



ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 17, 2024

ILLINOIS TOLLWAY LAUNCHES HOT WEATHER PATROLS TO ASSIST CUSTOMERS DURING DANGEROUS HEAT WAVE

Additional 24-hour road patrols bolster H.E.L.P. trucks

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – The Illinois Tollway is operating around-the-clock Hot Weather Patrols this week to more quickly locate and assist any customers stranded along its roads during the dangerously high temperatures and humidity expected to continue through Friday.

The Illinois Tollway typically mobilizes special Hot Weather Patrols whenever temperatures or heat indexes indicate conditions could be hazardous for drivers stopped along the road. 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.

“We are taking extra precautions to protect our customers during this dangerously hot weather by launching these additional road patrols to more quickly find and help any drivers stranded along our roads,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Cassandra Rouse. “Protecting our customers is always our highest priority and during extremely hot weather it is critical to rapidly reach drivers who need assistance and provide the help they need to safely complete their travels.”

While the Illinois Tollway’s Highway Emergency Lane Patrol (H.E.L.P.) trucks supported by GEICO 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 throughout the heat wave to augment H.E.L.P. trucks.

The Hot Weather Patrols consist of crew cab trucks equipped with arrow boards for directing traffic around stranded vehicles and can 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.

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.

-more-

- **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](#) 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 two oases with over-the-road pavilions at Lake Forest and the Chicago Southland Lincoln in South Holland and 7-Eleven stores and fuel stations at Hinsdale and O'Hare. There are also oases with pavilions on the Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88) in DeKalb and on the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) in Belvidere.

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.

#