



ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ILLINOIS TOLLWAY DEPLOYS 24-HOUR ZERO WEATHER ROAD PATROLS TO ASSIST CUSTOMERS DURING DANGEROUSLY COLD TEMPERATURES AND WINDCHILLS

*Drivers who need roadside assistance should dial *999, remain in their vehicles*

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – The Illinois Tollway is launching around-the-clock Zero Weather Road Patrols to more rapidly locate and reach drivers who need roadside assistance during the dangerously cold weather expected to move across Northern Illinois tonight and continue into Tuesday, December 16.

Drivers need to be prepared for frigid temperatures and sub-zero windchills as they travel this weekend and should dial *999 for prompt roadside assistance if they experience mechanical problems or are stranded along the Tollway system. After calling for help, drivers for their own safety should remain inside their vehicles until Tollway crews arrive.

To help reach drivers faster during the extremely cold weather affecting the region, the Tollway operates dedicated Zero Weather Road Patrols to search for stranded drivers and respond more quickly to calls for assistance.

“Safety is always our top priority and to better protect our customers during dangerously cold weather we operate special Zero Weather Road Patrols that operate around the clock to look for stranded drivers and rapidly respond to *999 calls for assistance,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Cassaundra Rouse. “Putting these additional road crews out on our system helps ensure our customers are able to travel safely even during extreme temperatures and windchills.”

Drivers calling *999 will obtain rapid assistance any time of the day or night from Zero Weather Road Patrols, Tollway Highway Emergency Lane Patrol (H.E.L.P.) trucks or Tollway roadway maintenance crews.

Zero Weather Road Patrols

The Illinois Tollway typically operates 24-hour Zero Weather Road Patrols whenever temperatures or sustained wind chills fall below zero degrees to bolster the roadway assistance already provided by Tollway Highway Emergency Lane Patrol (H.E.L.P.) trucks.

While Tollway H.E.L.P. trucks sponsored by Geico run from 4 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday, a minimum of 12 Zero Weather Road Patrols provide additional coverage throughout the day and night, including weekends.

The Zero Weather Road Patrols consist of crew cab trucks equipped with arrow boards for directing traffic around accidents or stranded vehicles and accommodate passengers if motorists need to be transported to a Tollway maintenance garage, toll plaza or Tollway oasis while service is obtained.

Cars or trucks with flat tires, batteries needing a boost, overheated radiators or empty fuel tanks are just some of the most frequent problems reported among drivers needing help.

Winter Weather Travel Tips

The Tollway offers the following travel tips to keep safe during dangerously cold weather:

1. Cellphone users should **call *999 motorist assistance** for roadway assistance and note the roadway and direction of travel and nearest milepost or crossroad.
2. Stranded motorists should **turn on their emergency lights and remain in their vehicles** until help arrives.
3. **Be sure your cellphone is fully charged** before heading out.
4. **Be sure tires are properly inflated** during cold weather. Tires lose a pound of pressure for every 10 degrees the temperature drops.
5. **Keep your gas tank at least half full** to avoid gas line freeze-up and ensure that you have extra to account for additional driving time if the weather is unfavorable.
6. **Keep a cold weather safety kit** in your car that includes gloves, boots, blankets, road flares, water and a flashlight with fresh batteries.

To receive real-time information on pavement conditions and roadway incidents before traveling, drivers should sign up for Tollway Trip Tweets via X on the Tollway's website illinoistollway.com. Drivers may follow all five Tollway Trips or just the roadways that interest them.

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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