



NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ILLINOIS TOLLWAY LAUNCHES ZERO WEATHER ROAD PATROLS TO ASSIST CUSTOMERS DURING EXTREME COLD

Patrols bolster H.E.L.P. trucks and State Police District 15

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – The Illinois Tollway is launching around-the-clock Zero Weather Road Patrols to aid stranded customers during the severe cold weather and dangerous wind chills anticipated to continue through Friday, December 16.

The Illinois Tollway typically operates Zero Weather Road Patrols whenever temperatures or sustained wind chills fall below zero degrees. The 24-hour patrols search for drivers stranded in disabled vehicles and respond to calls that come in to *999 motorist assistance, Illinois Tollway dispatch or Illinois State Police District 15.

“These patrols provide additional protection day or night for our customers who are traveling in these dangerously cold conditions,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Greg Bedalov. “The Illinois Tollway’s first priority is ensuring the safety of drivers using our roadways, particularly during severe weather. We remind our customers to help protect themselves if they become stranded by remaining in their vehicles and calling *999 for assistance.”

While the Illinois Tollway’s Highway Emergency Lane Patrol (H.E.L.P.) trucks sponsored by State Farm run from 4 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday, a minimum of 12 Zero Weather Road Patrols provide additional 24-hour coverage, including on weekends, to augment H.E.L.P. trucks and Illinois State Police patrols.

The Zero Weather Road Patrols consist of crew cab trucks equipped with arrow boards for directing traffic around accidents or stranded vehicles and enough room to accommodate up to five 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 empty fuel tanks, flat tires, batteries needing a boost, or overheated radiators 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:

- **Be sure your cellphone is fully charged** before heading out.
- **Be sure tires are properly inflated** during cold weather. Tires lose a pound of pressure for every 10 degrees the temperature drops. Check your vehicle owner’s manual for recommended tire pressure.
- **Maintain your vehicle properly.** Be sure that lights, brakes, windshield wipers, defrosters, radiator and other parts are in good working order **and always keep your gas tank at least two-thirds full to minimize condensation.**
- **Consider using winter or synthetic motor oil** for colder temperatures, as conventional oils may thicken in colder temperatures. Check your vehicle manufacturer’s recommendations for oil that meets colder temperature ranges.

- **Prepare an emergency car care kit.** Be ready for emergencies with a kit that includes jumper cables, flares or reflectors, windshield washer fluid, a small ice scraper, shovel, traction material, blankets, non-perishable food and a first aid kit.
- Stranded motorists should **turn on their emergency lights and remain in their vehicles** until help arrives.
- **Call *999 for roadway assistance.** Should you encounter car trouble and require roadway assistance, try to move your car to a safe position on the shoulder or in an untraveled area. Report stranded vehicles by dialing *999 from a cellular phone and note the roadway, direction of travel and nearest milepost or crossroad.
- **Check your vehicle at an Illinois Tollway oases.** Drivers can stop at Tollway oases to check their vehicles or simply take a break during severe winter weather. The oases include 7-Eleven stores and Mobil fuel stations, as well as a variety of food, beverage and retail offerings. There are four oases on the Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294/I-80): Lake Forest, O'Hare, Hinsdale and Chicago Southland Lincoln in South Holland. There are two oases on the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90): Des Plaines and Belvidere. And there is one oasis on the Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88) in DeKalb.

Illinois Tollway Keeps Drivers Informed

In addition to working to keep roads free of snow and ice, the Illinois Tollway provides drivers with information to help them reach their destinations safely during winter weather events.

The Illinois Tollway's Traffic and Incident Management System (TIMS) provides real-time travel times and roadway conditions on over-the-road electronic message signs throughout the Tollway.

Real-time roadway incident information including the type of incident, location and impact on traffic is also available on illinoistollway.com or via Twitter to assist drivers in planning their trips. Drivers can sign up for Tollway Trip Tweets at twitter.com from the Tollway's website at illinoistollway.com. Tweeters can follow all five Tollway Trips or just the roadways that interest them. The five are Tollway Trip 90, Tollway Trip 94/294, Tollway Trip 88, Tollway Trip 355 and Tollway Trip 390.

Before traveling, customers can access live camera feeds that offer "bird's-eye" views from 20 different locations along the Tollway system. The camera feeds are easily accessible by selecting the "Interactive Tollway Map" link on the Tollway's homepage at illinoistollway.com.

In addition, the Tollway operates a toll-free telephone line to keep customers up-to-date about weather conditions on its roadways. Customers can call 1-800-TOLL-FYI (1-800-865-5394) for recorded information updated every two hours or as conditions require during winter storms.

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 292 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), the Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294/I-80) and the Illinois Route 390 Tollway.

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