



NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ILLINOIS TOLLWAY LAUNCHES ZERO WEATHER ROAD PATROLS TO ASSIST CUSTOMERS DURING EXTREME COLD

Patrols bolster H.E.L.P. trucks and State Police District 15

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – The Illinois Tollway is launching around-the-clock Zero Weather Road Patrols to quickly aid stranded customers during the severe cold weather and dangerous wind chills forecast to continue into the weekend.

The Illinois Tollway typically operates Zero Weather Road Patrols whenever temperatures or sustained wind chills fall below zero degrees. 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.

“During this dangerously cold weather, we are taking additional steps to protect our customers by putting extra crews on the road to rapidly locate and assist any drivers stranded along our roadways,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Liz Gorman. “Safety is our highest priority and we want to make sure our customers have all the help they need during these extreme conditions.”

While the Illinois Tollway’s Highway Emergency Lane Patrol (H.E.L.P.) trucks sponsored by State Farm run from 4 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday, a minimum of 12 Zero Weather Road Patrols provide additional coverage throughout the day and night, including weekends to augment H.E.L.P. trucks and Illinois State Police patrols.

The Zero Weather Road Patrols consist of crew cab trucks equipped with arrow boards for directing traffic around accidents or stranded vehicles and accommodate up to five passengers if motorists need to be transported to a Tollway maintenance garage, toll plaza or Tollway oasis while service is obtained. Cars or trucks with empty fuel tanks, flat tires, batteries needing a boost, or overheated radiators are just some of the most frequent problems reported among drivers needing help.

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.

Winter Weather Travel Tips

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

- **Be sure your cell phone is fully charged** before heading out.
- **Be sure tires are properly inflated** during cold weather. Tires lose a pound of pressure for every 10 degrees the temperature drops.
- **Keep your gas tank at least half full** to avoid gas line freeze-up and ensure that you have extra to account for additional driving time if the weather is unfavorable.
- **Keep a cold weather safety kit** in your car that includes gloves, boots, blankets, road flares, water and a flashlight with fresh batteries.

- Stranded motorists should **turn on their emergency lights and remain in their vehicles** until help arrives.
- Cell phone users should **call *999 motorist assistance** for roadway assistance and note the roadway and direction of travel and nearest milepost or crossroad.

The Illinois Tollway also reminds customers that [oases located along the Tollway system](#) serve as warming 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 four oases: Lake Forest, O'Hare, 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.

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 interstate tollways 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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