and obey work zone speed limits.

Areas where Tollway drivers can expect to see ongoing work include:

#### **Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294/I-80)**

- Between St. Charles Road and Roosevelt Road, southbound traffic shifts into a split configuration with two left lanes continuing on the I-294 mainline and two right lanes on auxiliary lanes providing access to exit ramps for eastbound I-290 and for westbound I-88 before reconnecting with the southbound I-294 mainline.
- Between I-55 and North Avenue, traffic is shifted in both directions and a southbound counterflow lane between Cermak Road and Ogden Avenue. Watch for signage indicating changing traffic patterns.
- Closures and detours are in place on the ramps connecting westbound I-290 to northbound I-294 and westbound Roosevelt Road to southbound I-294.

#### **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.

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