



*Move Illinois:
The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 24, 2018

**NEW TRAFFIC PATTERN SCHEDULED TO BEGIN THIS WEEK
FOR CENTRAL TRI-STATE TOLLWAY (I-294) RECONSTRUCTION**

Work zone traffic split and “express lanes” in both directions between Balmoral Avenue and the O’Hare Oasis

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – Traffic shifts are scheduled to begin this week as part of ongoing reconstruction work for the Central Tri-State (I-294) Project underway between Balmoral Avenue and the O’Hare Oasis. A work zone traffic split in both directions will create express lanes between Balmoral Avenue and the O’Hare Oasis with restricted access to ramps and cash lanes at the Irving Park Toll Plaza.

Electronic message signs and construction signage will be put in place in advance to alert drivers to the new traffic patterns and work zone speed limits. All work is weather dependent and traffic is expected to remain in this configuration through fall.

Beginning this week traffic will be shifted in segments. Overnight on Wednesday, September 26, southbound traffic between Balmoral Avenue and Irving Park Road will shift, followed by the northbound lanes in the same area overnight on Thursday, September 27. During the week of October 1, southbound traffic between Irving Park Road and the O’Hare Oasis, followed by the northbound lanes.

The new traffic pattern will provide a work zone in the middle with two lanes on the right and two express lanes on the left in both directions on I-294 between Balmoral Avenue and the O’Hare Oasis. In addition, traffic restrictions will include:

- Northbound traffic traveling in the express lanes on the left will not have access to the Balmoral Avenue exit.
- Southbound traffic traveling in the express lanes will not have access to the O’Hare Oasis or Irving Park Road exits, as well as cash lanes at the Irving Park Toll Plaza. I-PASS customers will be able to pay their tolls electronically in either lane. There is no toll collection at this toll plaza for northbound traffic.
- Trucks are prohibited from using the express lanes.

In 2018, the Illinois Tollway is beginning work to repair, resurface and widen I-294 to five lanes between Balmoral Avenue and Wolf Road in Franklin Park, as well as reconstructing barrier walls, medians and shoulders in this area as part of the Central Tri-State Tollway Project.

Construction in this area is being coordinated with the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Federal Aviation Administration, Village of Schiller Park, Village of Rosemont and Village of Franklin Park, as well as local fire and police departments.

The Central Tri-State Tollway is being reconstructed to provide congestion relief, update old infrastructure to meet current and future transportation demand and address regional needs. This work

is part of the Tollway's 15-year, \$14 billion capital program, *Move Illinois: The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*. More than 220,000 vehicles use the Central Tri-State Tollway daily.

A detailed planning and refinement process is underway to complete design and construction plans for reconstruction of the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294), including reconfiguring the I-290/I-88 Interchange at I-294, rebuilding the Mile Long Bridge and the BNSF Railway Bridge as well as integrating Flex Lanes and SmartRoad technology. The Central Tri-State Concept includes findings and draft recommendations being considered and evaluated by the Tollway as it moves forward in the reconstruction of the Central Tri-State.

Maps, construction and detour information about the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project is available on the Tollway's website at illinoistollway.com via the Interactive Tollway Map and under "Projects Overview" in the Explore Projects section.

Work Zone Safety

The Illinois Tollway is committed to ensuring that the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) remains safe for both drivers and workers during construction, which is part of the agency's overall commitment to roadway safety.

Construction zone speed limits are in effect in all construction zones 24/7 and drivers should continue to watch for changing traffic patterns and use caution, especially when workers are present. On I-294, a 45 mph work zone speed limit is in effect throughout the construction season.

The Illinois Tollway reminds motorists that the "Move Over Law" requires motorists to change lanes or to slow down and proceed with caution when passing any vehicle on the side of the road with hazard lights activated. If you see flashing lights ahead, please move over or slow down.

Illinois State Police have zero tolerance for drivers speeding in work zones or failure to comply with the Move Over Law.

The minimum penalty for speeding in a work zone is \$375. Posted signs advise drivers of a \$10,000 fine and a 14-year jail sentence for hitting a roadway worker.

Penalties for failure to slow down or move over for a vehicle on the shoulder with flashing lights includes up to a \$10,000 fine, 2-year suspension of driving privileges and jail time, in extreme cases.

About Move Illinois

The Illinois Tollway's 15-year, \$14 billion capital program, *Move Illinois: The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*, is improving mobility, relieving congestion, reducing pollution, creating as many as 120,000 jobs and linking economies throughout the region. The first six years of *Move Illinois* are on schedule and within budget, delivering the new Illinois Route 390 Tollway and a rebuilt and widened Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) with its new SmartRoad corridor, as well as opening a new interchange connecting the Tri-State Tollway (I-294) to I-57. Progress continues on projects addressing the remaining needs of the existing Tollway system, delivering the new I-490 Tollway Project and reconstruction of the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) and planning for emerging projects.

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.