



State of Illinois
Bruce Rauner, Governor

Illinois Department of Transportation
Randall S. Blankenhorn, Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
December 30, 2015

CONTACT:
Gianna Urgo 312.814.4693
Master Sgt. Matt Boerwinkle (ISP) 217.782.6637

IDOT: Illinois Law Enforcement Working Overtime this New Year's Eve

Special patrols scheduled through weekend to reduce fatalities on Illinois roadways

CHICAGO – As 2015 comes to a close, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Illinois State Police (ISP) and nearly 200 law enforcement agencies throughout the state will be working overtime this New Year's holiday weekend. The effort has one simple goal – to save lives and reduce fatalities and serious injuries on Illinois roadways.

"Fatality numbers are a way to measure progress, but they are clearly so much more than just numbers. They represent friends, family and loved ones," said IDOT's Division of Traffic Safety Director Jared Thornley. "If you are going to drink this holiday, plan another way home before the celebration begins – and always remember to buckle up."

During these final days of 2015, hundreds of additional law enforcement hours, funded through federal highway safety funds administered by IDOT, will provide additional roadside safety checks, seat belt enforcement zones and other patrols, reminding motorists to "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" and "Click It or Ticket."

"With fatalities on the rise, Illinois State Police troopers will be stepping up patrols on New Year's Eve looking for Fatal Four violations: DUI, Speeding, Distracted Driving and Seatbelt Compliance," said ISP Colonel Tad Williams. "The ISP will conduct numerous Roadside Safety Checks and roving patrols in fatality areas throughout the state. Designate a driver when making plans this holiday season. Drive Sober, or Get Pulled Over."

Over the last five New Year's holiday periods (2010-2014), which include New Year's Eve, an average of 39 people died on Illinois roads, with 2,845 injured, according to IDOT data. Seventeen, or 44 percent, of those 39 individuals, died in crashes involving at least one driver who had been drinking.

1094**15

During last year's New Year's holiday period, 10 people lost their lives and 856 were injured in motor-vehicle crashes. Five of the 10 fatalities resulted from crashes in which a driver had been drinking.

Illinois has experienced fewer than 1,000 traffic fatalities each of the last six years, the lowest numbers since 728 in 1920 and 887 in 1921. In 1922, fatalities rose above 1,000, where they remained until 2009, when 911 people lost their lives on Illinois roads. Fatalities reached an all-time high of 2,600 in 1941.

Provisional data show 999 traffic fatalities so far this year in Illinois, an increase of 8.5% from a year ago. For a more complete breakdown of the data, click [here](#).

The public can do their part to make this a safe holiday weekend and achieve zero fatalities by following these simple rules:

- Plan ahead. Designate a sober driver before going out and give that person your keys.
- If you've been drinking, call a taxi, use mass transit or call a sober friend or family member.
- Use your community's designated driver program.
- Promptly report drunk drivers you see on the roadways to law enforcement.
- Wear your seat belt and make sure all passengers are safely buckled up. It is your best defense against a drunk driver.

###