



*Move Illinois:
The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 28, 2019

OVERNIGHT RAMP AND LANE CLOSURES SCHEDULED ON TRI-STATE TOLLWAY (I-294) FOR 159TH STREET INTERCHANGE WORK

Temporary, full closures planned for bridge pier removal and bridge beam placement as part of interchange improvement project

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – Temporary, overnight ramp closures are scheduled this weekend on the Tri-State Tollway (I-294) at 159th Street in Markham for bridge replacement work. Additional closures on I-294 are scheduled in early April.

Electronic message signs will be put in place in advance to alert drivers. The temporary closures are necessary to provide a work zone to safely accommodate the repairs at the 159th Street Bridge.

On Friday, March 29, two northbound lanes on I-294 are scheduled to close at 8 p.m. Intermittent, full closures of the ramp carrying eastbound 159th Street to northbound I-294, each lasting 15 minutes, are scheduled to begin just after midnight, for bridge pier removal. Ramp closures are scheduled to end by 4:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 30. All lanes on I-294 are scheduled to reopen by 7 a.m.

On Saturday, March 30, two southbound lanes on I-294 are scheduled to close at 8 p.m. Intermittent, full closures of the ramp connecting southbound I-294 to eastbound 159th Street, each lasting 15 minutes, are scheduled to begin just after midnight. Ramp closures are scheduled to end by 4:30 a.m. on Sunday, March 31. All lanes on I-294 are scheduled to reopen by 7 a.m.

In early April, overnight weekend lane closures on I-294 are scheduled for bridge beam placement. During those closures, two southbound lanes on I-294 are scheduled to close at 7 p.m. with a third lane closing at midnight. Intermittent, full closures of southbound I-294, each lasting 15 minutes, are scheduled to begin at midnight and be complete by 3:30 a.m. One lane in each direction is scheduled to remain closed through the weekend. A second night of similar closures in the northbound lanes will follow with intermittent, full closures of northbound I-294 scheduled to begin at 11 p.m.

In 2019, the Illinois Tollway is completing improvements at the 159th Street Interchange. Work on this project includes rebuilding the existing 159th Street Bridge and reconstructing four ramps at the 159th Street Interchange: southbound I-294 to eastbound 159th Street, eastbound 159th Street to northbound I-294, northbound I-294 to westbound 159th Street and westbound 159th Street to southbound I-294. Lighting and drainage structures will also be upgraded.

Currently, traffic on 159th Street is shifted and reduced to one lane in each direction and the ramps carrying traffic from westbound 159th Street to southbound I-294 and from northbound I-294 to westbound 159th Street are closed to traffic. Traffic is expected to remain in this configuration into summer 2019.

The 159th Street Bridge Project will extend the life of the interchange, increase traffic capacity and provide safe and convenient travel for Tollway customers. More than 13,000 vehicles use this interchange daily.

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Maps, construction and detour information about the 159th Street Bridge Project is available on the Tollway's website at illinoistollway.com via the Interactive Tollway Map and under "Projects Overview" in the Projects section.

The project is being coordinated with the Illinois Department of Transportation, Cook County and local fire and police departments.

Work Zone Safety

The Illinois Tollway is committed to ensuring that 159th Street and the Tri-State Tollway (I-294) remain 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 seven years of *Move Illinois* is on schedule and within budget, delivering the rebuilt and widened Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) as a state-of-the-art 21st century corridor and 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 Elgin O'Hare Western Access Project and planning for emerging projects, including reconstruction of the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294).

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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