



# ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**June 24, 2020**

**EXTENDED WEEKEND LANE CLOSURES SCHEDULED ON THE CENTRAL TRI-STATE TOLLWAY (I-294) FOR BURLINGTON NORTHERN SANTA FE RAILWAY BRIDGE PROJECT**  
*Delays are expected during overnight lane closures, traffic shift for placement of bridge segments*

**DOWNERS GROVE, IL** – Extended traffic shifts with lane reductions are scheduled over four nights this weekend as the Illinois Tollway proceeds with construction of a new Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway on the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294).

During bridge segment placement, the use of a self-propelled modular transporter (SPMT) technology will allow the Tollway to reduce significant impact to its customers to four nights, compared to two months of overnight and weekend lane closures with full stops typically scheduled for conventional bridge construction.

Electronic message signs and construction signage will be put in place in advance to alert drivers of lane closures and traffic shifts scheduled between Friday, June 26 and Tuesday, June 30. Significant delays are expected. All work is weather dependent.

“As part of the Illinois Tollway’s dedication to safety, we are committed to prioritizing the safety of both drivers and workers during construction,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez. “We understand the inconvenience that this approach to roadwork can cause, so we are always working to find ways when possible to reduce the impact of this disruption to our customers.”

**Overnight Lane Closure Schedule:**

On Friday, June 26, beginning at 6 p.m. lane closures and traffic shifts will begin for barrier wall placement to set up the overnight work zone for bridge segment placement on the southbound side of I-294. By 10 p.m., northbound traffic will be reduced to two lanes and southbound traffic will be reduced to a single lane traveling on the northbound side of the roadway. In addition, beginning at 6 p.m. the ramp from eastbound Ogden Avenue to southbound I-294 is scheduled to close to prevent traffic from entering the work zone. All lanes in both directions on I-294, as well as the Ogden Avenue ramp, are scheduled to be reopened to traffic by 8 a.m. on Saturday, June 27.

On Saturday, June 27, overnight closures follow the same schedule as Friday night, with three lanes of traffic in both directions are scheduled to reopen by 8 a.m. on Sunday, June 28, with single lane closures in both directions remaining in place throughout the day to accommodate advance work for the next night of construction. Overnight work will also include a single, 15-minute full closure of all lanes in both directions to move construction equipment.

On Sunday, June 28, beginning at 6 p.m. lane closures and traffic shifts will begin for barrier wall placement to set up the overnight work zone for bridge segment placement on the northbound side of I-294. By 8:30 p.m., southbound traffic will be reduced to two lanes and northbound traffic will be reduced to a single lane traveling on the southbound side of the roadway through 5 a.m. on Monday, June 29.

On Monday, June 29, beginning at 7 p.m. overnight closures following the same traffic configuration as Sunday night will be put in place by midnight with all lanes scheduled to open by 5 a.m. on Tuesday, June 30.

If the work cannot be completed as scheduled, closures will be scheduled as needed June 30 through July 2. Information regarding lane closures will be available in the Illinois Tollway's [Daily Construction Alerts](#).

### **Bridge Segment Placement**

In preparation for bridge segment placement, crews have been assembling the bridge segments from portions of steel beams in the work zone adjacent to the roadway since May. Each assembled bridge segment consists of four steel bridge beams.

During bridge segment placement, crews will use a self-propelled modular transporter (SPMT) vehicle – a combination of multi-axle platforms operated through a computer-controlled system – to lift, carry, and set the very large and heavy segment of bridge beams. The motorized vehicle moves at walking speed and is capable of carrying the large structures and positioning them precisely into final position.

Use of the SPMT technology will allow the Tollway to reduce significant impact to its customers to four nights, compared to two months of overnight and weekend lane closures with full stops typically scheduled for conventional bridge construction.

Overnight on Friday, June 26, and Saturday, June 27, pre-assembled bridge segments will be placed on the BNSF Bridge over the southbound side of I-294. Three pre-assembled segments will be put in place, with two segments placed during the Friday night of closures and one during the Saturday night closures. Bridge segment placement will follow the same plan overnight Sunday, June 28, and Monday, June 29, to place pre-assembled bridge segments will be placed on the BNSF Bridge over the northbound side of I-294.

The Illinois Tollway is reconstructing the BNSF Railway Bridge, which carries the triple-track railroad over I-294 between Hinsdale and Western Springs, to accommodate the reconstruction and widening of the Central Tri-State Tollway. The existing bridge will be replaced with a longer, wider two-span steel beam structure that will accommodate four tracks and will allow for reconstruction and widening of the Tollway underneath. The new fourth track on the bridge will be used for maintenance purposes by BNSF.

The BNSF Railway Bridge Project is being coordinated with Metra, Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway and Cook County, along with local municipalities, park districts, as well as police and fire departments.

The work is part of the Illinois Tollway's 15-year, \$14 billion capital program, *Move Illinois: The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*. Construction information about the BNSF Bridge Project is available in the Projects section on the Tollway's website at [www.illinoistollway.com](http://www.illinoistollway.com).

### **Work Zone 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 \$250 with up to a \$25,000 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 eight 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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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