



NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 25, 2018

ILLINOIS TOLLWAY PREPARED FOR OVERNIGHT SNOWFALL

Drivers reminded to slow down, keep a safe distance from snowplows and be prepared for variable road conditions

DOWNTOWN GROVE, IL – The Illinois Tollway has deployed its full fleet of 196 snowplows in response to snow that is expected to continue falling overnight into Monday, possibly affecting drivers during their weekend travels and morning commutes. The Tollway's Snow Operations Center is open to manage the agency's systemwide response.

"Our top priority is keeping our customers safe and we're prepared for the challenges we will face this winter, which includes not only keeping our roads clear of snow and ice but also assisting customers whose vehicles become disabled," said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Liz Gorman. "We're asking drivers to help us keep them safe by remembering to slow down during severe weather and be prepared for reduced visibility and changing pavement conditions. We also are reminding drivers that if they become stranded they should stay in their vehicles and call for assistance."

Drivers whose vehicles become disabled on the Tollway system should dial *999 from a cellphone for assistance from Illinois State Police District 15. Drivers should note the roadway and direction of travel and nearest milepost or crossroad.

The Tollway and other Illinois transportation and safety agencies also have launched the Give Them Distance campaign to remind drivers to slow down and change lanes safely when they see any stopped vehicle with flashing emergency or hazard lights. Drivers can visit www.GiveThemDistance.com for more information on this safe-driving initiative.

To respond to this weather event, the Illinois Tollway will have a full complement of more than 200 staff and supervisors per shift to ensure that roadways are kept clear of snow and ice.

During heavy snowfall, snowplows often work in tandem to remove as much ice, slush and snow as possible from all lanes at once. When it is safe to pass, the plows spread out and allow traffic to flow around them.

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:

[@I 94 Tollway](#), [@I 90 Tollway](#), [@I 88 Tollway](#), [@I 355 Tollway](#) and [@IL 390 Tollway](#).

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](#).

How the Tollway Prepares for Winter Weather

The Illinois Tollway strives to provide customers with the highest possible level of service during winter operations. Every effort is made to act quickly with snow and ice control measures that ensure the free flow of people, goods and services regardless of winter weather conditions.

Equipment

- The Illinois Tollway uses 196 snowplow trucks to clear its roadways of snow and ice.
- The Illinois Tollway used 3,290 plow blades last winter season.

Materials

- The Tollway this winter is prepared with a supply of 72,000 tons of salt, 50,000 gallons of liquid calcium chloride and 3,500 tons of roadway abrasives in inventory.
- During the 2017-2018 winter season, the Tollway used 60,000 tons of salt, 33,000 gallons of liquid calcium chloride and 7,000 tons of roadway abrasives. The average salt usage per year over the last four years is about 47,000 tons.
- Typical salt applications are 100 lbs. per lane mile during small storms and 500 lbs. per lane mile during heavier snowstorms or extreme icing conditions. Onboard computer controls monitor salt usage based on the speed of the truck and the amount of salt being put down.

Personnel

- The Illinois Tollway has 12 maintenance facilities, each responsible for up to 30 center lane miles. Eight maintenance facilities are located in the Chicago metropolitan area and others are located in Rockford, Marengo, Dixon and DeKalb.
- During a full call-out, more than 200 equipment operators, mechanics, clerical staff and supervisors are needed for each of the 12-hour shifts required to provide for 24-hour coverage. The Illinois Tollway’s Snow Operations Center is staffed with traffic center technicians and snow and ice control managers during winter weather events.
- It takes snow crews 2,281 lane miles to de-ice and plow one pass of the Illinois Tollway system during a snow and ice storm – the equivalent of driving from Chicago to San Francisco.
- In a typical 12-hour shift, snow crews can make up to eight complete passes of the 2,281 lane-mile system for a total coverage of about 18,250 miles. In a 24-hour storm operation, this would equate to more than 36,500 miles of coverage – the equivalent of driving coast to coast across the United States about 13 times.

Tollway Travel Tips

The Tollway offers the following tips for winter weather events:

- Slow down and leave enough time to reach your destination.
- Do not make sudden lane changes and always use your turn signal.
- Don’t follow too closely and increase your intervals between vehicles.
- Reduce speed in cash lanes at toll plazas.
- Remember to always wear your safety belt and ensure children under the age of 8 are securely restrained in child safety seats.
- Drop It and Drive. Don’t text or use a hand-held cellphone while driving. Both are illegal.

- Need Help? Dial *999. If your vehicle becomes disabled, park safely on the shoulder, raise your hood and remain in your vehicle. Dial *999 and assistance will be dispatched to your location.
- More information about safe winter driving is available at 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 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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