



State of Illinois  
JB Pritzker, Governor



Illinois Department of Transportation  
Omer Osman, Secretary

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CONTACT:

Paul Wappel 217.685.0082  
Joe Schatteman 217.970.0082

## Final stage of Interstate 70 project in Effingham County begins April 9

*Additional safety measures as construction begins on westbound lanes*

**EFFINGHAM** – The Illinois Department of Transportation announced today that the reconstruction of westbound Interstate 70 from just east of the I-57/70 interchange to just east of the Cumberland/Effingham County line, east of Montrose, will begin, weather permitting, Tuesday, April 9. The project will include several new safety features this year and a start date timed to not interfere with the April 8 solar eclipse that is anticipated to bring large crowds to the southern part of the state.

“We are excited to get one step closer to delivering this vital project to an important part of the state. These improvements will help the flow of goods and services throughout the area and provide a safer road for everyone who relies on I-70,” **said Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman**. “Partnering with local officials, we have added several safety measures this year that should drive down the number of crashes in the work zone, but we need your help and cooperation. Please stay alert for upcoming construction and prepared to slow down. Buckle up and put down the phone. Follow the signs and instructions. Expect conditions to change at any moment. Working together, we look forward to bringing this project to a safe, successful conclusion.”

Tree trimming already has been taking place in recent weeks. Starting this week, shoulder closures and intermittent lane closures in the eastbound lanes will be necessary to place traffic control devices in preparation for the project. Once the work zone is established starting April 9, traffic will be reduced to one lane in each direction on the eastbound lanes rebuilt last year, separated by the barrier walls, while the westbound lanes are reconstructed.

The work zone will include several new safety elements. They include extra dynamic message signs posted in advance of the northbound and eastbound I-57/70 split, helping to move I-57 traffic to the left lane. Temporary rumble strips will be installed prior to the work zone and through it to help keep drivers alert. Illinois State Police will have an enhanced presence throughout this construction season, checking for distracted driving, speeding and other traffic offenses.

In recent weeks, IDOT has met and coordinated with local police and fire departments in Effingham County to advise them on other safety elements added at their request, including pull-off locations in the work zone to respond to vehicle breakdowns or crashes. The group also discussed the most efficient method to access the work zone when crashes or other emergencies occur as well as other logistical details aimed at keeping the public safe.

Until the project is complete this fall, backups and congestion approaching the work zone should be anticipated at all times. Drivers are urged to slow down, put down their phones and devices, avoid all distractions, and watch for workers and equipment as well as give their undivided attention to traffic control signs and changing conditions in and around the work zone.

Made possible by Gov. JB Pritzker's Rebuild Illinois capital program, the overall \$50 million improvement on I-70 includes the reconstruction of 7 miles in both directions, including the replacement of the eastbound and westbound bridges over the Montrose Blacktop.

Over the [next six years](#), IDOT is planning to improve more than 3,000 miles of highway and nearly 10 million square feet of bridge deck as part of the Rebuild Illinois capital program, which is investing \$33.2 billion into all modes of transportation. [Accomplishments](#) through Year Four of Rebuild Illinois included approximately \$12.1 billion of improvements statewide on 5,339 miles of highway, 533 bridges and 762 additional safety improvements.

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