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## ***IDOT, Illinois State Police, Local Law Enforcement Push to Keep Fatalities on Decline for 2014***

*Motorists Advised to "Click It or Ticket," Drive Sober During Holidays*

**CHICAGO** – The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Illinois State Police (ISP) and local law enforcement are working diligently this long Thanksgiving weekend and throughout the holiday season to keep roadways safe and traffic fatalities on a pace for the lowest total since 2009. The arrival of the snow-and-ice season and winter holidays means Illinois will see a heightened risk for crashes, with heavy traffic starting this week and lasting into January.

A joint campaign by IDOT and law enforcement officials announced today and continuing throughout the holidays is reminding motorists to "Click It or Ticket" and "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over." To save lives during a time of year that can be one of the most deadly, the enforcement effort will focus on encouraging seat belt use and discouraging drunk driving.

"As a result of a drunk driver or someone choosing not to buckle up, families all over Illinois will not share the holidays with a loved one this year. We want to help prevent that from happening to another family," said Acting Illinois Transportation Secretary Erica Borggren. "With strong enforcement efforts throughout the year and the upcoming holiday season, we hope to keep fatalities on the decline and save more lives in Illinois."

Over the last decade, Illinois has experienced significant reductions in motor-vehicle fatalities, with average annual fatalities dropping significantly below those in the previous decade. A modern-day low of 911 traffic fatalities in Illinois was recorded in 2009. While the number of annual fatalities has stayed below 1,000 each year since 2009, they have consistently remained higher since then.

That could change in 2014. As of Nov. 24, 2014, 822 people have lost their lives on Illinois roads, which is 85 lower than the same timeframe in 2013. If this trend continues, Illinois fatalities will be significantly lower than they were in 2013 and possibly lower than the 911 that occurred in 2009. To see up-to-date information on motor-vehicle fatalities, visit <http://apps.dot.illinois.gov/FatalCrash/Home/CrashData>.

During the 2013 Thanksgiving holiday (6 p.m. Wednesday to 11:59 p.m. Sunday), seven people were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes in Illinois. Of the seven fatalities, three involved a drinking driver. Over the last five years in Illinois (2009-2013), 63 fatalities occurred in Illinois during the Thanksgiving holiday, 34 of which (54 percent) involved a drinking driver.

Illinois State Police are also reminding the motoring public that officers will focus on impaired, speeding, unrestrained and fatigued drivers and will enforce the traffic laws to ensure roads and motorists throughout Illinois are safe.

The latest statewide enforcement effort will concentrate on the deadly nighttime hours, when more people die in motor-vehicle crashes than any other time of day. Roadside safety checks, safety belt enforcement zones and other saturation patrols looking for drunk drivers and seat belt law violators will take place in communities and on state routes and interstates throughout Illinois, particularly at night.

To draw additional attention to dangerous driving behavior, IDOT earlier this year launched “The Driving Dead” website series. The series includes short videos that feature Michael Rooker, of the popular TV series “The Walking Dead,” and a cast of characters who find themselves in situations depicting the dangers of driving impaired and not buckling up. Fans can connect with “The Driving Dead” on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) for up-to-date news and behind-the-scenes looks at the series, as well as to watch future episodes.

### Illinois Motor Vehicle Fatalities

Year	Fatalities
1994	1,554
1995	1,586
1996	1,477
1997	1,397
1998	1,393
1999	1,456
2000	1,418
2001	1,414
2002	1,420
2003	1,454
2004	1,355
2005	1,363
2006	1,254
2007	1,248
2008	1,043
2009	911
2010	927
2011	918
2012	956
2013	991

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