



WINTER WEATHER  
GET IT TOGETHER



**State of Illinois**  
JB Pritzker, Governor

**Illinois Department of Transportation**  
Omer Osman, Acting Secretary

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Nov. 22, 2019

## **As Thanksgiving nears, IDOT, ISP and Tollway remind public: “Winter Weather – Get it Together”**

**SPRINGFIELD** – With motorists throughout the state preparing for Thanksgiving travel, the Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois State Police and the Illinois Tollway remind everyone that the brunt of winter is yet to come and encourage the driving public with “Winter Weather – Get it Together.”

“Illinois winters are unpredictable. Weather and road conditions need to be on the minds of all travelers these next few months,” said Acting Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman. “Our snow-and-ice teams have prepared throughout the year to make this winter driving season as safe as possible. When you see them doing their jobs this winter, please give them room to operate. By planning ahead and practicing safe winter driving habits, you can do your part to help ensure the safety of everyone on the road.”

Throughout the coming months of cold weather and adverse conditions, motorists should practice basic winter driving skills and build extra time into their schedules. As part of the “Winter Weather – Get it Together” campaign, travelers are encouraged to follow these simple guidelines:

- Always wear a seat belt. It’s the law in Illinois.
- Slow down. Slower speeds, slower acceleration, slower steering and slower braking all are required in winter conditions.
- Drop it and drive. Put down the handheld devices – it, too, is the law in Illinois.
- Don’t crowd the plow. A snowplow operator’s field of vision is restricted. You may see them, but they may not see you. Any plow that’s hit must be pulled out of service, resulting in one less piece of equipment responding to snow and ice.
- Avoid using cruise control when conditions are slick.
- Watch out for black ice. A road surface may appear clear but can be treacherous.
- Be especially careful approaching intersections, ramps, bridges and shady areas. All are prone to icing.

- Do not travel during bad weather unless absolutely necessary. If you do have to make a trip, check the forecast and make sure someone is aware of your travel route. Acquaint yourself with local public transportation options.
- Prepare an emergency kit that contains jumper cables, flares or reflectors, windshield washer fluid, a small ice scraper, traction material, blankets, non-perishable food and a first-aid kit.
- Carry a cell phone and a car charger in case of emergency. For emergency assistance in the Chicago area, call \*999.
- Give them distance. Obey the Move Over Law by slowing down and changing lanes when approaching ANY stopped vehicle with flashing lights.
- For a list of suggested maintenance for your car, visit the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration's winter driving [website](#).
- For more winter driving tips, check out this short IDOT [video](#).

Motorists can check statewide travel conditions by visiting [gettingaroundillinois.com](http://gettingaroundillinois.com).

“Our top priority during winter storms is to quickly and safely clear our roads, and the Illinois Tollway’s roadway team has an outstanding track record,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez. “We remind drivers to help keep everyone safe during winter weather by slowing down, increasing their distance from other vehicles, and giving our snowplows the room they need to do their work.”

For the upcoming winter, IDOT will have more than 1,800 trucks available for deployment to plow almost 16,000 miles of roads statewide, the equivalent of driving from Illinois to South America and back. Last year, IDOT spread more than 600,000 tons of salt statewide. This winter, salt domes throughout the state are close to capacity, with more than 570,000 tons on hand.

The Illinois Tollway mobilizes its fleet of 196 snowplows during winter storms and has stockpiled 81,000 tons of salt to keep its 294-mile system of five roadways safe and clear for its 1.6 million daily drivers.

“As the winter weather approaches, the Illinois State Police would like to ask all drivers to keep their eyes on the road, drive at a speed safe for conditions and *Move Over-Slow Down* for all vehicles with flashing lights,” Illinois State Police Director Brendan F. Kelly said. “Please help us keep all motorists, including emergency personnel, safe by making responsible driving choices during hazardous winter weather conditions.”

###