



State of Illinois
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Illinois Department of Transportation
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Heavy Snowfall, Strong Winds to Create Hazardous Conditions Tonight and Super Bowl Sunday

IDOT, ISP: Plan Travel Appropriately, Exercise Caution on Roadways This Weekend

SPRINGFIELD –The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) announced today that a winter storm anticipated to deliver heavy snowfall, strong winds and the potential for blowing and drifting snow will create hazardous driving conditions tonight and Sunday. Motorists should be alert for slick roadways, take extra precautions when driving and consider traveling only if it is necessary.

With this being Super Bowl weekend, IDOT and Illinois State Police also are warning motorists that travel will be hazardous enough without drunk drivers on the road. Please plan ahead and designate a sober driver if you are attending Super Bowl parties. The latest road conditions and road closures are available at www.gettingaroundillinois.com.

“We are fully prepared to battle the elements and are ready to work to clear the roads for the traveling public,” said Acting Illinois Transportation Secretary Erica Borggren. “Please help us by only driving if your trip is necessary and certainly don't drive if you've been drinking.”

National Weather Service forecasters are predicting 8 to 10 inches of snow across much of northern Illinois starting tonight and into Sunday, with 10 to 14 inches in the Chicago area, 3 to 6 inches in the central part of the state and 2 inches or less in southern Illinois. Gusty northeast winds Sunday afternoon and evening could produce blowing and drifting snow, significantly reducing visibility. Throughout the day today, IDOT has been pretreating bridge decks and elevated driving surfaces that are susceptible to icing.

To ensure the safety of the motoring public, IDOT will have more than 1,700 trucks and 3,700 employees statewide ready to fight snow and ice. Motorists should expect travel times that are much longer than usual. Also, don't crowd the plows. Make sure to give plows plenty of room to work. You might see them, but the plow drivers might not see you.

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Illinois State Police are asking motorists to plan accordingly and make safety a priority by driving at a safe speed, allowing plenty of distance from other vehicles to safely maneuver, ensuring vehicle lights are functioning properly, watching for snow removal equipment, and exiting the road to a safe location if driving conditions become too hazardous.

“Public safety is every driver’s responsibility. Motorists should take every precaution, reduce their speeds and avoid unnecessary travel to help keep roads safe,” said state police Col. Mike Zerbonia. “Avoiding distractions and keeping extra distance between vehicles will help when navigating through snow and ice conditions.”

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.

Additional tips to remember:

- Be aware that black ice can form on roads that appear clear and the unseen ice can be treacherous.
- Take it slow when approaching intersections, 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 and schedule.
- 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. Remember: using handheld phones while driving is illegal in Illinois if it is not an emergency situation.
- Always wear a seat belt, front seat or back – it’s the law.
- Check travel and road conditions routinely before any trip. You can get road conditions by calling 1-800-452-IDOT (4368), Illinois Tollway information by calling 1-800-TOLL-FYI or online at www.gettingaroundillinois.com and clicking on the “winter road conditions” icon.

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