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ILLINOIS TOLLWAY INSPECTOR GENERAL RELEASES SUMMARY ACTIVITY REPORT FOR PAST SIX MONTHS

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – The Illinois Tollway's Office of the Inspector General today issued its report summarizing activity for October 2012 through March 2013. During that time period, the office opened 14 full investigations and closed 16. Many of the investigations were referred to the Office of the Inspector General by the Tollway's management team.

"Cooperation and support are key to our successful investigations to date," said Illinois Tollway Inspector General James Wagner. "We continue to work hard to send the message that misuse of Tollway funds and resources is not tolerated."

"The Office of the Inspector General continues to review and respond to any and all questions regarding Tollway compliance with policies and procedures, especially those that guide the agency as it spends public funds," said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Kristi Lafleur. "We take these findings seriously and welcome the opportunity to enhance our operations."

Two cases involved fraudulent checks presented for payment on the Tollway's bank account that is used to process refund payments to I-PASS customers when they close their accounts. In both cases, the banks reimbursed the Tollway for the fraudulent checks and there was no financial loss to the agency. No Tollway employees were involved and the agency has made program changes and strengthened its internal controls to reduce the risk of future check fraud.

One case was a joint investigation with the Illinois State Police Medicaid Fraud Unit involving a Tollway employee who submitted false timesheets claiming care for another individual in order to obtain Medicaid reimbursement funds. That employee resigned from the Tollway and theft charges are currently pending. Another case involved a toll collector's workers' compensation claim and extended leave of absence.

One case involved a Tollway maintenance supervisor who was found sleeping on the job and intimidating employees. The supervisor was terminated.

One case involved a vendor's employee who had previously negotiated with several callers to the Tollway's call center for his own financial benefit in exchange for dismissing or reducing toll violations and fines. The employee was terminated by the call center vendor and the investigation has been referred to the DuPage County State's Attorney for prosecution.

Another investigation referred to the Office of the Inspector General by the Tollway's management team identified a construction contractor who had not submitted the appropriate form for a subcontractor working at one of the Tollway's worksites.

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“Members of the Tollway Board are pleased with the continuing oversight provided by the Inspector General,” said Illinois Tollway Board Chair Paula Wolff. “We appreciate Jim’s valuable insights about how we can improve our agency’s policies and procedures.”

There are no recommended administrative actions or matters for consideration by the Governor, the Tollway Board of Directors and the General Assembly since all issues were appropriately addressed by Tollway management and the Inspector General.

A copy of the complete report is available to view or download at www.illinoistollway.com.

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 286 miles of interstate tollways 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) and the Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294/I-80).

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