

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 24, 2014

CONTACT:
Paris Ervin 217.782.5025
Jae Miller 312.814.4693

Illinois Motorists Reminded to be Aware of Potentially Dangerous Travel Conditions During Winter Months

Reduce Speed, Reduce Traveling Distance and Beware of Black Ice

CHICAGO – Following the tragic multi-vehicle accident today on Interstate 94 near Michigan City, Indiana, The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is urging Illinois motorists to be cautious while traveling the roadways during the winter months.

IDOT has winter weather crews across the state on standby for the anticipated snowfall expected this weekend. As snowfall moves in Friday night, conditions are expected to change and has the potential to cause slick and hazardous driving conditions.

“We offer our deepest condolences to our neighbors in Indiana,” said Illinois Transportation Secretary Ann L. Schneider. “The tragic accident on I-94 near Michigan City, is a reminder for everyone to be mindful of dangerous road conditions and to be especially careful while traveling during these winter months.”

Drivers are reminded to exercise caution when snow and ice affect roadways, and IDOT advises travel only when absolutely necessary during winter storms or when temperatures are extremely low. During the severely cold weather expected, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security advises that Illinois residents limit exposure to cold temperatures, dress in layers, check in on others who may need additional assistance, keep vehicles in good repair, and bring pets indoors.

Other safety tips to remember:

- Don't crowd the plow – a snow plow operator's field of vision is restricted. You may see them, but they may not see you.
- Allow extra time for travel during the winter months.
- Watch out for black ice on roads that appear clear but can be treacherous. Take it slow when approaching intersections, off-ramps, bridges and shady areas - all are prone to black ice, which is often invisible.
- Always keep your gas tank at least two-thirds full to help prevent the vehicle's fuel line from freezing.
- Do not travel during bad weather unless absolutely necessary - if you do have to make a trip, check the forecast and make sure someone is aware of your travel route.
- 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 for roadway assistance.
- Always wear a safety belt.
- Motorists are urged to check travel conditions before any trip. You can get road condition information by calling 1-800-452-IDOT (4368), Illinois Tollway information by calling 1-800-TOLL-FYI or online at www.gettingaroundillinois.com and click on the “winter road conditions” icon.