



State of Illinois
Bruce Rauner, Governor



Illinois Department of Transportation
Randall S. Blankenhorn, Acting Secretary

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CONTACT:
Guy Tridgell 312.793.4199
Carson Quinn 312.814.4693
Brian Williamsen 217.720.0443

Snow and Freezing Rain to Impact Travel in Illinois *IDOT Crews Prepared to Battle Winter Weather this Weekend*

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) announced today that a winter storm is expected to produce measurable snowfall and freezing rain in parts of Illinois tonight and Saturday, creating the possibility of hazardous travel conditions.

Motorists should expect slick roadways and be cautious when driving. Travel times are likely to be delayed, so motorists are encouraged to plan ahead, and allow plenty of extra time to travel. For statewide road conditions visit www.gettingaroundillinois.com.

“Our crews are prepared for this latest round of winter weather and will be working hard to clear the roads,” said Acting Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn. “Motorists can help us by driving only if it is necessary during winter storms and taking it slow on the roads.”

The National Weather Service expects the heaviest snowfall (4-6 inches forecast in some areas) to occur in the central part of the state, with freezing rain and accumulating ice likely in the southern part of the state. Icy conditions can create extremely dangerous driving conditions.

IDOT crews pretreated bridges, overpasses, and ramps all day Friday – these are most susceptible to icing. IDOT will have more than 1,700 trucks and 3,700 employees available statewide to battle the winter storm.

If you have to drive in a winter storm, don't crowd the plow. Give plow crews plenty of room to work – you might see them, but the plow drivers might not see you.

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Illinois State Police ask motorists to drive at a safe speed, allow plenty of braking room and increase following distance, make sure your vehicle lights are functioning properly, move over for emergency vehicles that may be stopped to assist stranded motorists, and exit the road to a safe location if driving conditions become too hazardous.

“Illinois State Police are advising drivers to monitor weather conditions and to take the necessary steps to ensure their safety before heading out on potentially dangerous snow and ice covered roadways,” said ISP Operations Colonel Mike Zerbonia. “Drivers should reduce speeds, increase distances between vehicles and avoid sudden lane changes. Unless medical attention is required, drivers involved in crashes should exchange information to keep roads clear and avoid secondary collisions,” he added.

The Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) encourages travelers to have a vehicle emergency kit that includes water, snack foods, flashlight, blanket, extra warm clothing, sand or kitty litter, shovel, windshield scraper with brush, and booster cables. More winter weather survival tips are available at www.Ready.Illinois.gov.

Winter driving tips to remember:

- Do not travel during bad weather unless absolutely necessary. If you have to make a trip, check the forecast and make sure someone is aware of your travel route and schedule.
- Take it slow, especially when approaching intersections, ramps, bridges and shady areas – all are prone to black ice, an invisible danger during some winter storms.
- Keep your gas tank at least two-thirds full.
- Always carry an emergency car care kit that contains jumper cables, flares or reflectors, windshield washer fluid, a small ice scraper, traction material, blankets, non-perishable food and a first aid kit.
- Carry a cell phone and dial *999 in the Chicago area for roadway assistance in case of emergency. (Reminder: Using handheld phones while driving is illegal in Illinois if it is not an emergency situation.)
- Always wear a seat belt, whether you’re sitting in the front seat or back seat. It’s the law.
- Check road conditions before traveling.
 - Road conditions are updated regularly at www.gettingaroundillinois.com. Click the Winter Road Conditions tab to see the statewide map.
 - Information is available by phone at 1-800-452-IDOT (4368) or 1-800-TOLL-FYI for Illinois Tollway travelers.

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