



# ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **ILLINOIS TOLLWAY DEPLOYS HOT WEATHER PATROLS TO ASSIST CUSTOMERS DURING EXTREME HEAT**

*Additional road patrols bolster H.E.L.P. trucks and State Police District 15*

**DOWNERS GROVE, IL** – The Illinois Tollway has launched around-the-clock Hot Weather Patrols to more quickly locate and assist customers stranded along its roads during the dangerously high temperatures and humidity expected to continue into the weekend.

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, the trucks used for these patrols have been modified with plastic partitions and also are stocked with masks, hand sanitizer and gloves for motorists who may need to wait inside the truck or be transported to a different location.

The Illinois Tollway typically operates Hot Weather Patrols whenever temperatures or heat indexes indicate conditions could be hazardous for stranded drivers. The 24-hour patrols search for drivers stranded in disabled vehicles and respond to calls that come in to \*999 motorist assistance, Illinois Tollway dispatch or Illinois State Police District 15.

“As part of our commitment to safety, we’re adding these additional road patrols so we can more rapidly find and assist any drivers who become stranded along our roads during these dangerously hot conditions,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez. “To further protect our customers and employees, we’ve outfitted these patrol vehicles with safety partitions and other equipment that is intended to help deter the spread of COVID-19.”

While the Illinois Tollway’s Highway Emergency Lane Patrol (H.E.L.P.) trucks sponsored by State Farm run from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday, a minimum of 12 Hot Weather Patrols are providing additional coverage around the clock into the weekend to augment H.E.L.P. trucks and Illinois State Police patrols.

The Hot Weather Patrols consist of crew cab trucks equipped with arrow boards for directing traffic around stranded vehicles and accommodate passengers if motorists need to get out of the heat or be transported to a Tollway maintenance garage or Tollway oasis while service is obtained.

To protect motorists and Tollway workers, plastic partitions have been installed between the front and rear seats in these trucks to help block the spread of COVID-19. The trucks also are stocked with masks, hand sanitizers and gloves for stranded motorists who choose to wait inside the Tollway vehicles for a tow truck or need to be moved to a safer location.

The Hot Weather Patrols typically assist drivers whose cars or trucks have been disabled by empty fuel tanks, flat tires, batteries needing a boost, or overheated radiators.

### **Summer Travel Tips**

The Tollway offers the following travel tips to keep safe during summer weather:

- Cell phone users should **call \*999 motorist assistance** for roadway assistance and note the roadway and direction of travel and nearest milepost or crossroad.
- Stranded motorists should **turn on their emergency lights and remain with their vehicles** until help arrives.
- **Keep your tires properly inflated.** Driving on under-inflated tires can cause tires to overheat and increase the likelihood of a blowout, especially when road temperatures are extremely high.
- **Make sure fluids are at appropriate levels.** Most engine fluids lubricate and serve as coolants by helping carry heat away from critical components. Low fluid levels reduce the cooling effect and increase the possibility of overheating.
- **Keep an emergency kit** in your vehicle that includes water, non-perishable food items, jumper cables, a flashlight with extra batteries, road flares or an emergency beacon, basic hand tools and a first aid kit.
- **Drop It and Drive.** Using a hand-held phone while driving is illegal in Illinois.
- **Give Them Distance.** Drivers are required to slow down and move over when approaching any stopped vehicle that has its hazard lights activated.

The Illinois Tollway also reminds customers that [oases located along the Tollway system](#) serve as cooling centers and also provide drivers an opportunity to check their vehicles or simply take a break. The oases provide a variety of food, beverage and retail offerings, as well as 7-Eleven stores and fuel stations. On the Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294/I-80), there are three oases: Lake Forest, Hinsdale and Chicago Southland Lincoln in South Holland. There is an oasis on the Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88) in DeKalb and on the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) in Belvidere, as well as 7-Eleven stores and fuel stations at the O'Hare Oasis, also on 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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