



# ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS INTERESTED IN TRANSPORTATION CAREERS TOUR ILLINOIS TOLLWAY MAINTENANCE AND CONSTRUCTION SITES**

*Students will meet with engineers, managers to learn about skills needed to build and maintain 294-mile Tollway system*

**DOWNERS GROVE, IL** – Students from five Chicago-area high schools are meeting this week with Illinois Tollway engineers and roadway managers at Tollway maintenance sites as part of an innovative program to offer teens a close-up view of how the agency builds and maintains its roads to help foster their interest in future transportation careers.

The visits, which also will include tours of active Tollway construction sites, are intended to encourage students to consider future roles in the construction trades and engineering fields while also developing a new pool of skilled workers for the Tollway and the transportation industry.

“We are committed to inspiring the next generation of leaders to learn how their interests today can translate into successful careers in the transportation industry,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Cassandra Rouse. “By connecting students with our teams, we are providing a firsthand look at how the work we do every day keeps people and goods moving safely and efficiently while contributing to the regional economy.”

Students will tour the Tollway’s Bensenville Maintenance Site on Thursday, April 24, and the agency’s Alsip Maintenance Site on Friday, April 25, to get a behind-the-scenes look at the agency’s state-of-the-art facilities, which house plows and roadway equipment, and are staffed around the clock by Tollway crews who maintain roads, assist customers and respond to emergency situations.

Tollway staffers will brief the students on the equipment and safety practices they use to protect themselves and drivers while they are working on the roads and instruct the teens about the technology used by the agency, including overhead roadway gantries and digital message signs that relay real-time traffic and safety information to drivers.

Tollway staff will educate students about the importance the roadway system plays in providing critical transportation links between communities that foster economic growth.

The tours are designed to allow the students to talk directly with transportation industry professionals who build and operate the Tollway system, providing the teens with insights into the career paths available at the agency. By fostering these conversations, the Tollway intends to encourage students to consider future careers in transportation fields that include civil engineering, construction and skilled building trades.

Students will also visit Tollway work sites to view the equipment and construction equipment being used to upgrade and improve portions of the Tollway system.

Some of the teens will tour construction occurring on the Tri-State Tollway (I-294) near Hinsdale—work that is part of a \$4 billion project to widen and reconfigure a 23-mile segment of the Central Tri-State

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Tollway between Rosemont and Oak Lawn to provide congestion relief, update aging infrastructure and address regional transportation needs.

Other students will tour a work near Bensenville where the Tollway is building the new I-490 Tollway along the western edge of O'Hare International Airport to connect I-294 with the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) and the Illinois Route 390 Tollway while also providing for the first time western access into O'Hare Airport.

**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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